

The Work of Art  
and Its Fate in Heidegger's History of Being



Andrea Vitangeli  
University College, University of Oxford

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*To my parents*

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## Abstract

This thesis provides an original and comprehensive interpretive account of Martin Heidegger's philosophy of art at the stage of development it had reached by the time of composition of his seminal essay 'The Origin of the Work of Art' (OWA). The central exegetical claim advanced is that artworks are construed by Heidegger as entities that creatively articulate the affective dimension of human experience. This reading is set against the background of a reconstruction of Heidegger's underappreciated substantial reworking of his existential understanding of human affectivity, first introduced in *Being and Time*, into a historically inflected conception of the way human beings are fundamentally exposed to intelligibility as such. After outlining the key features of such reworking, it is argued that OWA, by its own internal logic, requires supplementation from the theoretical context thus established. This is achieved by showing that and how artworks function as distinctively suitable vehicles for the projection of affective grounds of intelligibility. In the process, several long-standing puzzles in the OWA scholarship are addressed, including Heidegger's conception of a 'strife between world and earth' as central to the functioning of artworks, artworks' distinctive ontological import, the significance of Greek architecture as Heidegger's primary illustrative example, and Heidegger's renewed ontology of equipment as a foil to that of artworks. An account of artistic experience is then developed as a corollary to the proposed picture of art. On this account, artistic experience involves a transformative reshaping, itself ultimately affective in nature, of the experiencer's frame of reference. Artistic experience, so construed, is then argued to provide the resources for a novel and compelling interpretation of OWA's exegetically contested Van Gogh episode. The thesis concludes by situating the proposed account of art within Heidegger's broader mid-1930s being-historical project, with particular attention to the different roles he envisages for artworks within it.

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*Andrea Vitangeli*  
*January 2025*

For verses are not, as people think, feelings  
(one has those early enough); they are  
experiences.

Even as a child I had been so suspicious of  
music [...] not because it lifted me out of  
myself more powerfully than anything else,  
but because I had noticed that it did not  
return me to where it had found me, but  
somewhere deeper, into the wholly  
incomplete.

– Rainer Maria Rilke  
*The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge*

## Introduction

Works of art have the power to move us and sometimes to change us. They do so by offering us encounters that we may experience as in some sense revelatory. This kernel of common experience, familiar from our pre-theoretical engagements with the arts, is also at the heart of Heidegger's influential philosophical account of art, as articulated most prominently in his seminal 1936 essay 'The Origin of the Work of Art' (henceforth OWA). Art's affective, transformative, and revelatory powers are taken seriously by Heidegger. Indeed, he argues that adequately making sense of them has far-reaching philosophical implications, ultimately requiring a radical revision of long-established ways of construing the relationship between human beings and the world. In this study, we will explore the extent to which such implications reach, and the picture of art that underlies them.<sup>1</sup>

Of course, Heidegger had already issued foundational challenges to traditional philosophical assumptions in his 1927 masterwork *Being and Time* (henceforth SZ, for *Sein und Zeit*). This involved an account of human beings' constitutive exposure to and immersion in meaningful practical contexts, as the basis for all human sense-making activities. In formulaic terms, this was the claim that the mode of being of human beings is existence (*Existenz*), whose structure is being-in-the-world. Heidegger's familiar SZ name for the human being, insofar as it is grasped in terms of its constitutive existence, is Dasein. As a Dasein, I always already find myself immersed in meaningful situations, as I pursue my purposive ends in the light of a self-conception tied to a certain possibility of my being (i.e. a 'for-the-sake-of-which'). While human beings are seen as inherently exposed to worldly possibilities, however, this does not imply that they grasp them explicitly. Indeed, on Heidegger's SZ view, for the most part we comport ourselves on the basis of restricted subsets of possibilities and interpret them in terms

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this study, all citations from Heidegger will refer to the relevant volume, followed by the page number, of Heidegger's *Gesamtausgabe* (abbreviated as 'GA'). In accordance with standard scholarly practice, the exception will be citations from *Being and Time*, which will refer to the pagination of the 7<sup>th</sup> German edition of *Sein und Zeit* (abbreviated as 'SZ') (see the Bibliography). Unless otherwise indicated, all translations from the German will be my own. Sometimes, for reasons of legibility, line breaks in the original text will not be reflected by a new paragraph in my quotations. In such cases, I will indicate the break with a '/' in the quoted text.

of generally available, impoverished frames of sense-making. Within the SZ framework, the achievement of artworks is construed as the interpretive extraction of implicit worldly significations from the shared human context of being-in-the-world and their explicit articulation. Entities within the world are thereby uncovered in terms of these hitherto latent possibilities of their meaningfulness. This surfaces in SZ in a passing remark made – the only one explicitly referring to art in that work – where Heidegger characterises “poetic” discourse’ as one that may take as its specific aim ‘[t]he communication of the existential possibilities of disposedness [*Befindlichkeit*], i.e. the opening up of existence’ (SZ:216).<sup>2</sup> Possibilities to which we are implicitly exposed and receptive by virtue of our very mode of being become the very theme of a kind of articulation whose mark is precisely its ability to bring them out as such. A corresponding characterisation is found in Heidegger’s lecture course *Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, contemporary with SZ. Here, an excerpt from Rilke’s novel *The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge* is treated by Heidegger as a case of discourse capable of ‘interpret[ing] and illuminat[ing]’ worldly significances that ‘leap[] out’ of entities – in the passage, a decaying Parisian wall – in our ‘natural compartmental relationship to’ them (GA24:246-47).<sup>3</sup>

In the course of the extensive reworking of his views that Heidegger undertook in the years after the publication of SZ, however, he eventually came to the conclusion that this framework could not do justice to the full, and primary, ontological import of artworks. The ultimate ground of such import – of art’s affective, transformative, and revelatory powers – is to be found at a level yet more fundamental than that of our ordinary being-in-the-world. This is part of a more general reframing of his overall picture, whereby our familiar immersion in worldly meanings is now itself to be seen as derivative of prior constructive processes, capturing which requires novel and more radical philosophical resources. Thus, in 1936, revisiting his earlier SZ passage on poetic discourse, he emphatically notes: ‘Poetry is not only communication of existential possibilities! but rather founding of beyng, originary naming on the part of the creators’ (GA82:89, emphasis omitted). Making sense of this, at first, admittedly

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<sup>2</sup> Given my overall thesis in this study, it is significant that already in SZ Heidegger should explicitly link poetic language to the *affective* dimension of being-in-the-world. The import of this connection will become clear in what follows.

<sup>3</sup> Pippin (2024) highlights the importance of this passage, both as an example of unconcealment (75-76) and as a model for Heidegger’s poetic thinking (208ff.). I am doubtful about the latter gloss, for reasons that will emerge in what follows (see especially Chapter 4). Young (2001:33-34) sees the passage as a model for Heidegger’s OWA discussion of Van Gogh, which I consider unwarranted for reasons that will become clear in Chapter 4.

cryptic remark, what it presupposes and implies about the nature and import of artworks, measuring the extent of the distance from the SZ picture that it implies, are the tasks I propose to undertake in this study. As we shall see, art's affective, transformative, and revelatory powers will receive, in Heidegger's mid-1930s reformulation, a more radical vindication than the SZ framework could countenance.

The overarching interpretive thesis I will advance is that artworks are construed by Heidegger as entities distinctively suited to projecting and preserving openings of sense (a notion I will specify), where such openings are conceived of as fundamentally affective. Heidegger's preferred term for what I refer to here as affect is 'attunement' (*Stimmung*). A concise formula for the thesis on the nature of artworks I ascribe to Heidegger thus is: artworks are projections of attunement. For this claim to say anything meaningful, we will need to sketch a picture of the way Heidegger had come to understand the relationship between attunement and projection by the mid-1930s. As indicated above, this picture will turn out to be drawn in explicit contradistinction to that presented by his earlier SZ framework – a divergence whose grounds and implications, as I will argue, are yet to find a full reception in the scholarly literature. The upshot will be a novel, unified picture of Heidegger's account of the artistic domain in its constitutive moments: artistic production, the artwork itself in its ontological make-up, and artistic experience. In addition to advancing the scholarly discussion on Heidegger on art, the study aims to shed light on key aspects of the broader philosophical framework of his middle-phase thought, of which his theory of art is, as we will explore in detail, a pivot.<sup>4</sup>

My approach in this study is primarily exegetical. By this I mean that my aim is to ascribe to Heidegger a set of philosophical views that the relevant textual evidence at our disposal best supports him as having held. To do so, I draw on Heidegger's texts to reconstruct lines of argument in support of such views, working out and articulating their internal logic.

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<sup>4</sup> To my knowledge, my reading is the first attempt at systematically embedding Heidegger's views on art within his reworked framework of the affective grounds of sense (and the new textual materials that document it). This marks out my approach from extant approaches to OWA, both those aiming at a comprehensive reading of the essay – see Harries (2009), Kockelmans (1985), Thomson (2011), and Young (2001) – and those focusing on more specific issues within Heidegger's philosophy of art – see Backman (2015), Briesen and Gutschmidt (2022), Dill (2017), Dreyfus (2005), Han-Pile (2011), Mulhall (2019), Pippin (2014; 2024), Sallis (2008), Seubold (1996), Sinclair (2006), and Wrathall (forthcoming). OWA's constitutive belonging to said framework is rightly noted by von Herrmann (1994), who does not, however, follow through on his own insight, effectively conducting his commentary on OWA primarily in terms of Heidegger's older, SZ framework.

Depending on the specific instance, the arguments I reconstruct may, but need not, have been explicitly advanced by him in support of the view(s) in question. However, while Heidegger need not have argued expressly in the way I reconstruct, I understand the relevant line(s) of argument always as implied by his broader, basic commitments and as having a solid basis in his texts. This, in turn, will require sketching out relevant aspects of the broader philosophical framework in which such views and arguments are embedded. Ideally, then, I intend to ascribe to Heidegger views he actually held, as grounded on commitments to which he actually subscribed.<sup>5</sup> Given the increasing radicality of Heidegger's project and the increasingly idiosyncratic character of his conceptuality and terminology in his middle period – on which the scholarship is in many ways still in its infancy – considerable interpretive elaboration and care are required to work out just what these commitments amount to and what their implications are. My treatment will accordingly be informed by meticulous attention to the primary sources, and I will systematically link my interpretive claims and attributions to their respective sources in Heidegger's texts. I will engage with the relevant scholarly literature on relevant issues as they arise from the main line of argument, weaving such engagement into it. These will be primarily cases where this engagement can help to shed light on contentious exegetical points; or where I believe that a well-entrenched tendency in the scholarship is objectionably at odds with what I take Heidegger's views and commitments in fact to have been; or where I believe my approach yields a novel solution to a long-standing interpretive puzzle in the literature.

Further clarification of my overall approach is in order. Heidegger's thinking was, as is well known, ever ongoing. His voluminous output over his decades-long career is marked by a continuous flow of philosophical, conceptual, and linguistic development and experimentation. Any interpretation must make choices about how to approach this material both vast and magmatic. My approach here will be text-based and period-based, in the following sense. My primary aim is to understand the views on art that Heidegger articulates in OWA in its final, late-1936 version.<sup>6</sup> The choice is motivated primarily by the plain fact that

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<sup>5</sup> In terms of Brandom's influential distinction, this qualifies my interpretive stance as *de dicto*, rather than *de re*. See Brandom (2002:94ff.).

<sup>6</sup> In what follows, 'OWA' will stand for OWA's final version, unless otherwise specified. Some bibliographical details are in order. Our source for OWA is the version of the text published by Heidegger in 1950 as part of *Holzwege*. This version is based on a set of three lectures Heidegger delivered in Frankfurt between November and December 1936. The *Holzwege* version includes an Afterword 'written partly later' (GA5:375) and

this is the text in which Heidegger thematises art most explicitly and at greatest length, and the one around which the scholarly debate on Heidegger on art has primarily revolved. However, as I will argue, the views on art Heidegger advances in OWA can only be fully understood by embedding them within a broader framework which is not itself articulated in OWA. Accordingly, I expand the scope of my analysis to those texts that do contain such articulation. Given the mentioned fluidity of Heidegger's thinking, however, this must be done with some caution. Supplementing OWA with materials elaborated much earlier or later than the period in which OWA itself was composed runs the risk of superimposing views no longer held or not yet conceived on the text of our interest. To minimise such risks, only texts belonging to the years immediately around OWA's final version will be included in my analysis. This delimits a specific section of the evolving course of Heidegger's thought, whose boundaries are roughly the years 1935 and 1937. I will refer to this interval as our 'period of interest'. The consequence is that my reading of Heidegger on art is effectively time-indexed. The reading offered purports to be an account of Heidegger's philosophy of art as it had developed by the time OWA's final version was composed, based on all relevant texts belonging to that period.<sup>7</sup> This does not eliminate internal fluctuations, but it does make them manageable. Occasional recourse to earlier or later sources is made only where they can be readily seen to clarify a point which has an explicit counterpart in our period of interest.

This approach, I believe, is best placed to deliver a textually well-founded reconstruction of the set of views on art that find their most direct and extensive, but not complete, articulation in OWA. The scope is widened away from OWA precisely to the extent that it allows for an illumination of the views OWA contains. On the other hand, what might strike the reader as the narrowness of such time-indexing is, I believe, counterbalanced by two

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an Addendum from 1956. Since the manuscript of the original Frankfurt lectures is unavailable, the exact extent of the overlap between them and the *Holzwege* version is uncertain. However, in a note contemporaneous with OWA's composition, Heidegger sketches in some detail the entire structure and main claims of the Frankfurt lectures (see GA82:486-90). This provides valuable evidence that the overlap between the Frankfurt lectures and the *Holzwege* version of OWA is substantial. On this basis, we can, for virtually all scholarly purposes, identify OWA's *Holzwege* version (minus Afterword and Addendum) with the Frankfurt version. There exist, moreover, two further, earlier versions of the OWA material. OWA's *first* version is a single lecture Heidegger composed in 1935 but did not deliver (see GA80.2:565-90). OWA's *second* version is a significant revision of this text, which Heidegger delivered as a lecture in Freiburg in November 1935 and again in Zurich in January 1936 (see *ibid.*:596-621). A 1936 'revision of the Freiburg lecture' does not exhibit any substantial changes and therefore does not warrant being considered as a version in its own right (see *ibid.*:627-58). In this study, I take OWA's final version as authoritative, referring to the earlier versions where they aid its interpretation.

<sup>7</sup> While I do believe that he held to his OWA views, at least in their core, throughout his later career, I will not make that case in the present study.

sets of considerations. First, the limitation allows us to descend into considerable depth and detail in our probing of Heidegger's views. This is a virtue inasmuch as the sophistication and complexity of these very views merit and reward, as I hope to show, this level of careful attention. Secondly, the restriction does not target just any period in Heidegger's development, but one of special significance. The interval includes the beginning and a substantial portion of Heidegger's work on *Contributions to Philosophy* (henceforth simply *Contributions*), the text that most comprehensively sets out his overall philosophical project of the period, and arguably serves as a major blueprint for his middle and later philosophy as a whole. Heidegger himself famously identifies the year 1936 retrospectively as a major turning point in his development, specifically as the year from which *Ereignis* becomes the 'guiding word of [his] thinking' (GA9:316 fn. a). This goes hand in hand with Heidegger's 1936 redaction of his first set of retrospective critical notes ('running notes', *Laufende Anmerkungen*) on SZ, an important source only recently become available which, as we shall see, meticulously documents the character and extent of Heidegger's departure from the SZ framework by the mid-1930s. The period of our interest is thus the one in which Heidegger explicitly records his abandonment of the fundamental-ontological project and concurrently makes his first attempt to comprehensively articulate his new theoretical framework. Finally, the interval, though narrow, is capacious enough to contain virtually all of Heidegger's work specifically devoted to art in that phase of his thinking. It includes all three versions of OWA, Heidegger's notes on OWA (recently published as 'hints on', *Hinweise zu*, OWA), and Heidegger's historical confrontations with the aesthetic theories of Kant, Schiller, and Nietzsche in his seminars and lectures (the work on the former two having itself only very recently been published). Our time-indexed focus thus allows us to zoom in on the period in which Heidegger's efforts are devoted to articulating both his novel overall philosophical picture and his reflections on art – a hardly coincidental concomitance, as we shall see – creating a uniquely appropriate exegetical context.

The mention of recently published new materials in the previous paragraph implicitly introduced another relevant point. The additions such materials make to our appreciation of Heidegger's theory of art are not merely quantitative. More substantively, as I will seek to show, they shed new light on and enrich such theory in ways unavailable prior to their publication. The sources I mentioned are contained in volumes 82 (published in 2018, for Heidegger's

notes on SZ and OWA) and 84.2 (published in 2023, for Heidegger's confrontation with his three German predecessors) of Heidegger's complete works (*Gesamtausgabe*). To this we should add the rich set of notes on Heidegger's 'thinking of *Ereignis*' contained in volume 73.1 (published in 2013), a substantial part of which belongs to our period of interest. It is my conviction, and indeed one of the motivations behind the present study, that such sources place us in a significantly better epistemic position vis-à-vis Heidegger's theory of art than we were just a decade ago, and that this calls for a scholarly reassessment of it on their basis. In my view, the new materials improve our epistemic position along three main axes, concerning: first, the inherent relationship between OWA and Heidegger's broader being-historical (*seinsgeschichtlich*) project of the period; secondly, the inherent relationship between OWA and Heidegger's project of overcoming (*überwinden*) modern aesthetics; thirdly, the inherent relationship between OWA and Heidegger's new conception of the affective-projective constitution of intelligibility as such. This study is an attempt to provide an account of the latter relationship. Its results will then serve as a basis for accounting, in further work, for the first two, in ways I outline in the Concluding Remarks of this thesis.

This brings me to the main philosophical-exegetical drive of the present project. My contention is that the way art relates to Heidegger's account of affectivity, as constitutive of the grounds of intelligibility, has been neglected in the extensive literature on OWA. Yet this relationship is crucial, and the neglect a significant lack in our reception. The neglect, however, is not accidental. Its roots are at least twofold. On the one hand, they lie in Heidegger's own reticence to explicitly link art and affectivity in OWA (a peculiar reticence, to be sure, about which I will say more in due course). On the other hand, they lie in a more general lack of reception of the centrality of Heidegger's doctrine of affect to the foundations of his post-SZ philosophical project.<sup>8</sup> This, in turn, is due, in my diagnosis, partly to a still-persistent lack of reception of Heidegger's so-called being-historical treatises of the 1930s and 1940s (i.e. volumes 65 to 71, except 68, of the *Gesamtausgabe*), in which the issue is explicitly explored in its more radical dimensions; and partly to the fact that the way in which Heidegger's account

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<sup>8</sup> Pippin's (2024) study of Heidegger's critique of German idealism represents a recent attempt to counter this tendency, which I regard as broadly in line with my motivations here.

of affectivity developed in the 1930s has so far remained underexplored and unclear.<sup>9</sup> This can now be rectified. The new materials – Heidegger’s aforementioned retrospective notes on SZ in particular – offer us rich sources for ascertaining the nature and extent of this development. Understanding the way Heidegger reconceives of affect in the 1930s allows us to work our way back in the chain of missing reception just laid out: on the basis of such understanding, we can appreciate in what sense affect thus reconceived is central to the foundations of Heidegger’s post-SZ project, and from there to assess its crucial relationship to Heidegger’s theory of art. The intertwining between the lack of a full appreciation of Heidegger’s evolution away from SZ in his conception of affect and the lack of important relevant textual sources reflects in a corresponding intertwining between the philosophical-exegetical drive of my project and the ‘material’ drive of a reassessment based on the newly available texts.

Here, however, a further restriction in my approach must be noted. This restriction intersects with the above-mentioned time-indexing to complete the delimitation of the scope of my study. In outlining Heidegger’s account of the grounds of intelligibility as a necessary backdrop for his views on art, I will take such account as a given and as a self-standing theoretical construction. However, it is important to be aware that this account is part and parcel of, and part of what is at stake in, Heidegger’s broader being-historical project. The standpoint from which Heidegger takes himself to be warranted in constructing the account that I take as a given is a thoroughly historical one. To claim, as we shall see he does, that the grounds of intelligibility are ultimately affective is inherently tied to his claim that such grounds have not been grasped as such in ontological history so far (so that this history is one of increasing ‘forgetting’ of such grounds). This in turn is part of an account of why they have not been so grasped (ultimately to do with the inherent ‘self-concealing’ nature of what is forgotten); of how we have now come to be in a position to possibly so grasp them (our historical trajectory having reached its endpoint, with revelatory consequences as to its grounds); of what grasping them as such involves (a transformation of our basic conception of what it is to be at all, as well as of our own human essence); and of what the historical consequences of so grasping them are (the need for a new historical ‘inception’, *Anfang*). Such

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<sup>9</sup> Itself a problem intertwined with that of how to cash out Heidegger’s ‘turn’ (*Kebr*) in this period. The knottiness of the issues we are confronted with begins to emerge. I hope my study may contribute to a partial disentanglement.

accounts imply one another in the historical-hermeneutic whole of Heidegger's being-historical project, so that ultimately they all stand or fall together. What I will do in the bulk of my treatment, then, amounts to artificially severing Heidegger's account of the grounds of intelligibility from this wider context, in order to focus on how Heidegger constructs the artwork on its basis. Effectively, this means that the account of Heidegger's views I will offer is to be seen as provisionally bracketing the being-historical dimension of Heidegger's project. This bracketing is viable in principle, insofar as the account of the grounds of intelligibility amounts to a theoretical framework that may be characterised independently for the sake of charting its internal structure. However, this must be done with an awareness of the broader context and with a view to eventually reintegrating the framework into it. While a *characterisation* of the individual parts of Heidegger's project can be done in isolation, an *assessment* of it must be comprehensive, due to the above-mentioned mutual interdependence of the parts. Most importantly, the regional characterisation must be informed by a background contextual awareness, if one is to avoid distorting aspects of the relevant part whose nature depends on the being-historical context and can therefore only be fully grasped in its terms. When such aspects arise in my treatment, I will note them as such.<sup>10</sup> Then, in my Concluding Remarks, I will remove the brackets from my account and discuss how it fits into and what implications it has for such broader context, in a connection to be fully developed in further work.

With the general textual and methodological coordinates of my approach in place, here is a roadmap for the chapters ahead. Chapter 1 sets the stage by introducing key terminology and outlining what I take to be the post-SZ developments in Heidegger's conception of the grounds of sense. Such developments involve a deepening of Heidegger's picture, whereby SZ's notion of being-in-the-world is traced back to a newly identified, more fundamental level on which it depends. This level is structured by the interplay between attunement and projection, now reworked, as I argue, as the two moments whereby intelligibility as such is fundamentally constituted. I show how this constitution takes place as the gradual construction of a context of intelligibility from a basic opening of sense – notions I will introduce and clarify. I conclude the chapter by showing that OWA's text lacks the theoretical resources to fully ground its core claim that artworks are needed for truth to happen (or, in OWA's terminology,

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<sup>10</sup> A case in point is the discussion of ordinariness in Chapter 4, which, as we shall see, would be misconstrued if not grasped as historically determined as *our* ordinariness *today*.

that truth has a ‘pull’ towards the work), arguing that this lack marks the juncture where the picture I reconstruct and OWA itself converge.

Having thus set the stage, I proceed to fill in the picture. My discussion is framed in terms of an overarching argument consisting of three key claims: (i) openings of sense are affective in nature; (ii) openings of sense, *qua* affective, require projection; and (iii) artworks are distinctively suited to projecting affective openings of sense. These claims, I argue, jointly vindicate OWA’s doctrine that truth has a pull towards the work. In this way, I show both that artworks are projections of attunement, as per my basic thesis, and that OWA is inherently dependent on this thesis.

The argument encapsulated by claims (i)-(iii) will structure my discussion in Chapters 2 and 3. Chapter 2 addresses claims (i) and (ii) through a reading of Heidegger’s conception of the clearing as an abyssal ground in *Contributions*. I argue that the clearing, thus construed, is fundamentally affective and that, as such, it inherently requires creative projection, thereby vindicating both claims (i) and (ii).

Chapter 3 addresses claim (iii) through a reading of the distinctive way in which artworks accomplish projection. I argue that this amounts to a distinctive modality of configuration of the world-earth strife, where such strife, a central notion in OWA, is to be grasped as differentially configurable across multiple modalities. By developing an account of Heidegger’s renewed conception of the being of equipment (i.e. reliability) as a foil, I locate the distinctiveness of artworks in their configuring strife by unveiling it *as* strife. As I argue, this allows artworks to project their underlying openings of sense while preserving the latter’s attuning power, vindicating claim (iii) and thus (together with (i) and (ii)) OWA’s claim that truth has a pull towards the work. I illustrate this through an extended discussion of the Greek temple, one of the few artworks Heidegger mentions in OWA, as a case study, showing that and how it amounts to a projection of the Greek attunement of wonder.

Chapter 4 then develops an account of artistic experience as a corollary to the proposed picture of art, arguing that it is a necessary complement to such picture insofar as art can successfully project affective openings of sense only by being suitably experienced. I show that artistic experience, so construed, involves a displacement (in a sense to be specified) of the artwork’s experiencer, ultimately to be grasped as a ‘retunement’ of the experiencer to the

attunement that the artwork projects. I conclude with a novel interpretation of the Van Gogh episode in OWA, showing how my account of artistic experience helps to explain some of its most puzzling features.

In my extended Concluding Remarks, as already indicated, I outline the way my account of art fits into Heidegger's broader being-historical project of the mid-1930s, with particular attention to the role Heidegger envisages for artworks, as I construe them, within such project. A corollary of the intersection between art and the history of being is a critique of the basic presuppositions of philosophical aesthetics – a critique which, I suggest, is itself best understood in the light of the account of art developed in this study.

## Attunement and Projection: Beyond *Being and Time*

This chapter sets the stage for my interpretive account by introducing its central elements and showing that OWA's theoretical construction lacks a proper foundation. I proceed as follows. In §1.1, I argue that mid-1930s Heidegger revises his conception of the notions of attunement and projection, which in *SZ* are construed as moments of being-in-the-world. He does so, as I show, by tracing being-in-the-world itself back to a new, more basic level of fundamentality on which it depends. In §1.2, I elaborate the resulting picture by specifying key features of the way attunement is now understood. In §1.3, I specify key features of the corresponding notion of projection. In §1.4, I turn to OWA, particularly to its central thesis that artworks are required for truth to take place. I show that OWA lacks the resources to ground this thesis, and identify this as the point at which OWA stands in need of theoretical supplementation – supplementation which, as I will argue in the following chapters, is provided by embedding OWA within the framework I outlined in the preceding sections.

### 1.1 Beneath Being-in-the-World

In the Introduction, I indicated that the overarching thesis of this study is that artworks are projections of attunements. At first, this may well sound puzzling as a purported reading of OWA. For, as I mentioned, affect virtually does not feature in the essay, which rather construes artworks in terms of a conceptual apparatus that, conversely, finds no immediate echo in my stated thesis. I say 'virtually' because, in fact, the term *Stimmung* does occur in OWA, albeit only once and then in passing in the essay's early stages. This fleeting mention, however, holds more significance than at first appears. The sentence reads: 'Perhaps, however, what we call [...] attunement [...] is more open to being than all reason' (GA5:9). In the light of the reconstruction I will offer, we will be able to recognise this seemingly incidental remark as a cryptic allusion to the central role of attunement within Heidegger's framework, and thus to the very foundation of the theory of art that OWA goes on to develop.

If attunement barely gets mentioned in OWA, in Heidegger's own coeval notes to the essay, as I mentioned, things look rather different. One citation to stand for many here:

Attunement itself – *happens* – does not arise ‘in’ us [...], but rather we come into it. / *Where* is it then? In the There and as the There of *Da-sein* [...] and that is precisely why the ‘work’ as *establishment* can create and preserve *attunement*, and that means in-toning and at the same time *transpose* [one] into it. [...] [*A*]tunement [...] makes the work possible and thus [makes] itself [possible] [...], holds it together [...] and holds it out[.]  
(GA82:531, original emphases)

This passage, to which we will return in greater detail in due course (see Chapter 4), centres on the relationship between affect and artwork, and helps us to begin to spell out the way Heidegger conceives of it. Three initial key points stand out. First, attunement is prior to the artwork and is what first enables it as the work it is. Secondly, the artwork ‘creates’ and ‘preserves’ its underlying attunement – that is, in the language I have begun to use, projects it. Thirdly, by projecting its underlying attunement, the artwork can in turn attune its recipient to that attunement.

The overall dynamic this passage encapsulates, as we shall trace at some length, is one whereby a certain basic configuration of intelligibility first opens up and then comes to be concretely and determinately established amidst entities. Crucially, the initial opening is, on Heidegger's construal, *affective* in nature. Now, to grasp what this means, it is vital to note that, as anticipated, a certain shift has intervened between Heidegger's late-1920s account of affectivity as disposedness (*Befindlichkeit*) in SZ and the mid-1930s context to which the passage just quoted belongs.

In SZ, attunements (*Stimmungen*) were understood as basic ways in which the individual Dasein found itself affectively disposed in and towards a shared meaningful world. By virtue of such predisposition, Dasein could encounter entities as mattering to it in certain ways, such ways being set in accordance with the tonal character of the respective attunement.<sup>11</sup> This provided a preliminary arraying of Dasein's field of possible encounter – a basic layer for possibilities of Dasein's comportment to be projected upon in understanding. Intuitively, joy or fear would position me in the world in very different ways, prefiguring correspondingly different sets of possibilities for my practical existence. From the mid-1930s, however,

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<sup>11</sup> ‘In disposedness, there existentially lies a disclosive assignment to the world, from out of which something that matters [*Angehendes*] can be encountered’ (SZ:137-38).

Heidegger revisits and repurposes this account to conceive of what he now sees as a prior, more fundamental layer than the one analysed in SZ's Division One (SZ I.1). To a first approximation, the relevant layer now concerns the process whereby a certain regime of intelligibility *itself* gets constituted. Attunement is now seen as the basic way the human being is transposed into a certain manner of opening of the clearing (*Lichtung*) of being – and, conversely, the basic way such clearing itself opens up, insofar as the human being is transposed into it. 'Attunement' thus comes to designate the basic affective modality in which the human being is receptively exposed to the basic occurrence (always so-and-so tonally configured) of intelligibility as such.

This shift is particularly emphasised by Heidegger in his 1936 notes of self-criticism to SZ, among the recently published sources mentioned in the Introduction. Here is a characteristic statement:

Attunement not first and only disposedness of being-human, but rather essence of being which *attunes* Da-sein [...] *beyng* [...] *is what attunes* – the authentic bringing-into-attunement [*Er-stimmung*] – *ur-attunement* [Ur-Stimmung]! [...] [A]ttuning is not [...] a subsequent 'effect' of beyng – indeed, beyng does not 'have effects', but rather 'attunes', but this attuning is entirely essentially conceived from and in Da-sein!

(GA82:79, original emphases)

Leaving aside for the moment the trickier terminological and conceptual complications passages such as this raise, the passage's basic thrust is clear enough. On Heidegger's reworked account, attunements are no longer grasped in terms of Dasein's disposedness, i.e. as ways in which I happen to affectively find myself in the world and thereby concerned by entities. Rather, they amount to basic affective openings of intelligibility as such – from which, as we shall see, worlds themselves may arise and entities acquire their respective being.<sup>12</sup>

However, the fact that attunement already played a structurally foundational role in Heidegger's SZ account of being-in(-the-world) makes the full import and nature of the change here at play not immediately transparent. After all, if SZ's disposedness captured the ground layer of Dasein's being-in-the-world, it is *prima facie* not clear what room there might be for the reworked account to go any deeper. Indeed, and accordingly, a natural tendency in interpreting Heidegger's re-elaboration of his conception of affectivity is to unwittingly flatten the novel

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<sup>12</sup> To mark this difference, in Heidegger's mid-1930s writings the word *Stimmung* is often replaced by *Gestimmtheit*, 'attunedness' – a lexical difference which, for simplicity, I will largely ignore in what follows. By 'attunement' I will simply refer to the revised 1930s notion, unless otherwise indicated.

account onto the earlier one. But this comes at the price, I contend, of failing to adequately grasp the philosophical development Heidegger is at pains to bring out in passages such as those just quoted. An instance of this general tendency, it seems to me, can be found in Withy's recent book-length treatment of affectivity in Heidegger. A brief examination of her account may help us better appreciate the interpretive stakes involved.

Withy offers a valuable reading of the SZ account. Her treatment of Heidegger's post-1930, reworked notion of fundamental attunement (*Grundstimmung*), however, appears to reduce it to a mere historical-communal extension of his earlier, individual Dasein-centred conception of attunement (see Withy 2024:40-42). Such a reading, however, is to be expected within an interpretive picture that, like Withy's, acknowledges no level of fundamentality in Heidegger's framework beyond that already countenanced in SZ. In such a picture, the revision of the SZ account of attunement in question could only be read as extending the account, as it were, horizontally (from the individual Dasein to a community of Daseins) rather than vertically (from one level of fundamentality to a more basic one). Accordingly, Withy sees Heidegger's 1930s fundamental attunements as concerning communities rather than individuals, but as doing essentially the same work as in SZ – namely, 'attun[ing] us to grounding phenomena' (*ibid.*:40, emphasis omitted) – and, crucially, doing so within the same basic framework (see *ibid.*:38-39), rather than within a framework itself reworked.

To see the root of the problem, let us look more closely at the overarching interpretive picture with which Withy operates, particularly her understanding of the structural relationship between the notions of being-in-the-world, world, and There (*Da*), as laid out in her recent treatment of Heidegger on unconcealment. There she writes:

Dasein's disclosing [...] illuminates a *there*: a clearing, open, or world within which entities can show up [...]. Opening up this clearing is Dasein's *being*-there, being-in-the-world, disclosing, clearing, dwelling, sojourning, or transcending.

(Withy 2022:76, original emphases)

Here, in line with her methodological commitment to what she characterises as 'a robust continuity in Heidegger's thought from early to late' (*ibid.*:4), Withy bundles together a host of notions which she sees, 'notwithstanding the obvious changes and differences over time' (*ibid.*), as ultimately equivalent. Yet it is precisely at this foundational juncture in her reading of Heidegger, I submit, that she forecloses the resources needed to capture Heidegger's mid-

1930s rethinking of affect. For here she collapses the two levels between which we need to distinguish if such rethinking is to come into view.

This can be seen most clearly when Withy's last quotation is compared directly with 1930s Heideggerian statements such as the following:

Being-in-the-world is an essential *consequence* of being-there – [i.e. of] what forms world – grounds earth – attainment-through-strife [*Erstreitung*] – origin.

(GA73.1:334, emphasis altered)

Here the SZ notion of being-in-the-world is explicitly construed as dependent on a more fundamental level, namely that at which being-there (Da-sein), in its 1930s sense (more on which below), is properly situated. In the same vein, in a contemporaneous retrospective reflection on the inadequacies of his SZ methodology, Heidegger writes:

[I]t is [...] erroneous to take being-in-the-world as a basis (as basic constitution) and to gain the concept of world through an isolating analysis of its 'structural moments' – among them 'world'. Rather, the other way round. World [...] essences as There, and only this There (truth) essences in insistence – on which the so-called 'being-in-the-world' is first grounded.

(GA82:59)

While reserving a detailed gloss on the picture Heidegger thereby outlines for later in the thesis, it already emerges how the structural relations and level distinctions he articulates here undermine the kind of grouping on which Withy bases her reading of Heidegger. Schematically, Withy claims, following SZ:

(0.a) Dasein's being-there = being-in-the-world = opening up of the There;

(0.b) There = clearing = world,

where the number (0) is intended to indicate that the level at issue is the most basic level of unconcealing that Withy's reading of Heidegger countenances.<sup>13</sup> The lettering, on the other hand, distinguishes between (a) Dasein's unconcealing constitution/comportment and (b) what such constitution/comportment inherently relates to (i.e. what it unconceals).

Now, however, as the quoted passages indicate, mid-1930s Heidegger holds:

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<sup>13</sup> What she refers to as 'third-plank unconcealing'. See the table at Withy (2022:161).

- (0.a\*) Dasein's being-there = insisting in the There,  
(0.b\*) There = world(-formation) (and earth-grounding);

and it is only on the basis and as a consequence of the latter starred pair that there arises

- (1) being-in-the-world.

This bare schema will be enriched below. But even by itself it clearly brings out that 1930s Heidegger comes to regard the notion of being-in-the-world as derivative of a prior level in a novel tiered picture of Dasein's openness – as my distinction between levels (0) and (1) indicates. Withy's reconstruction, however, is not sufficiently fine-grained to track such a distinction. And this has significant consequences for her account's ability to capture Heidegger's reconstrual of affectivity. For her overall approach leads her, inevitably, to keep SZ's being-in-the-world structure fixed as fundamental. Affect is one of the constitutive moments of such structure. Withy is therefore bound to keep affect where SZ had positioned it. But in contrast to this positioning, 1936 Heidegger is explicit that

[a]ttunement [...] must be taken back into the grounding of being itself – out of the context of being-in-the-world and of the human being's authentic existentiell selfhood and completely out of everydayness[.]  
(GA82:85, emphasis omitted)

Ultimately, Withy's basic interpretive assumptions stiffen her account and deprive it of the theoretical flexibility required to capture Heidegger's 1930s reworking of the SZ picture. There is simply no place in her interpretive framework to accommodate the shift in his conception of affect.

What, then, is missing from Withy's picture? What does the level on which being-in-the-world now depends amount to? And what is the role of attunement in this? Above, I preliminarily introduced the layer to which Heidegger now shifts his analysis as that at which contexts of intelligibility are constituted. The role of attunement in such a process would be to bring about the basic opening that underlies and informs this constitution. Let us now look more closely at what this might mean.

## 1.2 From Openings to Contexts

By context of intelligibility (or, equivalently, of sense-making), I refer to what might be characterised as a whole, self-enclosed, internally integrated and coherent way in which things make sense according to a unified governing pattern. In this sense, metaphysical epochs, as Heidegger construes them, count as natural instances of such contexts. Note, however, that contexts of intelligibility as characterised need not be governed by all-encompassing determinations of the being of entities as such and as a whole, such as metaphysical determinations of being(ness) (*Seiendheit*) define within metaphysical epochs.<sup>14</sup> Accordingly, the notion of a context of intelligibility picks out a broader category, of which metaphysical epochs form a special subset.

In particular, it is consistent with the features I have ascribed to such contexts that they be local and transient – or, more accurately, aware of themselves as such. For note that there is a clear sense in which metaphysical epochs may themselves be local and transient.<sup>15</sup> Thus, the post-Platonic Greek metaphysical epoch is local in that it coexists with modalities of sense-making alien to it – e.g. those of communities beyond the reach of the Greek world. And it is transient in that it eventually gives way to another metaphysical epoch that is irreducible to it, namely the Christian epoch. Nevertheless, it is an integral part of its being a metaphysical epoch that the determination of beingness that governs it purports to apply universally and atemporally. Metaphysical epochs, that is, embody a claim to the exclusive bindingness of their governing pattern of intelligibility. That non-metaphysical contexts of intelligibility may be aware of themselves as local and transient, then, means that they do not have such a claim built into them. The notion of a context of intelligibility is thus apt to apply to self-consciously spatially and temporally discrete regions of intelligibility, such as those that the later Heidegger would construe as locally-temporarily gathered by things ‘thinging’, such as the jug of his well-known example.<sup>16</sup> ‘Context’ strikes me as an appropriate terminological choice here for two main reasons. First, because of its etymological connotations of unity (*con-*, ‘together’)

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<sup>14</sup> For an account of which, see Wrathall (2021e).

<sup>15</sup> I say ‘may’ rather than ‘are’, for one way of construing the so-called ‘greatest danger’ of the technological metaphysical epoch is precisely that it may forfeit the features of locality and transience that previous, non-technological metaphysical epochs, despite themselves as it were, necessarily carry. On the greatest danger, see Thomson (2011:196-200).

<sup>16</sup> See GA7:168ff.

combined with inner structure (*-texere*, ‘to weave’). Secondly, because the term is apt to capture the idea of a relational whole that contributes essentially to the signification of its constituent units.<sup>17</sup>

My characterisation of a context of intelligibility in terms of self-enclosedness, internal integration, and coherence according to a unified pattern implies that a context’s inner structure enjoys a relatively high degree of determinacy. Intuitively, there must be a strongly characterising way in which one context of sense-making is *the* context it is, in contradistinction to other contexts. Without a sufficiently high degree of determinacy, contexts would tend to blur into one another. This intuitive sense is notoriously elusive and difficult to cash out. The notion best suited to the task remains, as far as I can see, that of style.<sup>18</sup> Roughly, then, contexts of intelligibility are such insofar as the way in which things make sense within them achieves the level of determinacy required of a distinctive style – where, generalising on Dreyfus’s (2005) account, we could attempt to formally characterise the relevant sense of style, at first pass, as consisting of (a) a coordination of the ways things make sense within a given context C, (b) a determination of the ways things matter in C, and (c) that which is transferred across sub-regions of C.

Our concern, however, is not with a detailed analysis of what constitutes a full-fledged context of intelligibility, but rather with how such a context, understood along the general lines provided so far, may come to be established at all. (And this, again, as a way of grasping the prior level on which being-in-the-world is to be seen as dependent.) Accordingly, what we are after is not giving a set of conditions for when a candidate context becomes sufficiently determined in its internal structure to count as one, i.e. to exhibit a distinctive style. Rather, it is to recognise that some such, relatively high degree of determinacy is required for this, and then to inquire from what source and in what way such determinacy comes about in the first place.

It is the latter question, I submit, that best brings Heidegger’s revised conception of attunement into focus. *Contexts* of intelligibility are seen by him as arising by construction from an initial *opening* of sense. By ‘opening of sense’ I refer to what might be characterised as a primitive, or ground-level, layer in the construction of a regime (contextual or otherwise) of

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<sup>17</sup> Here my intentions are roughly in line with those motivating Backman (2015).

<sup>18</sup> On which, see Dreyfus (2005).

sense-making, enabling and informing such construction. Now, openings of sense are seen by Heidegger as first opened up by attunement and as irreducibly affective in nature. As he writes, '[a]ttunement is [...] originally opening in that it brings the breakout [*Ausbruch*]' into the open 'and sustains openness [*Offenheit*]' (GA82:77, emphases omitted). In their opening capacity, attunements are construed as furnishing an initial, preliminary *determinacy* to the ways in which things may make sense within the respective opening, without however fully determining any one such way – thus remaining, in a crucial sense, *indeterminate*. Thus, a context of intelligibility depends on an attuned opening of sense as its ultimate ground. Such opening, however, by itself underdetermines the context it makes possible. Attunement provides, as it were, loose contours and hints of structure to its attendant opening, upon which a more determinate construction may be based. Thus, while attunement has opening power,

it is not capable of building and developing. [...] Attunedness is indeterminate [*unbestimmt*] – indeed, it is precisely that of which it can be said, and only of which it can be said, that it is determinable-attunable [*be-stimmbar*][.] (GA82:77, emphasis omitted)

But what about attunement makes it suitable for such basic opening function, and how does attunement discharge it? The musical connotations of Heidegger's affective vocabulary lend themselves naturally to images of attunement tuning the underlying tonality of the relevant opening. These metaphorical resonances are indeed intended by Heidegger, who explicitly elaborates on them. Thus, e.g., he writes of attunement as a 'melody' that 'gives the pitch' (*den Ton angibt*) (GA29/30:101).<sup>19</sup> The idea of attunement as the musical key of a particular opening of sense effectively connotes its functioning as a basis of the respective opening, much as a key forms the basis of a musical composition. It also points to an elusiveness inherent in the essence of attunement, which is of a piece with its very fundamentality.<sup>20</sup> Despite its ultimately

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<sup>19</sup> See Withy's (2024:5) remarks and her linking attunement to 'what in English we might call "vibes"'.  
<sup>20</sup> The most compelling articulation of the inherently elusive dimension of affectivity and its centrality to Heidegger's project, as far as I can see, is provided by Pippin (2024). See e.g. his point that '[a]n attunement to the primordial is a resonance with the obscurity of the sources of possible and actual meaningfulness [...]. It is to be "gripped" by the elusiveness of this source and to live out the implications of this orientation' (68 fn. 56). In my estimation, however, a full account of the foundational role of attunement in Heidegger's charge against German idealism would itself be assisted by attention to the shift I foreground here between Heidegger's late-1920s and mid-1930s conceptions of affect. As I argue, the latter conception relies on theoretical resources irreducible to those of Heidegger's early philosophy – the only ones Pippin seems to me to be in a position to avail himself of. As with Withy above, this strikes me as a consequence of his assuming too strong a continuity between early and late Heidegger, leading him to underplay the extent of Heidegger's 1930s 'turn'.

elusive character, Heidegger does attempt, to the extent possible, to give further philosophical specification to the contribution attunements make to their openings.

Thus, in his mid-1930s writings, Heidegger construes attunement as bringing about a basic temporal and spatial texturing of its attendant opening of sense – a twofold dimensionality unified in what he refers to as time-space (*Zeit-Raum*).<sup>21</sup> His name in the period of our interest for what I call an affective opening is, accordingly, temporal-spatial leeway (*Zeit-Spiel-Raum*). This is a notion Heidegger more often appeals to than ever fully elaborates. A helpful clue, however, can be found in his 1934 Hölderlin lecture course, a text slightly earlier than our period of interest but largely in line with several of our main motifs. There, Heidegger sets himself the task of interpretively retrieving the attunement informing Hölderlin's hymn 'Germania'. He finds it in what he calls a tonality of 'holy mourning, in readied distress'. This names a grief that Hölderlin gives voice to in response to the acknowledgement that the gods of old have fled, combined with an afflicted but resolute expectation of the gods to come. The relevant point for us is that this affective disposition is inherently such as to arrange *temporal* relationships in a way that prefigures how things may or may not make sense to one so disposed. Thus, the recognition of the irremediable pastness of the old gods directs one futurally towards the new gods that may yet arrive, thereby disposing one presently to the very attitude which may enable one to encounter them. In this sense, Heidegger writes that in such disposition,

there prevails an in-coming and still-essencing [*Zu-kommen und Noch-wesen*] (future and having-been) at once: originary time. The temporalising of this time is the fundamental happening of the attunement in which the poem is grounded. [...] [S]uch a time [...] trembles in the fundamental attunement – more truly said: *as* the said fundamental attunement[.]

(GA39:109, emphasis added)

The attunement Hölderlin articulates thus involves a certain basic positioning of human beings with respect to the gods, which in turn defines a certain network of basic temporal relationships, texturing a field of possible encounter. Within such field, things will be encountered in accordance with the temporality thereby defined, i.e. in the light of the underlying affective sense for the gods' present absence and possible future arrival. Things will

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<sup>21</sup> For an explicit statement, see e.g. GA65:375. But relevant citations could be multiplied.

ultimately matter, e.g., to the extent that they hint at such future arrival, or at what has been lost, or at the current state of deprivation, etc.

Analogous considerations apply to space. Thus, in the same text, Heidegger writes how the acceptance, embodied in the mentioned attunement, of the old gods' flight, properly understood, amounts precisely to a manner of 'abid[ing] alongside' the gods. This is so inasmuch as that recognition allows one to 'enter into and keep oneself purely within the space of possible new encounters with the gods' (GA39:97). We may elaborate on this as suggesting that the relation to the gods thereby gained is one in which appreciating their distance is precisely a distinctive manner of being close to them (see e.g. GA65:12, 412). The reciprocal positioning of humanity and divinity thus textures the field of sense along a spatial axis of basic determinations of nearness and farness. The network of temporal relationships is thus integrated by a corresponding network of spatial relationships. In this way, the attunement of mourning voiced in Hölderlin's poem is read as defining an intertwining array of determinations that preliminarily arrange the field of sense that the attunement itself opens up. The attunement, that is, opens up such field *as* so-and-so temporally-spatially textured.

In this sense, then, attunement, as Heidegger writes, 'transposes [*versetzt*] one in such a way that it co-grounds the time-space of the transposition itself' (GA45:154). This strikes me as a particularly effective formulation. The picture is not one in which we are brought by attunement into an independently occurring opening of sense, as a kind of self-subsisting container into which we would step. Rather, the opening itself comes into being (i.e. opens up) *as* we are carried into it by our tuning into the relevant attunement. The attunement itself constitutes the very field into which it carries us, and constitutes it in and through its carrying us into it. As Heidegger notes:

Insertion [*Einrückung*] into the openness – it sounds misleading, as though the latter stood by in readiness, whereas the openness happens first and only with the displacement [*Verrückung*].

(GA65:304)

The peculiarly temporally-spatially textured leeway opened by Hölderlin's holy mourning has no subsistence beyond its being tuned into by human beings who come to be appropriately attuned. But by being tuned into, it emerges as the field in which, and according to whose texture only, everything is encounterable – oneself included. Roughly put, attunement is not

something into which we are brought, but rather that which, in seizing us, takes us away from where we were prior to its seizing us, and into an elsewhere that is brought about precisely as we are brought into it. Our natural language is receptive to this dynamic when we say that a certain mood, say joy, overtakes us. The idea of overtaking implies the suddenness and forcefulness of the occurrence, and positions us as passive recipients of it, with connotations of motion. Moods, such idioms suggest, can take us by surprise, take possession of us, and carry us away. As Heidegger puts it:

We usually say: 'We are put [*versetzt*] in such-and-such a mood [*Stimmung*]'. In truth, i.e., conceived from the originary essence of being, it is the other way round: it is the attunement [*Stimmung*] that transposes [*versetzt*] us in such-and-such a way into this-and-that fundamental reference to entities as such. More precisely: *attunement is that which trans-poses* [dieses Ver-setzende][.]

(GA45:154, original emphasis)

Note how this transposing character that 1930s Heidegger ascribes to the essence of attunement is stronger than anything the SZ conception of affectivity can capture. In SZ, disposedness names the existentials by virtue of which I am always already so-and-so attuned to the world in which I find myself thrown. Such world is given to me as one whose establishment precedes me. Through disposedness, I am constitutively so that the significances (*Bedeutsamkeiten*) that make up the internal structure of such world may or may not be salient as mattering to me, according to the attunement in which I happen to be. At one extreme, in the attunement of anxiety, the totality of all such significances may cease to matter to me. Thus, in SZ, attunements are manners of affective relationship to a certain given worldly structure. Transitioning from one attunement to another (i.e. undergoing a retunement, *Umstimmung*) will make me differentially responsive to such structure, so that different subsets of its significances may come to salience for me and ground correspondingly different possibilities of projection. But no such transition can amount to a transposition *from* the given worldly structure of significance as a whole *to* an entirely different such structure. At most, in anxiety, I can become disanchored from the structure in its entirety – but in a way that, crucially, still keeps me in a relationship with it, albeit a thoroughly privative one.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> In anxiety, '[t]he world in which I exist has sunk to insignificance, and the world thus disclosed can only release entities in the character of non-affordance' (SZ:343).

The post-SZ conception of attunement as transposition, by contrast, allows for precisely the kind of more radical repositioning that SZ does not. A retunement may now amount *either* to a different affective relationship to the field of sense in which I find myself (the world into which I am thrown), as in SZ, *or* to a transposition into a different (temporally-spatially textured) field of sense (itself, as we shall see, a candidate for worldhood). In the former case, by retuning, I am thrown differently (within the same opening). In the latter case, by retuning, I am thrown differently *and* elsewhere (i.e. into a different opening). Thus, on Heidegger's reworking of his picture of affectivity, attunement remains construed, in continuity with SZ, as a receptive moment of pre-discursive affective exposure. But such exposure is not limited to the significances available within the worldly framework in which I am already situated. Rather, in a way that will become clearer below, it is deepened into an exposure to the very source from which a worldly framework may arise at all. As Heidegger sums up his revised conception vis-à-vis SZ's:

Attunement not [as in SZ] as disposedness of being-human and as only related to the accessibility and affection of what is in front of one [*des Gegenüber*], but rather as attunement of being [...].

(GA82:79, emphasis omitted)

Above, I introduced the notion of contexts of intelligibility. We have now begun to chart the way Heidegger construes attunement as the opening of the basic leeway for a context of intelligibility to be projected upon. We have seen how this is achieved through an affective texturing of the thereby-opening field along temporal and spatial axes. This preliminary texturing functions as a basic blueprint that imparts an initial determinacy to the newly opened field. However, as mentioned, such initial determinacy falls short of the full-fledged determinacy required for a context of intelligibility, i.e. one exhibiting a distinctive style. The affective opening of time-space is thus Heidegger's way of capturing the philosophically elusive notion of an indeterminacy that does not amount to a mere lack of any determinacy – 'a merely undifferentiable indeterminacy', as Pippin (2024:209) puts it – without however being univocally determinable. Attunement, as Heidegger will write in 1941, 'attunes for the ownmost determinacy of the indeterminate' (GA71:217).

The incipiently determinate character of an affective opening is precisely what makes it fit to function as the blueprint for a novel context of intelligibility. As such, attunement

amounts to a necessary but insufficient condition for such a context. What it stands in need of is a more determinate working out of its incipient blueprint for structure. Heidegger's mid-1930s term for the kind of construction whereby an initial affective opening gets unfolded into what ultimately becomes a context of intelligibility, is projection (*Entwerfung*). Thus, as he writes, 'attunement [...] and projection make up insistence' (GA82:80, emphases omitted) – where insistence (*Inständigkeit*), at a first pass, is Heidegger's name for the stance whereby the human being is knowingly positioned in (in-sists, 'stands within') the opening that is to be constructed.<sup>23</sup>

Here, of course, the notion of projection (*Entwerfung*) is an elaboration of SZ's notion of project (*Entwurf*). In a way analogous to what we have seen with attunement, the earlier notion is taken by Heidegger back one level. We move *from* the context of the practical projectuality of a human being in the world, structured by the existentials of understanding (SZ I.1), *to* a projection seen as more fundamentally shaping the very world in which the human being finds itself to begin with. As Heidegger retrospectively writes:

In *Being and Time*, we encountered project and built understanding into it [...]. [There, i]t remains veiled: that understanding is precisely *no longer* – projecting. Although – nay, precisely *because* it is dependent on a project. For understanding precisely does not concern itself with the project, [but rather] in each case it only settles into one, slows down the throw and brings it to *stand*.

(GA73.1:619, original emphases)

SZ's Dasein 'settles into' a project insofar as it finds itself always already at home in an articulated world that it can and must take for granted (in the way SZ I.1 then carries out an existential analytic of). But that Dasein *can* find itself at home in the world, *only* because a prior articulation for it to settle into has preliminarily taken place and become established. It is that prior articulation, on which SZ I.1 tacitly depends, that Heidegger's reworked notion of projection seeks to capture.

Here, the deepening of Heidegger's mid-1930s picture vis-à-vis SZ, to which I have referred, stands out in stark relief. SZ's existential analytic traced the human capacity to always already encounter intelligible entities (i.e. to encounter anything *as* something) back to structures constitutive of the human mode of being (i.e. existential structures), which functioned transcendently as conditions of the possibility of such encounter. The human

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<sup>23</sup> On insistence, see Gutschmidt (2021).

being was thereby investigated in terms of the (ultimately, temporal) structures that make it inherently capable of relating understandingly, in a pre-thematic way, to the being of entities. However, while such structures enable and govern Dasein's understanding of being, they say nothing about that which is understood in such understanding. What makes it the case that being *itself* is inherently articulated in the way that Dasein, thanks to its existential structures, is able to pre-thematically understand? SZ's analysis ultimately fails to address this question.<sup>24</sup> Addressing it necessarily takes philosophical analysis to a plane that such framework, as we have it, does not encompass.

Here we can appreciate more fully than before how Withy's above-mentioned approach to Heidegger on affect, predicated as it is on her broader assumption of a continuity between the early and late Heidegger – in particular, on a reading whereby being-in-the-world remains the basic structure of human being – cannot adequately capture Heidegger's reworked conception of affect (and, for that matter, of the human relationship to the intelligible as such). The possibility of being-in-the-world depends on a prior projective construction of the very context in which Dasein can exist *qua* being-in-the-world, a construction that unfolds an initial affective opening.

Note that such an opening defines a more fundamental sense of human thrownness than that recognised (and recognisable) in SZ. Indeed, and consistently, SZ construed thrownness precisely in terms of being-in-the-world:

This being-character of Dasein [...] we call the thrownness of this entity into its There, in such a way that, as being-in-the-world, it is the There.

(SZ:135, emphasis omitted)

But the fact that being-in-the-world *itself* ultimately depends on the human being's basic affective exposure to the intelligible as such implies that, as Heidegger now puts it,

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<sup>24</sup> At least, SZ in the unfinished form in which it was published. The qualification is required because a version of such questions would presumably have been thematised in the book's never-completed Division Three. *Thematised* – although of course, Heidegger's turning away from the SZ project was at least partly motivated by the impossibility, as he came to see it, of adequately *settling* them within that framework. Sheehan (2014) writes: 'It could be argued that after writing *Being and Time* [...], Heidegger spent the next fifty years formulating and reformulating [...] what was to have been the subject matter of SZ I.3' (195). My reading of the way Heidegger's mid-1930s project relates to SZ is in keeping with this line of interpretation, with which I am sympathetic. An exhaustive treatment of this relationship I must reserve for future work. For an insightful account of the ways the projected SZ I.3 eventually morphs into Heidegger's later thought, in addition to Sheehan's own, see Backman (2015).

‘[t]hrownness – [has] its “truth” in attunedness’ (GA82:79, emphasis omitted). As we have begun to see, it is the projective construction of human attunement – i.e. of thrownness more fundamentally understood – that makes being-in-the-world possible in the first place. It is in this sense that 1930s Heidegger can state that ‘[t]hrownness of projection [...] *enables* [...] *disposedness and understanding*’ (GA82:84-85, original emphases). This is something that, once again, an exegetical picture like Withy’s lacks the resources to grasp. For the only way such a picture could make sense of thrownness and projection is precisely, as in SZ, in terms of disposedness and understanding themselves – thereby collapsing two different levels that mid-1930s (and indeed later) Heidegger’s thinking requires us to distinguish, in order that one can ground the other.

### 1.3 Projection as Articulation and Sheltering

The need for projection to constructively unfold attunement defines a picture of Kantian reminiscence in which a moment of receptivity, represented by the human being’s initial affective opening, must be integrated by a corresponding moment of spontaneity, carried out through human doing. Thus, while the kind of opening (i.e. its tonality as well as its basic temporal-spatial texturing) in which the human being gets affectively transposed is not for it to decide,

[i]t is, nevertheless, up to the human being’s freedom how and to what extent it transforms and grounds that attunement, which strikes it from beyng, into its determination, and thus moulds its own essence in each case into a determinate form.

(GA66:236)

Now this free projective construction takes place, at bottom, by means of embodying the attunement, hence the leeway it opens and textures, into an entity. And this is where the role of the work enters Heidegger’s picture. As he writes:

[T]he attuning of the attunement [...] must be brought to essence in the work, *through* the construction and structuring [*Erbauung und Fügung*] of Da-*sein* itself.

(GA82:98, original emphases)

Importantly, since an affective opening is not itself an entity objectively determined in its properties, there is no neutral, purely procedural way of doing so. There could in principle be no mere representation or depiction of the opening that would correctly render it, for there is nothing about it to represent or depict. Rather, the opening's embodiment into an entity is an inherently interpretive, creative act: 'Da-sein is not at all something given – nor can it be found – it must be "carried out" (created)' (GA82:39, emphasis omitted). The freedom at issue in the task of determining attunement is the freedom of human creativity.<sup>25</sup>

Thus, a *work* in Heidegger's sense is, at a first pass, an entity so shaped that it successfully creatively embodies an underlying affective opening. Unpacking this idea *in concreto* requires more theoretical resources than we yet have at our disposal. In Chapter 3, I will develop such resources and explore the issue in detail with reference to Heidegger's own example of a Greek temple, which I will argue to be a creative embodiment of an attunement of (what Heidegger calls) wonder. For now, let us note in the abstract that creative embodiment is a twofold achievement. First, the opening's incipient, determinately indeterminate texturing is creatively worked out into a more determinate configuration of intelligibility. Secondly, the (so-and-so determined) opening is preserved against closure, by being made retrievable through an appropriate experiential encounter with the entity which embodies its determination. I will distinguish the two by referring to the former achievement (i.e. working out) as 'articulation' and to the latter (i.e. preserving-as-open), following Heidegger, as 'sheltering' (*Bergung*).<sup>26</sup> Yet they are inherently related. On the one hand, there is no other way of preserving an opening by making it retrievable than to give it some determinate form or other (no sheltering without articulation). Conversely, such determinate form could not count as a determination *of* the opening which makes it possible without thereby preserving it in the process, and consequently making it retrievable via its determination (no articulation without sheltering). In what follows, I will primarily speak of projection *simpliciter*, understanding the notion as encompassing both articulation and sheltering.

This gives further substance to the way in which the kind of projection a work embodies differs fundamentally from what SZ analyses under the rubric of project. SZ's

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<sup>25</sup> And, in Heidegger's reworked picture, the most fundamental sense of human freedom itself: '[F]reedom is nothing other than this [...] grounding of the truth of being in the sense of its safekeeping in entities' (GA66:236).

<sup>26</sup> On which, see GA65:389ff.

Dasein, by virtue of the existentials of understanding, projects upon possibilities. The very availability of such possibilities *as* possibilities, however, depends on the prior projection, in and through a work, of a context of intelligibility within which they may make whatever sense they do make. In this respect, the revised notion of projection concerns the ‘formation of possibility as such in general’ (GA73.1:623) in and through a work. The SZ conception of project depends on the 1930s conception of projection. Correspondingly, being-in-the-world depends on a prior work. We began to see this above in the quote in which Heidegger construed SZ’s understanding as always ‘settling into’ an already given project. That passage continues:

Under-standing does not open a path – but rather seals it off – and what is understood is not held in the open – but is instead included in the familiar. / To understand is to bring to a stand – to level. [...] *Understanding of being* [Seinsverständnis] – as the project-of-*being* that has been set still – set aside and away.  
(GA73.1:619, original emphases)

For Dasein to enjoy the kind of ‘deep familiarity’ (Pippin 2024:36) with its world that is part and parcel of SZ’s account of projective understanding, the prior articulative projection on which its possibility depends must already have been assumed as firmly in place. Dasein’s SZ-projectuality thus involves a stabilisation of what is, more fundamentally, a matter of free projection. In such a process, we might say, familiarity is bought at the price of creative projectability.

The hardening of a projection into taken-for-granted acquaintance conceals its more fundamental status *as* projection. It thereby conceals what Heidegger sees as the projection’s inherently *contestable* character. We have seen that any projection of an attunement is and must be fundamentally interpretive. But precisely *qua* interpretive, it is non-definitive and always to some extent open-ended.<sup>27</sup> As we shall see, the projection of an affective opening into a context of intelligibility comes in degrees and layers and different modalities. Heidegger’s ontological construal of artworks turns out to be of a piece with a specification of the distinctive way in which artworks participate in such projective process.

Thus, Dasein’s being-in-the-world, as analysed in SZ, is and must be grasped as downstream of a dynamic of inherently contestable construction of an opening of sense.

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<sup>27</sup> In this sense, creative projection grounds intelligibility in precisely the opposite way to that which metaphysical foundationalism strives to achieve.

Dasein's ability to fluidly navigate its world – i.e. the possibility of what Dreyfus has influentially labelled 'skillful coping' (1990:67) – presupposes a prior bracketing of precisely the possibility of fundamental challenge inherent in the projection structuring said world – as I put it above, of its very status *as* projection. Predictably, this goes hand in hand with a revised understanding of the very notion of Dasein. This is evidenced by the fact that, from the 1930s onwards, Heidegger begins to consistently hyphenate the term, linguistically marking a discontinuity with its previous usage. At a first pass, to 'be there' (*da sein*), in Heidegger's mid-1930s sense, is for the human being to be responsive to an affective opening's need for projection and to explicitly take it over by taking part in the contentious dynamics of its projection.<sup>28</sup> 'Da-sein' no longer names, like 'Dasein' in SZ, the human being in its mode of being. Rather, it names the affective opening of intelligibility to which the human being, by virtue of its mode of being, is implicitly inherently related – and names it precisely to the extent to which (if at all) the human being comes to relate to it, no longer merely implicitly, but in an explicit uptake.<sup>29</sup> For mid-1930s Heidegger, to 'be there' means for the human being to positively and expressly take up the underlying constitutive human relation to being, a relation occurring in and through an affective opening of intelligibility as such. The affective opening, thus taken up, is what 'Da-sein' labels.<sup>30</sup> But to take it up is learning to experience the opening and attempting to sustain it – a sustaining which, in turn, necessarily entails its contentious interpretive projection in some modality: "The contesting of the strife is Da-sein. / Da-sein happens in the modes of the sheltering of truth" (GA65:30, emphasis omitted). In his notes, Heidegger sums up the picture I have sketched:

Attunement belongs to the There as such. Attunedness concerns Da-sein. Determinacy refers to the attuned Da-sein – insistence – is determinable and determined on the ground of its attunedness [...] the awakening [*Erweckung*] of attunement in the There by the creators – the attunedness which they are given as a gift [*geschenkt*].  
(GA82:77, original emphasis)

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<sup>28</sup> 'Da-sein as contesting of the strife and thus of the in-between' (GA82:110); 'Da-sein [is] not only the open – not only the domain-like – but the essencing of strife itself' (GA73.1:341).

<sup>29</sup> Which may not come to pass. If so, 'Da-sein' would remain without any instantiation. Indeed, Heidegger sometimes takes the view that Da-sein has *never* been instantiated in (Western) history. Thus, e.g.: 'Being-human is not necessarily and always, and has so far never at all been, Da-sein' (GA82:56, emphases omitted). On this passage, see Polt (2020).

<sup>30</sup> Above, I identified my notion of an affective opening with Heidegger's mid-1930s notion of time-space (or temporal-spatial leeway). Note that the notion of Da-sein is intimately related, but not equivalent, to that of time-space. 'Da-sein' names time-space *qua* explicitly taken up by the human being. Time-space *per se* does not imply explicit uptake.

The idea that the initial affective opening be gifted (or endowed, bestowed) aptly highlights the moment of receptivity inherent in it. The gifted attunement may be awakened as a result of its creative projection – something we will return to when discussing Heidegger’s conception of artistic experience (see Chapter 4). In this passage, Heidegger explicitly construes projection as a determination of the underlying attunement, and explicitly links the novel sense of the human being’s ‘being there’ to an active enactment of such determining – a moment of activity Heidegger often highlights, as he does here, by italicising the verbal element of the compound (*Da-sein*).

One key modality of such projection is, as mentioned, projection through work. I glossed Heidegger’s notion of work as referring to an entity shaped in such a way that it successfully creatively embodies an underlying affective opening, thereby projecting it in the twofold, interrelated sense of working it out more determinately (i.e. articulation) and preserving it while making it retrievable as open (i.e. sheltering). With such specifications, however, the question arises as to how such picture could be reconciled with the account of works Heidegger gives in OWA. For it would strike any reader of that essay that the language in which Heidegger’s account of the work is couched there seems to have little overlap with that of the account so far drawn. This might give the impression that there is also little *theoretical* overlap between the two. But this impression would be misleading. To show how the two accounts fit together, however, requires some further steps. Having set the stage with a preliminary discussion of the basic coordinates of Heidegger’s renewed account of the affective grounds of sense, I will now turn to OWA itself, with the aim of showing how OWA ultimately depends on such account. To do so, I will take OWA on its own terms and show that its internal theoretical mechanics require that account as a foundation. I will begin in the next section by arguing that OWA lacks the resources to ground the claims about art it advances. Having proceeded from the bottom up, i.e. from the notion of an affective opening to the work as its projection, we will now proceed from the top down to see how the work, as OWA construes it, stands in need of a foundation – one which, I will argue in the following chapters, is found precisely in affective openings as I construe them.

## 1.4 Whence the Pull Towards the Work?

In OWA, Heidegger famously construes the work in terms of a peculiar conceptual apparatus and set of claims. Let us review them very schematically. An entity is a work insofar as it sets up (*aufstellt*) a world (GA5:31) and sets forth (*herausstellt*) the earth (*ibid.*:32). In so doing, the work instigates (*anstiftet*) a strife (*Streit*) between world and earth and lets it be contested (*bestritten*) (*ibid.*:35-36). Such strife is the distinctive way in which world and earth relate to each other (*ibid.*:50). By being at strife, that is, they are united in a relationship of contentious (*strittig*) intimacy (*Innigkeit*). The pattern by which they achieve intimacy is what Heidegger calls a rift (*Riß*) (*ibid.*:51). Creating a work is a matter of embedding the rift (*Riß*) in and through the work's figure (*Gestalt*) (*ibid.*:51). Now, the world-earth strife is an essential step in the way in which truth essences (*wes*) (*ibid.*:50). Therefore, by embedding the world-earth rift through its figure, the work thereby establishes (*einrichtet*) truth in the midst of entities. The work thus lets truth happen (*geschehen*) (*ibid.*:49) in and through itself – to the extent that the work is preserved. A preserved work works as a work (*ibid.*:54).

In the course of the next chapters, each of these claims will receive interpretive clarification. For the purposes of this section, what matters is to appreciate, at a purely structural level, how OWA lacks a foundation. The overview just given served to introduce OWA's main claims and terminology, in terms of which I will now approach OWA's internal structure.

In OWA, Heidegger claims that the work lets truth happen. The happening of truth involves a world-earth strife. The work functions by letting such strife be contested:

Setting up a world and setting forth the earth, the work is the contesting of that strife in which the unconcealment of entities as a whole, truth, is striven forth [*erstritten*].

(GA5:42)

The essential connection between work and truth, then, depends on the essential connection between world-earth strife and truth. The latter connection, however, depends on a further, 'primal' or 'ur'-strife (*Urstreit*), which is itself (a more fundamental) part of the happening of truth. Ur-strife is a strife, not between world and earth, but between clearing (*Lichtung*) and concealing (*Verbergung*). Thus:

Earth only protrudes through the world, world is only grounded on earth, insofar as truth happens as the ur-strife of clearing and concealing.

(GA5:42)

The statement of this formal dependence of (world-earth) strife on (clearing-concealing) ur-strife raises the further question of what exactly the nature and grounds of such dependence are supposed to be. However, when it comes to explaining the relationship between the two forms of strife, OWA leaves us with little to work with. Indeed, stripped to its core, what the essay has to say about it ultimately amounts to the negative assertion that the two forms of strife are not the same. Thus:

The world is not simply the open which corresponds to the clearing, the earth is not the closed which corresponds to the concealing. [...] World and earth are [...] litigious and disputable [*streitig und streitbar*]. Only as such do they enter into the strife of clearing and concealing.

(GA5:42)

Now, suppose we were to accept Heidegger's claim that the work lets truth happen by letting the world-earth strife be contested. We would still be owed an explanation as to *why* truth (i.e. clearing-concealing ur-strife) *needs* the world-earth strife, hence the work, to happen. Short of that, we would be left with an explanatory gap. OWA, however, merely states the difference between the two forms of strife and the dependence of one on the other. But this means that it fails to provide the required explanation. As I will argue, this fact, which seems to have gone unnoticed in the scholarship to date, is ripe with implications for the adequate interpretation of the account OWA advances.

Ultimately, the explanatory gap in OWA arises from the fact that OWA omits a full account of truth as ur-strife. Indeed, this omission seems to be highlighted by Heidegger himself, in a telling retrospective remark. At a point in OWA where the question of how truth happens is explicitly posed, the official answer reads:

[...] insofar as truth happens as the ur-strife of clearing and concealing. But how does truth happen? We answer: it happens in few essential ways. One of these ways in which truth happens is the work's work-being.

(GA5:42)

To this purported answer, however, later Heidegger retorts: 'Not an answer, because the question remains: what is this [something] that happens in ways?' (*ibid.*:42 fn. b).<sup>31</sup> To the latter

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<sup>31</sup> This remark, included in the GA edition of OWA from a set of *marginalia* that Heidegger considered particularly important, has 1960 as its *terminus post quem*. See the editor's note at GA5:378-79.

question, as we shall presently see in more detail, OWA provides no satisfactory reply. Unless we know *what* this something is that happens (among other essential ways) through the work, we will not know *why* it *can* happen through the work. The claim that the happening of truth amounts to a clearing-concealing ur-strife does not remedy the deficiency, unless we are also told how the happening of such ur-strife itself requires a world-earth strife in order to unfold. This, however, Heidegger does not tell us. Thus, when all is said and done, OWA lacks an account of what truth is, such that the world-earth strife – hence the work, *qua* letting such strife be contested – is needed for it to happen.

To see this, consider the point in OWA where Heidegger comes closest to providing the required account. It occurs in the context of his discussion of artistic creation. There, he asks precisely a version of the question we are now seeking an answer to:

What is truth, however, such that it must happen in something like a created [thing]? To what extent does truth, on the ground of its essence, have a pull [*Zug*] towards the work? Can this be grasped out of the essence of truth that has been elucidated so far [i.e. as clearing-concealing]?

(GA5:48)

A full answer to these questions would amount to the required account of what it is about truth (*qua* ur-strife) that makes it need a work (*qua* contesting of strife). It would be a story about the nature and grounds of such inherent connection, capable of discharging the metaphor Heidegger employs in this passage of truth being ‘pulled’, by virtue of its own essence, ‘towards’ the work. Heidegger, however, stops short of completing this task. Let us see how.

Heidegger begins with the claim that ur-strife brings about an open(ing) (*Offene*), in each case so-and-so determined (what above I referred to as an opening of sense) (see GA5:48). He then continues as follows (call the following passage E, for ‘establishment’, and its three constituent sentences accordingly):

[E<sub>1</sub>] The openness [*Offenheit*] of this open, i.e. truth, can only be what it is, namely *this* openness, if and for as long as it establishes itself [*sich einrichtet*] in its open. [E<sub>2</sub>] That is why, in this open, an entity must always be in which the openness takes its stand and its constancy. [E<sub>3</sub>] By occupying [*besetzen*] the open, the openness holds it open and sustains it.

(GA5:48, original emphasis)

It is in this passage that the key derivation of the necessity of (an entity such as)<sup>32</sup> the work from the nature of truth is purportedly made in OWA. Shortly thereafter, Heidegger will say more about *how* the establishment takes place. This will be the point, which I summarised above, about the world-earth rift being embodied in the work's figure (see GA5:51). But everything Heidegger has to say about *why* this should take place is completely encapsulated in the passage just quoted. It is solely on the strength of the derivation there made that, in the continuation of the passage, after noting that there are different kinds of entities in which truth can be established, he feels entitled to conclude:

*Because* it belongs to the essence of truth that it establishes itself in entities in order thereby to first become truth, *therefore* in the essence of truth there lies the pull towards the work as a distinctive possibility for truth itself to be in being [*seiend*] amidst entities.

(GA5:50, emphases altered)

The essential requirement for truth to be established amidst entities, however, had not been adequately motivated by Heidegger. If it had been, the three sentences constitutive of passage E above, which contains the supposed derivation of the need for establishment from the essence of truth, would have to amount to an argument for this requirement. But they do not. Indeed, E<sub>1</sub> amounts to an unargued-for assertion of the requirement itself. What it says, in effect, is that truth, as so-and-so determined, requires establishment. But it does not tell us why. E<sub>2</sub> then only derives from E<sub>1</sub> the claim that, so long as there is truth, there must always be some entity such that it performs the establishment. Lastly, E<sub>3</sub> only says more about the relationship between truth *qua* established and the attendant opening (namely, that truth is that by virtue of which the opening is and remains the opening it is).

Thus, in asking what it is about truth that makes it require works for it to happen, we reach the theoretical boundaries of OWA. Nowhere in it is an account given that would vindicate the claim that the clearing-concealing ur-strife requires a world-earth strife, hence a work as a way for such strife to be contested, in order to take place. At its theoretical core, what OWA does is (1) to state (not argue) *that* ur-strife requires strife, hence work (or

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<sup>32</sup> As mentioned, the work is one of a plurality of (kinds of) entities in which truth gets established. OWA's well-known list follows shortly after the last-quoted passage, at GA5:49. The plurality of the modes of establishment does not affect the point at issue here, since in OWA Heidegger offers no further derivation of the *work's* necessity for truth in addition to the broader derivation of the necessity of an *establishing entity* (be it the work or another) for truth.

equivalently, that truth requires establishment), and then (2) to construe the ontology of artwork accordingly (by telling us *how* work lets strife be contested).

This does not imply that Heidegger had no account to offer to underpin OWA. If it did, OWA would be theoretically groundless. What it does imply is that the required account is not part of OWA itself. This means that OWA depends on some more fundamental account, capable of grounding what OWA presupposes. Indeed, this circumstance is hinted at by Heidegger himself in the essay. And it is no coincidence that this hint should come just after passage E. Thus, after stating the requirement for truth (or openness) to establish itself, he writes:

With the reference to the self-establishing of openness in the open, thinking touches on a domain that here cannot yet be explicated. Let only this be noted, that if the essence of the unconcealment of entities belongs in some way to being itself (cf. SZ §44), [then] the latter, from its essence, lets the leeway [*Spielraum*] of openness (the clearing of the There) happen and introduces it as *that* in which, in its own way, each entity emerges.

(GA5:48-49, original emphasis)

In the light of what we have just seen, we can appreciate how by ‘here’, in the first sentence of the quoted passage, Heidegger does not mean: *at this particular point in the essay*. Rather, he means: *in OWA as a whole*. The domain that ‘thinking’ ‘touches on’ ‘here’ is, ultimately, that thematised in *Contributions* under the rubric of essencing of being (*Wesung des Seyns*). It is a discussion of *that* domain which, by offering an account of the process whereby intelligibility as such takes place, will provide the resources for grasping why such process necessarily involves the kind of establishment that OWA presupposes but does not motivate. The later Heidegger himself implies as much in the Addendum to OWA he pens in 1956. There he cites the first sentence of the quoted passage and glosses it by saying that OWA as a whole ‘moves knowingly and yet unspokenly along the path of the question of the essencing of being’ (GA5:73), where I translate *Wesen* verbally.<sup>33</sup> We thus reach, starting from the central claims of OWA itself, the very juncture at which OWA is nested within the *Contributions* framework. This is, however, precisely the juncture we had already independently reached in the previous sections, starting from a consideration of Heidegger’s mid-1930s account of attunement and projection.

For all the richness of its account of the being of works in terms of the happening of truth, then, OWA lacks the resources to tell us just *why* works are needed for truth to happen.

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<sup>33</sup> Note that by 1956, Heidegger had abandoned the spelling ‘being’.

This is because it lacks the resources to tell us *why* truth requires *any* entity in order to happen – that is to say: the need for truth to be established is not motivated in OWA. What OWA tells us is: (i) *that* works are needed for truth to happen (i.e. *that* truth has an essential pull towards works), and correspondingly, *that* works let truth happen; (ii) *by virtue of what* the work lets truth happen (i.e. the world-earth strife); and (iii) *how* such letting takes place (i.e. by embedding the rift in the work’s figure).

What we need to underpin OWA is thus an account of the nature of truth that could justify what OWA calls its pull towards the work. Now, precisely this account is developed by Heidegger in *Contributions*, most directly in the section on ‘Grounding’. We should not be surprised, then, to find Heidegger noting in that section that ‘[t]he specific question concerning the “origin of the work of art” [is] extracted from this domain and therefore belonging here’ (GA65:392). Ultimately, underpinning OWA is Heidegger’s being-historical account of appropriation (*Ereignis*). This is brought out most effectively by Heidegger himself in statements such as the following (where it should be noted that ‘sheltering’ of truth, *Bergung*, is effectively the *Contributions*’ name for what OWA calls ‘establishment’ of truth, *Einrichtung*): ‘Sheltering is at bottom the preservation of appropriation through the contesting of strife’ (GA65:392). The fact that OWA does not motivate its basic assumptions about truth may thus be read as a decision on Heidegger’s part not to make public, in delivering the OWA lectures in 1936, the account of appropriation that underpinned them. The scope of the present project does not allow me to attempt a comprehensive reading of Heidegger’s account of appropriation, a task that would require its own separate study. What *can* be done, however, is to extend OWA’s account by bringing in enough of Heidegger’s broader framework to substantially motivate the foundational claims that we have seen as unmotivated in OWA – in particular, the claim that truth has a pull towards the work.<sup>34</sup> The needed supplementation, I suggest, can be provided by appealing to and developing the picture of the opening of sense as affective introduced in the previous sections. For, as I will argue, conceiving of such opening as affective provides precisely the resources for appreciating why and how something like a work would be needed for truth to take place.

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<sup>34</sup> In further work, I plan to integrate the reading offered in this study into an interpretation of Heidegger’s being-historical account of appropriation. See the Concluding Remarks.

## The Affective Grounds of Intelligibility

In the previous chapter, I began to suggest that a conception of openings of sense as affective could successfully ground OWA's claim that truth has an inherent pull towards the work. To show this, I will construct an argument that will also serve as the overarching framework for this chapter and the next. Structurally, the argument is straightforward. It consists of the following three theses: (i) the basic opening of sense (i.e. truth as *ur-strife*) is affective; (ii) an affective opening requires projection; and (iii) works are distinctively suited to the projection of affective openings. Taken together, the three theses amount to a vindication of the claim that truth as *ur-strife* requires projection through (*inter alia*) works – a vindication which, as we have seen, OWA cannot provide. In this chapter, I address the first two theses. In §2.1, I argue that OWA's underdeveloped notion of *ur-strife* is to be grasped in terms of the *Contributions* notion of an abyssal ground. In §2.2, I argue that, for Heidegger, attunements function as abyssal grounds, and that this vindicates thesis (i) above. In §2.3, I take up thesis (ii), showing that and how attunements, so construed, require projection.

### 2.1 Basic Refusal

The first thesis affirms the affective nature of the basic opening of intelligibility. In the previous chapter, I already provided substantial evidence for attributing this view to mid-1930s Heidegger and offered a preliminary interpretation of it. What we now need is to appreciate that the notion of affective opening amounts to a more fundamental way of grasping what OWA discusses under the heading of truth *qua* clearing-concealing *ur-strife*. I say more fundamental, because OWA's conception of an *ur-strife* as constitutive of truth is implicitly predicated on the conception of the affective nature of truth itself. In other words, OWA's conception of truth in terms of clearing and concealing presupposes that truth happens affectively.

To see this, let us first review how OWA construes concealing. OWA distinguishes two kinds of concealing – what we might call a basic and a derivative one. The *derivative* kind of concealing is the phenomenon of dissimulating (*Verstellen*) whereby ‘an entity does appear, but it presents itself as other than it is’ (GA5:40). The entity is encountered, but as wholly or partly concealed in its true nature. Mundane example: I greet a friend in the street, but as it turns out, the person I mistook for my friend was in fact a stranger, whose appearance closely resembles my friend’s. The derivative character of this kind of concealing depends on the fact that, for it to occur, some entity must be positively encountered. The concealment concerns the true nature of the entity encountered. Thus, I do encounter someone in the street, but I encounter them as concealed (dissimulated) as the person they are. Derivative concealing as dissimulating thus depends on the prior obtaining of a clearing for entities to be encounterable within (whether as dissimulated or not).

By contrast, OWA construes the *basic* kind of concealing as one *prior* to any encounter with entities. Basic concealing concerns the opening up (the coming-to-obtain) of the clearing itself – hence its basic, non-derivative character. Without much in the way of explanation, Heidegger ascribes to basic concealing the phenomenological character (hence the label) of a refusing (*Versagen*) (see GA5:41). However, when we inquire further as to the nature of such refusal, OWA again leaves us unsatisfied. For OWA lacks any substantive treatment of it, beyond the bare statement of its basic character (see GA5:40) and the cryptic, not-further-explicated assertion that ‘refusal first allocates to all clearing its constant provenance’ (*ibid.*:41-42). Rather than elaborating on refusal, Heidegger simply goes on to claim that the conflictual dynamic relationship between clearing and concealing (as both refusal and dissimulating) is what structures the happening of truth. For it is through the unfolding of such relationship that an opening of intelligibility first opens up for entities to show up in (see GA5:42). It is in this sense that OWA construes truth as ur-strife.

In acknowledging the lack of an account of refusal, we come up against another of OWA’s theoretical limitations. And indeed, such lack helps to explain why OWA fails to spell out the relationship between the two forms of strife. For to do so would require an account of (clearing-concealing) ur-strife, which in turn would require precisely an account of refusal. As above, this is not to say that Heidegger lacked such accounts altogether in writing OWA –

only that he chose not to include them in the essay. Once again, then, we see how OWA, by its internal logic, needs to be supplemented by relevant elements of Heidegger's broader picture if its central claims are to be adequately grounded.

What OWA presupposes but does not thematise, I suggested, is a conception of the basic opening of sense as affective. As we shall see, only such a conception makes sense of Heidegger's notion of basic concealing as refusal, and thus grounds the view, unsupported in OWA, of the happening of truth as a clearing-concealing *ur-strife*. The connection between clearing, basic concealing, and attunement finds its first full articulation in *Contributions*, further substantiating the way the latter text contains the theoretical presuppositions of OWA's treatment of art.

In the previous chapter, I introduced Heidegger's conception of the basic affective opening of sense. This picture may now be further enriched to encompass the idea of concealing as refusal. Indeed, this idea is implicit in the very notion of an affective opening, properly understood. We saw how Heidegger understands affective openings as inherently temporally and spatially textured. Two points about such texturing are worth noting here. First, *qua* textured, affective openings are not neutral and featureless. Rather, they inherently warp the field of possible encounter, and precisely according to their constitutive temporal and spatial relational networks.<sup>35</sup> Secondly, and accordingly, the kind of determinacy that openings enjoy as thus textured is only inceptive. They thereby enable, but underdetermine, a context of intelligibility that might arise on their basis.

Now, a way in which Heidegger expresses this last point is by saying that an opening of this kind is (1) a ground (*Grund*), because it functions as the basic enabling of a potential context of intelligibility; but a ground (2) of an abyssal (*abgründig*) sort, because this enabling leaves indeterminate the specific way in which such context should be structured (in the way that an abyss, in its ordinary sense, is a depth lacking any determinate measure). In providing the basic blueprint for any possible encounter (i.e. in grounding), such an opening falls short of univocally determining the structure of encounterability (i.e. is abyssal). Note, moreover,

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<sup>35</sup> I borrow the notion of a 'warping' of the field of encounterability from Wrathall (2021d), who glosses *beyng* as 'creating a kind of gravitational warp to the field of possible relationships' whereby 'some relationships stand out as salient because others disappear into the gaps or folds of the field' (122). Wrathall says little about the relevant 'gaps or folds', and it seems to me that Heidegger's notion of time-space is precisely what could discharge such metaphors.

that these two moments are not merely contingently, but inherently related. The very *way* in which openings ground is by enabling and texturing, but not fully determining, the field of possible encounter. (Which is why, as we saw, they stand in need of creative projection – more on which below.)

A ground which is inherently such as to ground abysally Heidegger calls an a-byss (*Abgrund*). This hyphenation familiarly exploits the fact that the German term for ‘abyss’, *Abgrund*, is a compound of the prefix *ab-* (here indicating removal) and *Grund*, hence literally denoting something ‘lacking in ground’, ‘groundless’. This is effectively rendered by hyphenating the similarly formed noun ‘abyss’, compound of the privative *a-* and the Greek *buthós*, ‘sea depth’. By hyphenating the term, Heidegger can preserve the sense of both abyss and ground at once, and thereby ‘indicate that the abyss is, *as* an abyss, also offering a ground in some sense’ (Wrathall 2021b:9 fn. 1, original emphasis).

The thrust of Heidegger’s notion of a-byss has, in my view, been aptly captured by Wrathall, who glosses a-byss as ‘something that grounds the being of a thing precisely by refusing to determine it’ (2021b:9), where the ‘precisely by’ is doing key work. As an example of a-byssal phenomenon, Wrathall then helpfully mentions, *inter alia*, a ‘true decision’. In deciding, I do not operate in a vacuum, but in a so-and-so determinate space of possibilities. Yet I would not count as making a decision, if the arrangement of such space were to fully determine me in favour of what I decide. In Heidegger’s construal of affective openings as a-bysses, the structure Wrathall describes no longer concerns the grounding of the being ‘of a thing’, but rather, more fundamentally, the grounding of a certain patterning of being *itself*, i.e. of the way in which *anything* might at all make sense and be encounterable.

Now, it is precisely in terms of this peculiar dynamic of grounding that we should understand the basic concealing Heidegger sees at play in the happening of truth. OWA characterised it as a refusal, offering no rationale for this characterisation. We can now see that the refusal at issue is precisely the stopping short, on the part of an inceptive opening, of univocally determining the structure of encounterability. This stopping short counts as a *refusal* when grasped in connection with a concomitant attempt, on the human being’s part, to read off such a structure from the inceptive opening:

But does not this [i.e. the originary gaping in hesitant self-refusal] have to come up against a claim, a seeking, a striving in order to be a self-refusal? Certainly[.]

(GA65:381)

Thus, my attempt to read off a determinate structure runs up against the opening's underdetermination of structure. I thereby encounter the opening's underdetermination of structure *as* a refusal: '[T]o truth belongs nullity [*das Nichthafte*], but by no means only as a lack, but rather as something opposing resistance' (GA65:356, emphasis omitted). Concealing as refusal, that is, concerns the inherently abyssal character of an opening's way of grounding.

Thus Heidegger:

What is the a-byss? What is its way of grounding? A-byss is the remaining-away of the ground. [...] A-byss [is] [...] a self-concealing in the manner of a refusal [*Versagung*] of ground. Refusal, however, is not nothing, but rather a distinctive, originary kind of leaving unfulfilled, leaving empty; hence a distinctive kind of opening up [*Eröffnung*]. / The a-byss, however, as essencing of ground, is not a mere self-refusing as simple retreat and departure. / The a-byss is a-byss. In refusing itself, the ground brings in a distinctive way into the open, namely into the first open of *that* emptiness which is thereby a determinate one.

(GA65:379-80, original emphases)

Here, Heidegger is distinguishing between two notions of ground (and their attendant modes of grounding). Call them ground<sub>1</sub> and ground<sub>2</sub>. Ground<sub>1</sub> grounds in the sense of univocally determining the way in which things make sense. Ground<sub>2</sub>, on the other hand, grounds abyssally, in the sense indicated, and is thus equivalent to what Heidegger calls a-byss.

The key point of this important passage is precisely the claim that the basic opening of intelligibility occurs and functions a-byssally, i.e. in the manner of ground<sub>2</sub>. This involves an inherent foreclosing (a 'remaining-away', *Weg-bleiben*) of ground<sub>1</sub>. The basic opening grounds<sub>2</sub> by enabling intelligibility within and in accordance with itself as an inceptively temporally and spatially textured field of possible encounter. The blueprint for encounterability thereby afforded is what makes the 'emptiness' of the opening a 'determinate' one. Again, however, such determinacy, *qua* only inceptive, cannot by itself provide a fixed structuring of the field thereby opened. Any attempt to read off such structure from the mere texturing of the field is bound to fail. The opening, that is, does not ground<sub>1</sub>, remaining to that extent indeterminate. Ground<sub>1</sub> *refuses itself* in it. The opening is ungrounded<sub>1</sub>, or groundless<sub>1</sub>. (Compare this to the way metaphysics conceives of its grounds, precisely as the basis for determining the being of anything at all. Metaphysical grounds are grounds<sub>1</sub>.)

This dynamic of simultaneous grounding (in the sense of ground<sub>2</sub>) and refusal of grounding (in the sense of ground<sub>1</sub>), Heidegger calls hesitation (*Zögerung*). Ordinarily, in hesitating, we hold back from a certain course of action to which we are and remain inclined. Hesitation names the ontic phenomenon in which these two moments structurally coexist. Ontologically, the coexistence concerns the holding back of ground<sub>1</sub> and the tendency to ground<sub>2</sub> in the occurrence of the basic opening of intelligibility – i.e., in an equivalence Heidegger now makes explicit, of clearing or truth:

Insofar as the ground, even and precisely in the abyss, still grounds[<sub>2</sub>] and yet does not properly [*eigentlich*] ground[<sub>1</sub>], it stands in hesitation. / A-byss is the hesitant refusal of ground. In refusal, there opens up the originary emptiness, there happens the originary *clearing* [...]. / The a-byss is the first-essential *concealing that clears*, the essencing [*Wesung*] of truth.

(GA65:380, original emphases)

We thus gain a richer account of the basic concealing that OWA claimed (without telling us why and how) to be ‘the beginning of the clearing of what is cleared’ (GA5:40). Refusal is the ‘beginning’ of the clearing, in that the fact that the clearing grounds<sub>2</sub> as a refusal to ground<sub>1</sub> is part and parcel of the clearing’s initial (‘first-essential’) opening. Refusal is the concealment of any prescriptive determinations of the clearing’s projection (i.e. of a ground<sub>1</sub>) – which would fix its structure in a way that would prevent it from functioning as the distinctive (a-byssal, hence non-determining) ground it is (namely a ground<sub>2</sub>).

Of course, refusal is *not* a kind of concealment that Heidegger understands as ideally fully overcome by a successful countereffort to unconceal whatever it conceals (see GA65:352). For it could not be. The concealing at issue is an essential structural component of the very clearing for intelligibility, on the basis of and in accordance with which all further unconcealing is possible. To overcome *that* concealing through further unconcealing would be to overcome the very condition of the possibility of the unconcealing that would overcome it, hence an impossibility. It is part of *what it is* for a clearing to occur that an inceptively determinate leeway is opened up without thereby possibly fixing any one structure for its full determination. This is part of the sense in which Heidegger understands clearing as *essentially involving* concealing. This does not imply that there is no tension between clearing and concealing. Indeed, as we shall see, the relationship between clearing and refusal is precisely one of contentious intimacy,

and it is in this sense that Heidegger in OWA characterises the happening of truth in terms of a clearing-concealing *ur-strife*.<sup>36</sup>

## 2.2 Attuned Clearings

Having introduced the a-byssal character of the clearing's occurrence and grounding, we can now appreciate its relationship to the notion of affective openings sketched in the previous chapter. For Heidegger explicitly construes the clearing, *qua* a-byssal, as temporally-spatially textured. In turn, he inherently links such temporal-spatial character to the clearing's *affective* nature. As he writes:

The a-byss, as the remaining-away of ground [...], is the first clearing of the open as 'emptiness'. But what emptiness is meant here? [...] [T]he temporal-spatial emptiness, the originary gaping in hesitant self-refusal. (GA65:380-81)

The a-byss, as the first essencing of ground, grounds [...] in the manner of temporalisation and spatialisation. (*ibid.*:383)

The 'staying away' of ground, its abyssal character, is *attuned* out of the hesitant self-refusal – temporalising and spatialising, enrapturing and enchanting [*entrückend und berückend*] at once. (*ibid.*:384, original emphasis)

Time-space is [...] the a-byss so structured [*gefügte*] and correspondingly attuning. (*ibid.*:386)

The relationship between time-space and attunement we already traced in the previous chapter. What we find here is a rationale for why Heidegger should construe the clearing (or, equivalently, the opening of sense) as affective. The rationale is that the clearing can occur and function as the kind of ground it is – i.e. an a-byssal ground (i.e. ground<sub>2</sub>) of intelligibility as such – only *qua* affective.

Why so? We saw how affective openings exhibit a distinctive kind of indeterminate determinacy. Attunements texture, without univocally determining, their respective fields of sense – fields into which attunements transpose us by thereby co-grounding them. But this means that attunements, by their very nature, function as a-byssal grounds. They enable

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<sup>36</sup> As seen, OWA's *ur-strife* also involves derivative concealing as dissimulating. This further aspect of such *strife*, like the notion of dissimulating itself, does not present any particular interpretive difficulties. Accordingly, I will set it aside in what follows and take it for granted that clearing always involves a *strife* with dissimulating.

determining by offering an orienting texture while refusing *a priori* determination. Thus, as Heidegger writes,

the clearing that happens in self-refusal is not a mere gaping and yawning [...], but rather the attuning structuring [*stimmende Erfügen*] [...] of precisely *this* cleared [*Gelichteten*].

(GA65:381, original emphases)

Here, as usual in Heidegger, the determiner ‘this’ that identifies the cleared (i.e. the outcome of the process of clearing) implies that the cleared in question is determined in a specific way, i.e. it is thus-and-so structured – hence precisely not a vacuum such as would be found in a ‘mere gaping and yawning’. And again, as the previous set of quotations made clear, the determinacy which the cleared inherently carries is that of its temporal-spatial texturing, which Heidegger here simply calls ‘structure’ (*Gefüge*). Heidegger’s core claim here is that the (basic layer of the) happening of truth just *is* the opening up of a thus-and-so textured, thus-and-so attuned-and-attuning clearing for intelligibility as such. Thus:

Appropriation attunes and thoroughly tunes [*stimmt und durchstimmt*] the essencing of truth. The openness of the clearing [*Lichten*] of concealing is thus originally not a mere emptiness of being-vacant, but rather the attuned, attuning emptiness of the a-byss – which [...] is an attuned, and that here means a structured [*gefügter*], one [i.e. emptiness].

(GA65:381)

Truth [...] is the ground as [a ground] that withdraws and looms through [*durchragender*], [...] [truth is] the attunement that attunes as this ground.

(*ibid.*:346)

In Chapter 3, we will examine how an affective clearing functions as an a-byssal ground through a concrete example, namely the early Greek experience of the attunement of wonder. Such experience will be shown to fit the formal account provided here, insofar as it serves as the basic opening of sense upon which the early Greeks articulated their context of sense-making – partly through artworks such as OWA’s Greek temple. For now, the key point is that we can see how OWA, in relying on a notion of truth as ur-strife while failing to specify the kind of (basic) concealing (i.e. refusal) involved in such strife, is dependent on the account of truth spelled out in *Contributions*. Having traced such account, we are in a position to appreciate that OWA’s ur-strife refers to the relationship between clearing and refusal at play in the clearing’s occurrence and functioning as an a-byssal ground, where, crucially, such clearing is construed as an affective opening.

In what sense do clearing and concealing count as being at strife with each other, in (what OWA calls) ur-strife?<sup>37</sup> As far as I can see, Heidegger never makes this fully explicit. Nevertheless, we can reconstruct his intended meaning by reference to his construal of strife in the world-earth case in OWA. I will return to OWA's world-earth dynamics in Chapter 3. What matters for now is simply to highlight the underlying structure by whose instantiation their relationship counts as a strife (*Streit*) or, equivalently, is contentious (*strittig*). I will therefore rely on the reader's familiarity with the well-known discussion of the world-earth strife in OWA, in any reading of it minimally consistent with the basic elements of such discussion, and distil such structure analytically as follows (see GA5:35-36):

x and y are at strife (i.e. stand in a contentious relationship) if and only if

- (i) x's essence involves feature A, y's essence involves feature B, such that A and B are suitable opposites;
- (ii) x, as an instantiation of A, and y, as an instantiation of B, are such that each tends to reduce the other to itself; and
- (iii) x, by virtue of the specific way it instantiates A, and y, by virtue of the specific way it instantiates B, are such that each, in order to be what it is, requires that the other be in place.

Thus, world and earth are at strife (stand in a contentious relationship) because (i<sub>w-e</sub>) the essence of world involves opening and the essence of earth involves closing; (ii<sub>w-e</sub>) world, as an instantiation of opening, tends to reduce earth, as an instantiation of closing, to itself, and vice versa; and (iii<sub>w-e</sub>) world, to be the specific kind of opening it is (i.e. a projected opening), requires earth, and earth, to be the specific kind of closing it is (i.e. self-closing showing up as such), requires world.

It is important for Heideggerian strife that the conjunction of conditions (ii) and (iii) implies a reciprocal essential belonging of the contestants of the strife, a belonging which plays out dynamically through their very contesting of the strife. Thus each, to be itself, needs the

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<sup>37</sup> The qualifier 'ur' for the clearing-concealing strife seems specific to OWA. I retain it both for consistency's sake and because it seems a helpful terminological device for distinguishing the two related but distinct forms of strife featured in Heidegger's picture.

other (condition (iii)); and each, *qua* itself, tends to assimilate the other (condition (ii)). The more each tends to assimilate the other, the more it is itself (by condition (ii)); and the more each is itself, the more it needs the other (by condition (iii)).

The dynamic, contentious co-belonging thus at play defines a *sui generis* kind of relational unity of opposites, which from the 1930s becomes a core element of Heidegger's theoretical apparatus. Borrowing from Hölderlin, Heidegger names such a relationship 'intimacy' (*Innigkeit*).<sup>38</sup> He glosses it thus: 'Hölderlin calls "intimacy" that which keeps things apart in conflict [*Widerstreit*] and thereby at the same time binds them together' (GA4:36). The unity-through-strife of world and earth is correspondingly said by Heidegger in OWA (again without explanation in OWA itself) to be intimate: '[S]trife is the intimacy of mutual belonging of the contestants' (GA5:51; see *ibid.*:35).

With this in view, and given the above discussion of the clearing as a-byssal and of basic concealing as refusal, we can now appreciate the sense in which the relationship between the clearing and basic concealing is one of strife, i.e. of contentious intimacy. It is one insofar as (i<sub>c-c</sub>) the clearing's essence involves grounding, basic concealing's essence involves not-grounding; (ii<sub>c-c</sub>) the clearing, as an instantiation of grounding, tends to reduce basic concealing, as an instantiation of not-grounding, to itself, and vice versa; and (iii<sub>c-c</sub>) the clearing, to be the specific kind of grounding it is (i.e. a-byssal), requires basic concealing, and basic concealing, to be the specific kind of non-grounding it is (i.e. refusal), requires the clearing.

The most important of the three conditions for characterising the distinctiveness of the clearing-concealing relationship is clearly (iii<sub>c-c</sub>), which states their mutual dependence in order for each to be itself. We have already seen how the clearing requires basic concealing in order to be clearing, insofar as a stopping short of grounding<sub>1</sub> is required for the clearing to be the kind of textured emptiness (i.e. affective opening) it is, hence to be able to ground<sub>2</sub>. Why, on the other hand, would basic concealing require the clearing in order to be a refusal? Above, we have touched on the fact that the stopping short of grounding<sub>1</sub> can count as a refusal only insofar as it is experienced as a resistance against an attempt to read off a ground<sub>1</sub> from the clearing. As seen, the non-grounding at issue can be said to *refuse* itself precisely to the extent that its negativity can be encountered *as* a negativity by a suitably comporting human being,

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<sup>38</sup> On which, see e.g. Backman (2015:140-41 and *passim*). Cf. Mirković (2021).

i.e. insofar as it can ‘come up against a claim, a seeking, a striving’ (GA65:381). Someone’s refusal to answer my question is not the mere, neutral non-obtaining of an utterance, but a lack that I experience as resistance against my attempt to be answered. In such refusal, the negativity of the lack of a response (the *non*-response) is thus not a *pure* negativity (or, as Heidegger would put it: it is not nothing) – as would be the fact that, as I write right now alone in my study, no-one is answering me (for no-one is speaking to me at all). Someone’s refusal to answer a question I put to them, on the other hand, ‘comes up against’ my ‘seeking’ to be answered, i.e. is positively encountered by me *as* a (specific kind of) negativity. Thus, if basic concealing, to count as refusal, has to be encountered *as* refusal, then a field of encounterability is required in which such encounter can take place. In this sense, refusal *requires* the clearing. Hence Heidegger’s insistence in *Contributions* and elsewhere that ‘[o]nly if we stand in the clearing do we experience self-concealing’ (GA65:346).<sup>39</sup> The reciprocal essential dependence, whereby clearing requires refusal and refusal requires clearing, structures their co-belonging in intimacy, which plays out dynamically in the contentious relationship captured by (ii-c.). It is in this sense that Heidegger can regard ‘[t]ruth: the clearing for concealing’ as ‘in itself contentious and [...] [as] originary intimacy’ (GA65:345).<sup>40</sup>

Readers of OWA will readily recognise the way in which refusal requires clearing as analogous to that in which earth requires world in OWA’s more familiar account, where earth is construed as ‘needing the disclosure of some world or other in which to manifest itself as essentially resistant to disclosure’, as Mulhall (2019:202) aptly puts it. The analogy points to the broader structural relationship of contentious intimacy that, as just seen, underlies both the contestants of *ur*-strife and those of strife. This structural isomorphism, however, coupled with the lack of an adequate account of *ur*-strife in OWA, has produced a tendency among commentators to conflate the two forms of strife (to the extent that they have addressed the issue of the relationship between them at all). Predictably, this has occurred by way of collapsing the more opaque onto the more transparent – *ur*-strife onto strife. Thus, Young (2001) glosses refusal as ‘concealment by the clearing of world’ (37 fn. 34, emphasis omitted), and earth as ‘the area of “unfathomable” [...] darkness which constitutes the other “side” of

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<sup>39</sup> That the self-concealing here at issue is refusal is made explicit earlier on the same page, where Heidegger equates them: ‘self-concealing (i.e. [...] hesitant refusal [...])’ (GA65:346).

<sup>40</sup> The passage continues with an explicit reference to the ‘Frankfurt lectures’, i.e. those on which OWA is based.

the “clearing” that is world’ (40), thereby blurring all distinctions between the clearing-concealing and the world-earth pairs, hence between ur-strife and strife. As noted above, while Heidegger provides no positive account of ur-strife in OWA, he does at least give the negative indication that ‘the world is not simply the open which corresponds to the clearing, the earth is not the closed which corresponds to the concealing’ (GA5:42). This alone should have made Young more wary of any overlapping of the two pairs. A similar problem seems to me to arise in Thomson’s (2011) account. He glosses strife as a ‘phenomenological[] elaborat[ion]’ (92) of ur-strife. With world and earth, he writes, ‘Heidegger seeks to name and so render visible the quietly conflictual structure at the heart of intelligibility, the unified opposition of ‘revealing [i.e. clearing, in Thomson’s preferred rendering] and concealing’ (*ibid.*). Whatever the details of the phenomenological elaboration in question, this seems to imply that the world-earth and clearing-concealing pairs map neatly onto each other. This appears corroborated by the way Thomson employs the two pairs in parallel elsewhere in his study, e.g.: ‘The “essential strife” of this *a-lêtheiac* struggle between concealing and revealing, earth and world’ (*ibid.*:94; see also 112, 113). A mapping of world onto clearing and of earth onto concealing, however, would seem to fall squarely within the scope of the sort of reading Heidegger’s just-quoted remark seeks to forestall.

In collapsing ur-strife onto strife, both Young and Thomson flatten Heidegger’s account by losing track of a distinction between two different levels of fundamentality. Yet this distinction is crucial to Heidegger’s picture and project, and it is paramount for interpreters to appreciate and preserve it. Heidegger’s commitment to it is explicitly articulated on several occasions. One helpfully succinct statement reads: ‘In the clearing of concealing of the between, [...] there arises the strife of world and earth’ (GA65:477).<sup>41</sup> World-earth strife, that is, takes place *within* the opening that occurs through clearing-concealing ur-strife. Nor could it be otherwise, given that the opening thereby occurring is the basic opening of intelligibility as such. Strife, as we shall see, is the way in which the textured ‘emptiness’ of such basic opening gets projected. Of course, this is not to say that ur-strife temporarily precedes, or could occur in isolation from, strife. The distinction concerns levels of fundamentality and relations of dependence – what grounds what – that are consistent with temporal simultaneity

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<sup>41</sup> For lengthier statements, see GA65:476, 485; GA94:336.

and indeed necessary co-occurrence. By collapsing the two forms of strife, Thomson and Young, as we saw Withy do in her own way, flatten what is grounded onto what grounds it, the grounded onto the (a-byssal) ground. This distorts Heidegger's picture. For if the two pairs are reduced to one, then the happening of truth is no longer one in which a clearing-concealing dynamic whole is projected by a world-earth dynamic whole, but one in which, on a more coarse-grained model, earth is ("simply") projected by world. Earth must then be understood as the source of intelligibility as such, and hence, implausibly, identified with *beyng* (an identification which both Thomson and Young, in keeping with the thrust of their readings, make).<sup>42</sup> Worlds must then be understood as attempts to project the earth as such source. Accordingly, clearing (equated with world) must be understood as the result of projection<sup>43</sup> – implausibly, since, as seen, the clearing is *prior* to projection, and precisely what enables it. In other words, on such accounts one loses the resources for making sense of the fact that the world-earth strife is understood by Heidegger as *itself* playing out within a priorly textured opening which world-earth strife *as a whole* seeks to project. *Contra* the tendency in the OWA literature, the priority of ur-strife over strife (the very 'ur' nature of ur-strife), together with their structural isomorphism (by virtue of which both count as forms of strife), is a feature of Heidegger's picture that we should recognise and account for if we are to adequately grasp OWA, which depends on such picture.<sup>44</sup> The reading I have presented gives us, I contend, a way of doing so.

We have thus gained a way of supplying OWA with an important portion of the theoretical foundations which it leaves implicit, by looking at what it means for clearing to be originally at strife with a basic concealing in the form of refusal. We have seen how this is an integral part of a view whereby the happening of truth, which the concealing-refusal ur-strife constitutes, amounts to the opening of the kind of temporally-spatially textured, affective leeway for intelligibility we introduced in the previous chapter. Thus, for Heidegger, truth happens affectively. We should therefore be less surprised than we might initially have been by

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<sup>42</sup> 'Heidegger [...] continually s[ought] new names with which to evoke the "be-ing" which gives itself to intelligibility ("earth", "being as such" [...])' (Thomson 2011:209); '[T]he [...] epistemological "depth" to Being, which Heidegger calls "earth"' (Young 2001:40).

<sup>43</sup> Young explicitly equates the notion of clearing with that of historical world (see 2001:23). Thomson makes only passing mention of the notion of clearing, but the logic of his reading commits him to understanding it as at least partly the result of projection (i.e., on his terminology, 'gestalting').

<sup>44</sup> An exception to the mentioned tendency is Backman (2015:179ff.), to whose understanding of this issue I am indebted. I lack the space here to systematically compare our respective readings.

the claim that attunement does not figure in OWA in any substantive way, and yet (as I argue) it is crucial to his conception of the artwork. No more surprised, that is, than we might be to find that *ur-strife* plays a key role in the conception of truth OWA works with, and yet there is no satisfactory account of it in OWA itself. *Ur-strife* and attunement are one and the same in Heidegger's mid-1930s picture, and to exclude an account of one from his discussion would be to exclude an account of the other.

### 2.3 The Need for Projection

Let us briefly take stock. We have seen that OWA lacks a satisfactory account to ground its key thesis that truth requires entities such as works in order to take place (i.e. the thesis, in OWA's terminology, that truth has a pull towards the work). This is because, I argued, OWA lacks an account of truth capable of grounding such requirement. Such an account needs to be supplemented from outside OWA, integrating OWA's picture. The necessary resources are to be found primarily in *Contributions*. I have suggested that spelling out the affective character of the fundamental opening which truth amounts to would fill said gap. This would be done on the strength of the following three claims: (i) truth is an affective opening of intelligibility as such; (ii) such an affective opening requires projection; (iii) works are distinctively suited to such projection. Truth's pull towards the work, that is, would be grounded in truth's affective nature. In the previous section, I have discussed at some length Heidegger's *Contributions* account of truth, in the way it dovetails with and crucially extends OWA's insufficient account. The core upshot has been that OWA's conception of truth as *ur-strife* amounts to a conception of the clearing as an affective opening (temporally-spatially textured, a-byssally grounding) of intelligibility as such. This vindicates claim (i). I now turn to claims (ii) and (iii), addressing the former in this section, the latter in the next chapter.

The work needed to justify (ii) – i.e. the claim that the clearing, *qua* affective opening, requires projection – has already been largely carried out in the previous chapter. There, we saw how attunement, by its very nature, transposes the human being into an opening that the attunement co-grounds. Such an opening is temporally-spatially textured. This texturing pre-arranges the field of encounterability by warping it according to certain temporal and spatial

relational networks. Things will possibly come to make sense within the opening only in ways that conform to the relevant networks. The opening thus has an inceptive, or indeterminate, determinacy. Determinacy, in that it is not a mere neutral void to be filled at leisure; but inceptive or indeterminate, in that its texturing is necessary but insufficient for the opening to function as a full context of intelligibility, in the sense introduced in the previous chapter.

Thus, as we saw, the Hölderlinian attunement of holy mourning in readied distress textures an opening that is (to put it roughly) basically temporally stretched between a sense of the old gods' pastness and an expectation of the new gods' potential arrival. A present is thereby constituted by a certain orientation towards the future in the light of a certain uptake of the past.<sup>45</sup> Now the attunement, so-and-so temporally textured, requires projection in two senses. First, if it is to be preserved from closure, it must be sheltered, i.e. made retrievable by being given a stability that can sustain its continued experienceability. Secondly, if the attunement is to ground a context of intelligibility, it must be worked out with greater determinacy.

Why worked out? Because its temporal texturing by itself only enables and orients the relevant field of experienceability, without configuring it in any substantive way. What counts as mourning for the past gods and what does not? What as only seemingly, but not genuinely, mourning them? What as awaiting the new ones in a readied way? In short, what does it mean for one to exist as so-and-so attuned? As far as the attunement is concerned, all such questions are up for grabs. The affective clearing, as we saw, grounds a-bysally. It grounds<sub>2</sub>, i.e. enables and orients the field of experienceability, by non-grounding<sub>1</sub>, i.e. not configuring the field substantively. If we were to look at the attunement itself for answers to the questions just raised, we would be left wanting. The resistance we would encounter to answering such questions would be precisely the clearing's refusal, i.e. the basic concealing that we saw is co-essential to it. (Recall: 'Attunement [...] brings the break-out and sustains openness. But it is not capable of building and developing' (GA82:77).) Projection, then, is the articulative process in which, as it were, the questions the attunement raises without answering are given tentative answers against the background of the attunement's a-byssal grounding. The successful among such answers get a grip and scaffold new questions and new answers. Schematically, then, a

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<sup>45</sup> I set spatiality aside here for ease of exposition, but analogous considerations apply.

coherent network of these answers constitutes the relational structure of a context of intelligibility. Downstream of the articulative process, as seen, the human being is able to familiarly navigate such context by taking its structure for granted.

This, in a nutshell, is why attunement requires projection. Note, however, that ‘requires’ is ambiguous. The sense I have just rehearsed from my previous discussion concerns the acceptance that we might gloss as follows: A requires B insofar as B is necessary for A to fulfil its essential nature. Without projection, attunement would not fulfil its essence as an opening of sense. For without being sheltered, it is bound to forfeit its opening function; without being articulated, it cannot successfully ground a context of intelligibility, hence its clearing remains sterile. To disambiguate the idea of requirement in this sense, we could paraphrase it by saying that attunement *stands in need* of projection.

This disambiguation is worth making, in that there is another sense in which attunement ‘requires’ projection, which I have not yet touched on, but which is nevertheless relevant. Take an unprojected attunement. It stands, by definition, in need of projection, in the sense just rehearsed. Now, however, note that this at the same time means that the human being who comes to be attuned by it stands under a claim, on the part of the attunement, to project it. Why so? Again, attunement transposes me into its opening. But to be transposed into such an opening is at the same time to be unrooted from the context of intelligibility in which I stood until then. It is, then, to come to find myself in a peculiar interstitial position: the context that governed my making sense of things has lost its hold on me, and the opening that now has hold on me falls short of being a context (for it is, by assumption, unprojected). I find myself in a peculiar impasse. This kind of impasse has its own name in Heidegger’s philosophy. He calls it emergency (*No!*). Ontically, an emergency is an unforeseen situation that undermines the ordinary order of things and calls for immediate action to restore order. This structure is preserved in Heidegger’s ontological usage of the term. Polt aptly glosses such usage as relating to ‘a condition of needfulness that arises at a particular juncture and creates a pressing need or distress’ (2019:273), where these are ontological in nature. Depending on the specifics of the respective juncture, condition, and need, this structure could be instantiated differently.<sup>46</sup> What we are interested in is the emergency that arises at the juncture between, on

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<sup>46</sup> For a helpful overview, see Polt (2021), which, however, does not include the sense I am highlighting here.

the one hand, the ceasing-to-be-compelling of a formerly compelling context of sense-making and, on the other hand, the not-yet-being-a-context of the newly compelling opening of sense into which I am affectively transposed. The relevant condition of needfulness consists in my lacking any articulated configuration of sense-making in terms of which to make sense of things within the new opening I am in (for an attunement textures without configuring), while the previous one has lost its grip on me. The pressing need is for me to take a stand in the face of such condition. The need is made pressing by the fact that I cannot will myself out of this impasse. For I am affectively transposed into it, and the attunement into which one is thrown cannot, for familiar reasons to do with the very nature of thrownness, be wished away.

An emergency of this kind Heidegger refers to, rather literally, as the impasse of ‘not-knowing-the-way-out-or-the-way-in’ (*das Nicht-aus-und-ein-Wissen*) (GA45:152 and *passim*). In ordinary German, the phrase is used to indicate one’s finding oneself in a (nearly) hopeless situation, not knowing what one should do, being at a loss or at one’s wits’ end. Heidegger exploits the spatial references of the literal construction – not knowing (the way) ‘out’ or ‘in’ – to bring out the sense in which what one is unable to escape in such impasse is the peculiar space in which the attunement has transposed one – or more accurately, the time-space of the attendant affective opening. Thus, he writes:

Not-knowing-the-way-out and the-way-in: out of and into *that* which, through such knowing, first opens up as this untrudened and ungrounded ‘space’. This ‘space’ (time-space) [...] is that Between in which it is not yet determined what is in being [*ist seiend*] and what is not in being [*unseiend*], and where yet the complete confusion of the indivisibility of entities and non-entities also already no longer sweeps everything away and around into everything else.

(GA45:152, original emphases)

In the light of our discussion of affective opening, we can see how the emergency at issue here concerns precisely (Heidegger’s construal of) the experience of being transposed into such an (as-yet-unprojected) opening. The passage recapitulates our points above about how the opening is not one of sheer indeterminacy, for it has an inceptive texture, and yet such texture underdetermines any determinate configuration of intelligibility. Thus, while being and non-being are not in ‘complete confusion’, which would preclude the very possibility of any sense-making, they are not yet determinedly separated, i.e. no configuration is yet in place according to which the separation could be made and a thus-and-so configured context of intelligibility be operative.

In being transposed into an unprojected affective opening and away from my previous context of sense-making, I find myself in the impasse of having lost my bearings without yet having new ones. The ultimate reason why I do not ‘know’ a way out or a way in is that there *is* as yet none. The opening, by its very (a-byssal) essence, affords no such thing. If there is to be one, then, it must be created. In experiencing the impasse, *I* am called upon to do so:

This emergency [...] is the *throwing asunder* of that which is forthwith determined as entities in their beingness against non-entities – provided that the emergency [*Not*] compels [*ernötigt*] the corresponding necessity [*Notwendigkeit*] in the human being.

(GA45:152-52, original emphasis)

I encounter an emergency *as such* only insofar as I encounter it as something that *compels* me to act upon it. If I were to remain unmoved by it, I would have failed to respond to its very character of emergency. What the emergency of the opening’s lack of projection moves me to do is to take it upon myself to project it. Taking projection upon *myself* is a need which I apprehend as unavoidable, inasmuch as part of my apprehension of the emergency is an apprehension of the opening’s refusal (to ground<sub>1</sub>). Projection essentially involves human decision, which the opening grounds<sub>2</sub> (a-byssally):

The ‘emptiness’ is also and properly the fullness of the still undecided, the to-be-decided[.]

(GA65:382)

Indeed, projection involves human decision *because* the opening grounds a-byssally:

The a-byss [...] is the ‘ground’ of ground, because it alone can be the *emergency* of grounding – of fundamental creation – and determine the necessities of grounding.

(GA66:101, original emphasis)

If the opening grounded<sub>1</sub>, rather than grounding<sub>2</sub> (i.e. a-byssally), there would be nothing to be humanly decided, only a given configuration to be assumed passively. The ‘necessity’ ‘corresponding’ to the emergency, compelled in me by the emergency itself, is precisely my responding to the opening’s lack of configuration with an awareness of the need thereby arising for me to decide (how) to creatively project it. I speak here in the first person to rhetorically imply that the requirement is experienced as a call directed to *oneself* by the one who undergoes it. Borrowing a well-known phrase of the early Heidegger, we could say that the experience of emergency is ‘always mine’ (*jemeinig*).

Note, moreover, that *I* am engaged by the emergency in a further way. Not only am I called upon to respond to it by projecting the opening. As a projection of the opening for intelligibility as such, the configuration issuing from my response at the same time entails a decision about what it is to be a human being – hence what it is to be *me* – at all:

Insofar as this emergency comes upon the human being, it *transposes* [versetzt] it [...] for the first time in the decision of the most decisive references to entities and non-entities. These references confer on it [i.e. the human being] the fundamental trait of a new essence. This emergency *transposes* the human being into the inception of a grounding of its essence.

(GA45:160-61, original emphases)

Thus, from the impasse in which I come to find myself there arises a claim on me to take a stand, in the light of the opening's affective texture, on what it is to be at all, and hence on who I am. Above, I disambiguated a first sense of the way in which an affective opening requires projection, namely that it stands in need of projection if it is to function as an opening at all. We can now distinguish a second sense in which the opening 'requires' projection. It does so in that it requires *of me* that I project it. We can capture this sense by saying that the opening *calls for* its projection, where the emphasis should be heard as lying on the requirement's character of a call, i.e. its amounting to an appeal to one, and experienced first-personally by one, to act upon it.

While this disambiguation helps us to better grasp the structure of the phenomenon analytically, it is important to appreciate that the two senses are in fact two sides of the same coin. For there is no such thing as an opening standing in need of projection independently of its being experienced as calling for projection by a human being that is transposed into it. In the previous chapter, I noted how an affective opening is such that it opens up (it 'is') at all only insofar as a human being comes to be suitably attuned to it. We can now see that this further implies that an affective opening opens up as standing in need of projection only insofar as a human being comes to experience it as calling upon her to project it. Put otherwise, it is a true essential claim about what it is to be an affective opening that, if unprojected, it stands in need of projection. However, this only ever takes place in and through a human being's first-personally experiencing the call for such projection.

The goal of this section was to justify the claim (ii) that the clearing, *qua* affective opening, requires projection. We saw that and how this is so, by rehearsing our discussion of

the sense in which an affective opening stands in need of projection (i.e. articulation and sheltering), and by introducing a correlated sense in which an affective opening calls for projection on 'my' part. Note that affectivity plays a correspondingly twofold crucial role here. On the one hand, it is the fact that the clearing is opened in attunement that makes it the sort of thing that *stands in need* of projection. For, as we have seen, attunement is the sort of thing that, by virtue of its (textured but indeterminate) essence, stands in such a need. On the other hand, it is the fact that the clearing is opened in attunement that makes it the sort of thing that *calls for* projection. For it is affect that engages *me* in the relevant sort of way, i.e. as something that can compel me to take the task of its projection upon myself.

## Projecting Affect

Having justified claims (i) and (ii) of my proposed argument, in this chapter I turn to claim (iii), namely the claim that works are entities distinctively suited to the kind of projection which claims (i) and (ii) establish that the clearing, *qua* affective opening, requires. The aim, once again, is a vindication, through the conjunction of these three claims, of OWA's thesis that truth requires entities such as works in order to take place, or equivalently, that truth has an inherent pull towards works.

As discussed, projection is the twofold process whereby the clearing (i.e. the a-byssal, affective opening) is preserved as open (i.e. sheltered) and is more determinately worked out into a configuration of intelligibility (i.e. articulated). The two are inextricably linked in that preservation requires that the clearing be worked out in some way or other, and the working out counts as a working out *of the clearing* only if it does not fail to preserve it (see §1.3). The twofold process of projection is an inherently interpretive, creative human act. Human: because the clearing refuses to ground<sub>1</sub> and thus compels the human being, affectively transposed into it, to project it. Interpretive: because the refusal to ground<sub>1</sub> prevents the configuration(s) of intelligibility which would work it out from being readable off the clearing itself. This implies that the relationship between the inceptive texturing of the clearing and the configuration(s) purporting to work it out cannot be settled by appeal to fact (to something present-at-hand or occurrent), but is a hermeneutical matter inherently involving the freedom of human decision. Creative: because the configuration resulting from interpretation must be concretely fashioned into an entity that is so shaped as to embody the configuration itself. The creative character of this fashioning lies in the fact there is no rule to which it could be reduced and by appeal to which it could be conducted. Rather, the manner in which it occurs is unpredictable prior to its very occurrence.

By virtue of its interpretive character, projection is an open-ended, ongoing process. As such, it is inherently contentious, taking the form of a strife between, in general terms, attempts to interpret and resistance to interpretation. We can thus begin to appreciate how

projection represents the level in Heidegger's picture of fundamentality at which the world-earth strife finds its proper theoretical place. In the previous chapter, I emphasised the need to distinguish between Heidegger's two forms of strife as belonging to distinct layers, with the clearing-concealing ur-strife (in and through attunement) serving as the basis and background against which world-earth strife takes place (in and through projection). In world-earth strife, to a first approximation, an underlying affective opening of sense is projectively taken up in different ways. Such ways, as we will explore in this chapter, constitute an array of different modalities of possible world-earth configuration. The artwork is determined ontologically as the kind of entity it is precisely in terms of the particular manner in which it configures world and earth in their strife.

In this chapter, then, I proceed as follows. In §3.1, I specify the sense just mentioned in which, on Heidegger's account, the contentious world-earth relationship can be configured in different modalities, and I clarify what is at stake in this view. In §3.2, I examine the distinctive way in which Heidegger conceives of equipment as configuring strife. This discussion will have several implications, both in this chapter and in the next. Here, it is primarily relevant because the modality of strife-configuration in equipment will serve as an ideal foil against which to better appreciate the artwork's own characteristic modality, i.e. its peculiar way of accomplishing projection. Ultimately, in §3.7, this will be shown to amount to a projection whereby the projected affective opening is preserved in its abyssal nature and attuning power (a kind of projection that equipment, by contrast, is inherently incapable of supporting). This will vindicate claim (iii) above, bringing our overarching argument to a conclusion (and allowing us to move on to an account of artistic experience in the next chapter).

To get there, however, a number of intermediate steps are in order. First, in §3.3, I introduce the notion of textural sense as a way of capturing the characteristic modality of sense-making of artworks, which will be crucial in accounting for how artworks project in the manner they do. Then, in §3.4, I turn to OWA to examine how Heidegger construes projection in it, suggesting that he does so through his (exegetically contested) notions of rift and figure. In §3.5, I argue that the rift, in particular, amounts to the projection of an underlying understanding of being. In §3.6, I further argue that this projection in turn depends on a prior

affective opening of sense, so that OWA's rift can rightfully be seen as a projection of attunement. Finally, in §3.7, I conclude by showing that the rift succeeds as a projection of attunement only insofar as artworks, through their figure, make textural sense – with the implications for my overarching argument noted above. My discussion in §§3.4-3.7 will be conducted with sustained reference to Heidegger's example of a Greek temple. This will serve the dual purpose of providing concrete illustrations of my arguments in this and the preceding chapters, while also offering a novel interpretation of the example itself, whereby I show the temple to be best understood as a work projective of the attunement of wonder.

### 3.1 Modalities of Strife

At a first pass, we may gloss Heidegger's notion of *world* as picking out a determinate historical configuration of a clearing (or a regional subset thereof). *Earth*, on the other hand, picks out the non-configured basis on and out of which each configuration is concretely fashioned. Wrathall (2005) captures this by noting that '[t]he idea is something like this: world, the intelligible ordering of things, settles into the matter or substance out of which everything is drawn' (Wrathall 2005:77). 'Matter' or 'substance' should be understood here, however, only as attempts to approximate, in standard philosophical (and paradigmatically metaphysical) language, something that by its very nature escapes, because it is prior to, the kind of conceptual determination such language presupposes. Wrathall (forthcoming) himself rightly notes that 'Heidegger wants us to bracket any materialist presuppositions' – and, we might add, any 'substantialist' presuppositions as well. For reasons that we will further explore below, I favour, following Harries (2009) and Backman (2015), the notion of *dimension* as a way of trying to capture intuitively the elusive idea here at stake. Thus, Harries glosses earth as 'that dimension of things that will always resist human mastery [...] [and] that makes them incapable of being adequately expressed in some clear and distinct discourse' (2009:117).<sup>47</sup> Note, however, that while both of these claims correctly apply to Heidegger's earth, they are only consequences of the more fundamental fact that earth is the non-configured basis for worldly configuration. Importantly, as such basis, earth both supports and resists worldly configurative

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<sup>47</sup> For earth and world as dimensions, see also Backman (2015:147ff.).

attempts. It supports them by being that on and out of which projections may be concretely fashioned. It resists them both by eschewing full projectability and by constraining the way projection may be concretely fashioned in any given instance. Finally, as we shall see in more detail, it is key to Heidegger's earth that it does not simply, as it were tacitly, fulfil its role as basis, but that it may also *manifest itself* as the basis it is.

World and earth are familiarly construed by Heidegger as being at strife, or as standing in a relationship of contentious intimacy. In the previous chapter I spelled out this relationship analytically, abstracting its structure to grasp how ur-strife could count as a form of strife. But I did not examine in detail how world and earth themselves instantiate the structure. I was able to leave such examination aside because the general features of a contentious relationship are clear enough from OWA's discussion and will already be familiar to the essay's readers. Now, however, a closer look is in order.

Matters are complicated here by what I regard as a widespread shortcoming in our reception of Heidegger's doctrine of world-earth strife. We saw how influential readings of OWA tend to conflate clearing-concealing strife and world-earth strife, to the detriment of Heidegger's layered picture of fundamentality. I argued this to arise from a lack of appreciation for the specificity of ur-strife. What I want to highlight now, on the other hand, is what strikes me as a misconception in the way world and earth themselves are understood in the scholarly literature as functioning within Heidegger's picture.

Generally stated, the problem is the following. The world-earth relationship has been received by the scholarship as functioning in the terms set out by OWA. However, what OWA sets out is not how the world-earth relationship functions *simpliciter*. Rather, it is how the world-earth relationship functions as instantiated by a particular kind of entity, namely the work. Other kinds of entities will instantiate the relationship differently. In other words, the scholarly literature has generally failed to recognise that there is more than one way in which the world-earth strife can be configured.<sup>48</sup> Indeed, as we shall see, at least for certain kinds of entities, the different ways in which they configure such strife are an integral part of what makes them the specific kinds they are. This is a problem relevant to our discussion because, as I will now argue, the unwarranted generalisation to the world-earth relationship *simpliciter* of the world-

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<sup>48</sup> A recent exception is Wrathall (forthcoming).

earth relationship *in works* prevents us from fully appreciating the very distinctiveness of works themselves. But such distinctiveness is what we are after when we ask, as we are now doing, what it is that makes works a kind of entity distinctively suited to projecting affective openings.

The root of the confusion surrounding this issue, it seems to me, lies in OWA itself, and can be traced in part to a shortcoming in Heidegger's presentation of his views in that essay. In OWA, Heidegger presents the world-earth relationship primarily and most extensively in connection with artworks, particularly in his discussion of the Greek temple (more on which below) in the second of OWA's constitutive lectures, without any mention of the fact that what is being presented is only *one* of several modalities in which the relationship can be configured. Admittedly, a hint at the plurality of such modalities does surface in OWA, even before the discussion of the temple. The context is the Van Gogh episode in the first lecture. Here, in a passage to which we will return in the next chapter, Heidegger claims that *qua* piece of equipment, the pair of peasant shoes depicted in Van Gogh's painting 'belongs to the *earth* and is protected in the *world* of the peasant woman' (GA5:19, original emphases). The presentation of the world-earth relationship that accompanies this claim, however, is altogether too cursory and vague to make it clear that the modality of relationship by virtue of which the shoes thus belong to the earth and are protected in the world is *sui generis* with respect to that of works – which Heidegger will present at much greater length later in the essay, without clarifying the differences implicitly at play. Therefore, when shortly after the quoted sentence, Heidegger claims that '[f]or her [i.e. the peasant woman] and those who are with her in her manner, world and earth are there only thus: in equipment' (GA5:19-20), the *prima facie* natural way to read the 'thus' is weaker than Heidegger (I submit) in fact intends. Lacking an appreciation of the world-earth relationship as inherently plural, the 'thus' is naturally read as saying that the world-earth relationship *simpliciter* manifests itself, in the relevant form of life, only through equipment (hence fails to manifest itself through other kinds of entities, such as works). Only an appreciation of the pluralism inherent to such relationship would allow one to infer the intended meaning of the passage, namely that the relationship manifests itself in that form of life only *in the modality* peculiar to equipment (hence fails to manifest itself in other modalities, such as that peculiar to works). In other words, Heidegger is not saying that equipment is the only kind of entity which instantiates the relationship in the peasant woman's

form of life, but more strongly, that in such form of life the relationship is instantiated only in one of the several modalities in which it may occur. While the difference may seem subtle in the abstract, it has important consequences when it comes to grasping the way Heidegger conceives of the projection and internal structure of contexts of intelligibility, and the distinctive roles that different kinds of entities play within them, as we shall presently see.

While OWA bears partial responsibility for the extant reception of the world-earth relationship, the scholarly oversight becomes more pronounced when OWA is read alongside *Contributions*. Here, the modal plurality of such relationship is repeatedly noted by Heidegger. Admittedly, this is somewhat obscured by the peculiarities of *Contributions*' language. In that language, the most recurrent way in which Heidegger expresses the idea in question is through the claim that the *sheltering of truth* occurs in different modalities. But such sheltering is explicitly understood as occurring 'through the contesting of the strife' (GA65:392; see *passim*). The failure of commentators to register the point, it seems to me, should be seen as an instance of the broader lack of a thorough embedding of OWA within the *Contributions* framework that the present study seeks to begin to remedy. Here is a *Contributions* passage where the point is stated in a way that best allows us to bridge the gap with OWA (which, not coincidentally, is explicitly referenced in the paragraph immediately following the one from which I now quote):

It must be shown in which truth entities stand and how [they stand] in it in each case. It must become clear *how world and earth are here at strife* and *how this strife and thus they themselves deconceal* [entbergen] *and conceal themselves*. [...] [T]ruth essences [...] only in the mode of sheltering according to all the paths and modes that belong to it [i.e. to sheltering][.]

(GA65:389-90, emphasis added)

Here, Heidegger is explicit that he sees strife as occurring in different modalities ('*how* world and earth are *here* at strife') and that such modalities involve (a) differing ways of the mutual configuration of world and earth with regard to their (un)concealing ('*how* [...] [world and earth] deconceal and conceal themselves') as well as (b) correspondingly differing ways of the (un)concealing of strife itself ('*how* this strife [...] deconceal[s] and conceal[s] [itself]'). Each distinct modality of the world-earth relationship defines a corresponding distinct modality (a distinct 'path[] and mode[]') of the sheltering of truth – i.e., in our terminology, of the projection of truth (as affective opening). Each such modality is in turn embodied by a different

kind of entity: ‘The clearing [...] needs what sustains it in openness, and that is, in each case differently, an entity (thing – equipment – work)’ (GA65:389; see also *passim*).

By plugging the world-earth relationship as set out in OWA into the template Heidegger provides in this passage, we can see that in the work, world and earth are at strife by (a) the world’s being set out (i.e. unconcealed (in its articulated openness)) and the earth’s being set forth (i.e. unconcealed (as self-closing)), with (b) their strife itself being explicitly (i.e. unconcealedly) contested in and through the work. More details on what this amounts to will follow presently. But the general point is that *this* way of the being-at-strife of world and earth is not the *only* way. Other ways are possible which will diverge in how (a) and (b) are configured.

Now admittedly, the passage just quoted is of an overtly programmatic nature (‘it must be shown...’, ‘it must become clear...’). The programme would have presumably involved providing a full account of the ways in which (a) and (b) are configured in each of the distinct modalities of sheltering and the attendant kind of entity. Heidegger provides several lists of what modalities and entities are supposed there to be. The one offered in the context of the passage just quoted is as follows: ‘The contesting of strife sets truth into work, into equipment, ex-periences [*er-fährt*] it as thing, accomplishes it in deed and sacrifice’ (GA65:391). The several lists given in *Contributions* are more or less extensive and overlapping. They manifestly correspond to the more familiar list given in OWA of the various ‘essential modes’ of the ‘establishment’ of truth (‘establishment’ being, as noted in Chapter 1, OWA’s name for *Contributions*’ notion of sheltering), which includes work, the state, god, sacrifice, and thought. Be that as it may, to the best of my knowledge, Heidegger never got around to providing the accounts his programme envisages. This, however, should not lead us to neglect the programme itself and what it implies for Heidegger’s account of artworks. For while he may never have carried out the whole programme, OWA certainly counts as part of its implementation, i.e. as an account of how (a) and (b) are configured in the kind of entity *the work* and its distinctive mode of truth-sheltering/establishment, namely the setting-of-truth-into-work. Appropriately understanding the programme and keeping it in view is what only allows us to fully place OWA within the broader theoretical context in which it was conceived and intended to belong, even though such context was never fully worked out. This is confirmed beyond doubt by the fact that it is precisely at this point in *Contributions* that

Heidegger makes the remark, already quoted in Chapter 1, that '[t]he *specific* question concerning the "origin of the work of art" [is] *extracted from this domain* and therefore belonging here' (GA65:392, emphases added).

With reference to our earlier discussion of the distinction between the two forms of strife, we can see here another way in which their widespread conflation distorts Heidegger's picture. Heidegger's pluralism in OWA about the essential modes of truth-establishment is, at least programmatically, essentially a pluralism about the modalities in which the world-earth strife is configured. Interpreters who blur the distinction between the forms of strife not only collapse, as I argued, the grounded (strife) onto its ground (ur-strife). Given the general lack of appreciation for the pluralism inherent in strife, and the consequent unwarranted generalisation of the work's own modality of strife to strife *simpliciter*, interpreters also end up unwittingly extending to the happening of truth as such (i.e. ur-strife) what is only one way in which such happening is projected (i.e. the work's own modality of world-earth relationship).

A paradigmatic instance of such tendency in the scholarship, it seems to me, can be found in Thomson's claim that '[t]he conflict preserved in Van Gogh's painting – between emerging into the light and receding into the darkness [...] – is for Heidegger the basic structure of intelligibility as it takes place in time' (2011:91-92; see *passim*). Here, the work's modality of strife (the one particularly instantiated by Van Gogh's painting) is taken to be equivalent in all important respects to the modality of occurrence of intelligibility *simpliciter*. What is lost in the process, I contend, is *both* the fundamental distinction between the ur-strife governing the occurrence of intelligibility as such and world-earth strife (which, as I argued above, do not map neatly onto each other) *and* the distinction between the workly modality of strife (as instantiated by Van Gogh's painting) and *other* modalities of strife. Such modalities will differ in the way the 'conflict [...] between emerging into the light and receding into the darkness' is configured and played out in each case, and, *contra* Thomson, none of them 'is', in any important sense, 'the basic structure of intelligibility', for each is rather a different way of *projecting* such structure (i.e. ur-strife). A claim such as Thomson's is thus too coarse-grained to capture these finer-grained but important differences in Heidegger's picture. And while Thomson's reading, by virtue of its clarity, lends itself most readily as a case in point, the charges now made, or the relevant subset thereof, extend to all readings of OWA that do not

distinguish between ur-strife and strife and/or do not distinguish between workly and other modalities of strife – hence, for the reasons given above, to most readings of OWA. In general, if one overlooks the fact that strife has plural modalities, and thus takes the work’s own modality to be strife *simpliciter*, two interpretive options are available: either (i) one does *not* distinguish the two forms of strife (i.e. ur-strife and world-earth strife), leading one to overgeneralise workly strife to intelligibility as such (conflating workly strife and ur-strife), or (ii) one does distinguish the two forms of strife, leading one to overrestrict world-earth strife to workly strife (failing to recognise that workly strife is only one modality of world-earth strife). Neither option captures Heidegger’s view. Hence the importance of appreciating strife in the plurality of its modalities.

While Heidegger never completed his programme, his texts from the period around OWA, especially his working notes, are replete with hints and cursory sketches of his developing views on the matter. A full interpretation of Heidegger’s picture of the clearing’s projection would attempt to reconstruct what the programme finally implemented might have looked like. Such an account would be best placed to display the distinctiveness of the projective modality of artworks in the most exhaustive way, by placing it in the context of all the other concurrent modalities in an integrated overall picture. For the more modest purposes of this study, however, such an attempt, though interesting, must be set aside. Nevertheless, it seems to me that even in the absence of a complete account, the distinctiveness of artworks may be brought out effectively by comparing their modality of strife-configuration with that of a suitable contrasting case. Heidegger’s notes are of considerable assistance here, for among the many barely developed hints, they also contain the exception of one case which Heidegger did work out to a more substantial degree. It concerns how strife is configured by equipment.

I mentioned above how already in OWA, in the context of the Van Gogh episode, Heidegger ascribes to equipment – there instanced by the shoes Van Gogh depicts – an inherent relationship to world and earth, without however making clear that this relationship is of a *sui generis* kind. This turns out to be an important part of Heidegger’s picture hiding in plain sight. In his coeval notes of self-criticism to SZ, by way of a critical engagement with his earlier SZ understanding of the mode of being of equipment, Heidegger sets out the barebones of an account of equipment’s modality of strife-configuration that both dovetails with and

enriches OWA's presentation, making explicit the distinctiveness of such modality.<sup>49</sup> A review of this account will position us, in the subsequent sections, to better draw out the specificity of artworks by contrast with it.

### 3.2 Veiling Strife: Reliability

In SZ, Heidegger's analysis of availability (or readiness-to-hand, *Zuhandenheit*) had highlighted how pieces of equipment are what they are when they function as transparent means to the task for which they are suited. In handwriting, my pen withdraws from the field of my thematic awareness as it allows what I am writing to come to salience in such field. In the mid-1930s, Heidegger deepens this analysis by acknowledging that in so doing, the piece of equipment is embedding me in a context of intelligibility which it helps to sustain. By facilitating writing, my pen inserts me into an articulated whole of sense – the practice of writing and its meaning, the purposes for which I am currently writing and their relevance to me, etc. – in which, thanks to the pen,<sup>50</sup> I am immersed immediately. The pen's mediating function withdraws from my field of awareness, but along with it, so does any potential mediation between me and the very context in which I operate. The context is such that I am able to take it for granted, and to be conversant with it in a fluid manner, with that deep familiarity which, as we reviewed in Chapter 1, is the hallmark of being-in-the-world.

Through the pen, then, I am embedded in the open of (a certain local region of) an articulated world of significances. Now crucially, for this to be the case, the world's very articulated openness must not manifest itself to me *as such*. If it did, I would be at a remove from it and thus not *immediately* immersed in it. (Compare the case in which I might be struck by, say, the sheer peculiarity of the practice of writing as a mode of expression of the self, whereby a layer of mediation between me and the open context in which I operate begins to surface.) As I write, not only does my pen withdraw in favour of what I am writing, but primarily and most importantly, through the pen's functioning, the very world in which I exist

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<sup>49</sup> The significance of Heidegger's mid-1930s revised views on equipment is recognised by Wrathall (forthcoming), including – an exception in the literature – the *sui generis* nature of equipment's world-earth configuration. My understanding of the issue is indebted to his treatment. An examination of the differences between our accounts must be reserved for further work.

<sup>50</sup> And, of course, the other equipment the pen refers me to, such as the paper on which I write, etc. For ease of exposition, I will set this complication aside.

withdraws in favour of the task at hand. Precisely thereby the world functions as a world, i.e. as something in which I can be immediately immersed in pursuing this or that specific goal. In this sense, in functioning as it does, the pen embodies the world's articulated openness (at least as far as the local region pertaining to the practice of writing is concerned) and maintains its openness. It does so by allowing the world to withdraw and thus be inhabited *as* open.

On Heidegger's view, this way of functioning is essential to the pen as the kind of entity it is, i.e. as a piece of equipment. He captures this in the claim that equipment is essentially *reliable*. He glosses reliability (*Verlässlichkeit*) thus:

Reliability as world-veiling sheltering into the proximity of the 'There' (the proximate – the familiar first grounded as such). The piece of equipment essences in such reliability[.]

(GA82:64, emphasis omitted)

'The familiar' is 'first grounded as such' by equipment precisely because equipment makes it the case that I can be immediately immersed in the world whose articulated openness equipment embodies. Equipment does this by 'veiling' the world, i.e. by allowing it to withdraw in favour of my equipment-facilitated pursuit, and precisely thereby 'shelter[s]' it, i.e. preserves it as the specific open, articulated context it is. *Qua* reliable, then, the kind of entity 'equipment' has an inherent relationship to world – namely, one whereby it both veils and (thereby) shelters world. It is in this sense that Heidegger writes in OWA that it is 'by virtue of the reliability of equipment' that one 'is certain of [one's] world' (GA5:19). I am *certain* of my world insofar as I am *immediately immersed* in it. The possibility of such immediate immersion depends on the world's being veiled and thereby sheltered in and through reliable equipment.<sup>51</sup> Thus Heidegger:

In coping [*Umgang*], no grasping and no knowing of the constitution of equipment [are involved] and yet [coping is] entirely certain [*sicher*] – this certainty – has its security [*Geborgenheit*] out of the veiling of the world: the sheltering [*bergende*] nearness of the world in the veiling of the world.

(GA82:63, emphases omitted)

Pieces of equipment co-ground a world by anchoring relevant local sub-regions of that world. Thus, in my example, the pen anchors the region pertaining to the practice of handwriting. In

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<sup>51</sup> Wrathall (forthcoming) rightly notes Heidegger's point that reliable equipment 'supports and keeps open the world' (quoting GA82:493, emphasis omitted). But he does not, I believe, emphasise enough the concomitant point that equipment does so by *veiling* world. As we shall see, this is a key difference between equipment and work.

doing so, it structures the respective significances of the entities belonging to such region. The notebook in which I write is something I should not forget to take with me when I leave my study, the ink refill is something I should be careful to always keep in reserve, etc. The region of significance thus defined constitutes a local whole with the pen at its centre. It is in this sense that Heidegger can claim in OWA that '[t]he equipment-being of equipment, reliability, holds all things gathered in itself, each according to its manner and range' (GA5:20). From this it also follows – a point whose full implications will emerge in the next chapter – that equipment's anchoring of its region of intelligibility is *prior to*, hence to a certain extent *independent of*, its actual use. The pen anchors its surrounding region whether I am now writing with it or not. Indeed, it is such anchoring that makes it possible for me at any moment to interrupt the task at hand to confidently turn to the pen and begin to write. As I read my book, my pen sits idly on a corner of my desk. Yet it still carries within it the whole range of significances it anchors, and that my actual use of it would release. Hence, I take it, Heidegger's suggestive remark that '[e]quipment essences in such reliability – even and especially when unused – the peculiar charge of the unused – even of the discarded [*Ab-gestellten*]' (GA82:64, emphasis omitted).<sup>52</sup>

One of the many differences between this and Heidegger's earlier account of equipment is worth pausing on. In SZ I.1, Heidegger analysed Dasein's comportment towards equipment to find that equipment could be discovered in its being (as available or ready-to-hand, *zuhause*) only if Dasein were constitutively immersed in a world of equipment-mediated significance. Now, in the mid-1930s, Heidegger characteristically takes his analysis down one level to find that in fact, Dasein's very immersion in a world of equipment-mediated significance more fundamentally depends on *equipment itself* as an inherently world-veiling and world-sheltering kind of entity. This means that SZ's Dasein can encounter equipment in the way that SZ I.1 analyses, i.e. as available/ready-to-hand, only insofar as equipment has *already* veiled and sheltered that world, i.e. only insofar as equipment is reliable. And this, it seems to me, is the point that Heidegger expresses through the claim in OWA that the mark of equipment his SZ account had identified (i.e. usefulness or serviceability, *Dienlichkeit*) 'is only

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<sup>52</sup> The charge (*Geladenheit*) of unused equipment is certainly part of what Heidegger takes Van Gogh's painting to reveal. See the discussion of the Van Gogh episode in the next chapter.

the essential consequence of reliability' (GA5:20).<sup>53</sup> We can thus see how Heidegger's renewed understanding of equipment fits into the broader pattern of his mid-1930s revision of the SZ framework that we traced in Chapter 1. Here, too, we move from Dasein's worldly familiarity to the conditions of the possibility of that very familiarity. Equipment is no longer merely seen (*qua* available/ready-to-hand) as a vehicle of that familiarity (and concurrently as a methodological starting point for analysing it), but (*qua* reliable) as contributing to enabling that familiarity in the first place. Reliable equipment co-grounds the world *qua* familiar. To grasp equipment as reliable is to grasp it in its function as a mode whereby world is veiled and sheltered. But importantly, this means grasping equipment in its function as establishing the configuration of intelligibility that structures such world, such that it becomes inhabitable (i.e. amenable to immediate immersion) by Dasein. Reliability is the ontological character of equipment whereby equipment establishes (in OWA's terminology), shelters (in *Contributions*' terminology), or projects (in my terminology) truth. It is in this sense that Heidegger can retrospectively comment on his SZ views in the following way, effectively summing up the key points I have tried to draw out:

The formulation of the question in *Being and Time* still focuses entirely on the concern [*Besorgen*] with equipment and the conditions of possibility of encounter! and it is from there, and only in this way, that 'world' is conceived. Instead, however, one must ask about the equipment-being of equipment. But equipment-being: how it establishes the truth of the There [...] – how it veils and guards [...] – how it makes at home and secure! [...] How in this way the open [...] is veiled in its openness[.]

(GA82:63, emphases omitted)

This ties in with my earlier discussion of Heidegger's revised account of attunement and projection, where I argued that Dasein's being-in-the-world should be seen, in the light of Heidegger's mid-1930s reworking of his views, as derivative of a more fundamental level of clearing-projection. Equipment enters into the process of projection by making it the case that an articulated configuration of intelligibility can be inhabited as familiar (more on which below).

This comparison of Heidegger's pre- and post-1930 conceptions of equipment is particularly instructive, it seems to me, in that it highlights how the *deepening* of his analysis is at the same time a *reversal* of his perspective – or, more precisely, a turn (*Kehre*). The downward

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<sup>53</sup> Cf. the reading of the reliability-usefulness relationship offered by Wrathall (forthcoming).

movement towards that which grounds Dasein's being-in-the-world is necessarily also an about-turn, whereby the entities encountered in being-in-the-world come to be seen as themselves grounding and structuring, through their projective (establishing, sheltering) function, the very possibility of such being-in-the-world. Whatever else Heidegger's turn in the 1930s is, at its core it is also a shift from an analysis of entities in terms of the Dasein-grounded conditions of their encounterability, to an appreciation of their function in grounding configurations of intelligibility such that Dasein can encounter anything intelligible at all. It is in keeping with this turn that Heidegger can now write that '[e]quipment-being [is] not readiness-to-hand – this is its encounter-character [*Begegnischarakter*] – but rather veiling bringing-near of world [...] in a reliability' (GA82:64, emphases omitted), i.e. the way equipment makes encounter at all possible within the world thereby veiled and brought near. We move from asking: how can Dasein encounter equipmental entities in their being, i.e. as available/ready-to-hand, to asking: how do equipmental entities contribute to the projection of a context of intelligibility in which anything can be encountered in its being at all? The fact that an answer to the latter question is presupposed by an answer to the former – or equivalently, the fact that projection (through, *inter alia*, equipmental entities) of a context of intelligibility is prior to encounter of entities (of, *inter alia*, equipmental entities) within that context – is the reason why the reliability of equipment is prior to its readiness-to-hand/availability and usefulness, i.e. the reason why '[r]eadiness-to-hand is grounded in reliability' (GA82:64) and usefulness 'oscillates within' reliability 'and would be nothing without it' (GA5:20). OWA's hardly conspicuous claim of the priority of reliability over usefulness (overshadowed by the clamour surrounding the Van Gogh episode), in encapsulating Heidegger's new understanding of the being of equipment, is at the same time a claim paradigmatic of the still much misunderstood turn in Heidegger's thinking.

With this in view, let us return to our analysis of the ontological structure of reliable equipment. *Qua* reliable, equipment, we have seen, veils and shelters world. Now, however, equipment can achieve this only insofar as, as Wrathall aptly puts it, it 'harnesses the forces of the earth in such a way as to minimise the [earth's] resistance, and maximise the sustaining force that the earth gives to the world' (forthcoming). A pen is so shaped that the earthly basis it fashions admits my worldly pursuits by lending itself to them. Moreover, it thereby enables

me to unlock the earth's world-sustaining capacity beyond the pen's own intrinsic make-up. Through the pen, I can release, say, the ink's capacity to sustain signs, and such signs' capacity to sustain meanings. Or less trivially, I can, say, generate unexpected thoughts in a way that the physical act of writing itself elusively seems to help enable. The pen, itself amounting to earth harnessed to worldly ends, allows me, within the practices it facilitates, to respond to the earth as a potential bearer of worldly configurations. Equipment puts me in a position to pick up relevant earthly solicitations that would otherwise be occluded to me. In this sense, through equipment I am, as Heidegger puts it, 'admitted into the silent call of the earth' (GA5:19).

But importantly, what I discover in thus responding to such call is not the earth as something which closes itself vis-à-vis worldly projectuality. Rather, I discover the earth precisely as something *favourable* to such projectuality. Earth is discovered, in Heidegger's terms, 'in the familiarity [*Vertrautheit*] of what it yields' (GA82:64), i.e. as offering me grounds that I can trust (*vertrauen*) to support my pursuits. Earth contributes (*beitragen*) to such pursuits, or as Heidegger also writes, con-tributes to them (see *ibid.*) – where the hyphen highlights the senses both of sustaining and yielding (*tragen*) (to bear fruit, *Früchte tragen*) and of favouring (*bei*, for/in favour of).<sup>54</sup> Thus, in making one certain of one's world, reliable equipment at the same time allows one to 'co-discover[]' the earth in the '[f]amiliarity of what contributes – con-tributivity [...] to the reliability of sheltering' (GA82:64). Reliable equipment is such that the earth manifests itself as conducive to our inhabiting the world into which such equipment immerses us. *Qua* reliable, then, the kind of entity *equipment* has an inherent relationship to the earth – namely, one whereby the earth contributes to the worldly pursuits the respective entity facilitates.

Heidegger's renewed – deepened and 'turned' (*kehrig*) – ontological analysis of equipmentality thus construes equipment in terms of the function it plays in projecting contexts of intelligibility. Such projection has a worldly-earthly structure: '[r]eliability of the veiling world-sheltering – world / [f]amiliarity of the contributive – earth' (GA82:64). The worldly and earthly dimensions of equipment are intertwined in its ontological make-up, something Heidegger effectively expresses through an antimetabole: 'Equipment-being – as reliable contributivity: contributive reliability' (*ibid.*:65, emphasis omitted). Note that this

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<sup>54</sup> The Latin root *tribuere* in the English 'to contribute' means to yield, both in the sense of granting/bestowing and in that of giving up/conceding. Wrathall (forthcoming) renders *beiträglich* as 'conductive'.

formulation of the account, found in his retrospective notes on SZ, is subtly different from the one cursorily surfacing in OWA. There, reliability is the name for the whole world-earth structure of equipment-being, rather than for the sole worldly moment of such whole. As far as I can see, however, this is hardly more than a terminological choice, on which nothing substantive hinges. The two accounts essentially overlap, with the notes offering a more comprehensive (and likely slightly later) elaboration of what OWA only hints at. I will therefore treat the two accounts as one and, for ease of exposition, refer to equipment's reliability to denote the whole structure, after OWA's manner.

Here, then, we come to a view of the specific modality of world-earth relationship that equipment embodies. Reliable equipment makes it so that earth contributes to world and that world can thereby function as itself, i.e. as an open relational structure of significance whose very openness is veiled. Such veiling allows for Dasein's worldly immersion, i.e. Dasein's immediate responsiveness to worldly significances.<sup>55</sup> This means that reliable equipment enables and anchors a harmonious, synergetic relationship between earth and world. Their essential mutual contentiousness finds reconciliation in a cooperative equipoise. Heidegger speaks in this sense of reliable equipment as the site of 'conciliated [*geschlichtete*] strife' (GA82:66) – or of strife being 'mediated', in Wrathall's (forthcoming) rendering. Equipment is reliable in Heidegger's sense precisely to the extent that it acts upon earth in such a way as to enable stable world-immersion, 'mediati[ng] between worldly norms and activities on the one hand, and earthy constraints on the other' (*ibid.*).

Importantly, this mediating function does *not* amount to a definitive settlement, and hence overcoming, of strife. Rather, the conciliation at issue is to be seen as inherently temporary, local, and tentative. In being conciliated in and through equipment, strife is not sublated, but rather 'warded off' (*abgewehrt*), in Heidegger's apt phrase (GA82:65). In Chapter 1, we saw how Dasein's deep familiarity with its world involves the consolidation and entrenchment of a prior creative projection, whereby the results of such projection become a matter of assumed acquaintance, part and parcel of which is that their very projective character is concealed. We can now see that reliable equipment plays a central role in achieving this. By

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<sup>55</sup> Wrathall rightly notes how in practice, such responsiveness partly depends on Dasein's acquiring the dispositions needed to employ reliable equipment skilfully, so that 'we see and respond immediately to what matters in the world' (forthcoming).

warding off strife, reliable equipment thereby ‘*veil[s]*’ strife itself (GA82:65, original emphasis). Its conciliatory function brings to relative stability a structure whose foundations are ultimately inherently contentious (because creatively projected), thereby concealing such contentiousness. In other words, strife remains constitutive of the context of intelligibility in which reliable equipment immerses us. But thanks to the workings of (*inter alia*) reliable equipment, in our ordinary inhabiting such context – and as an integral part of the very possibility of such (immersed) inhabiting – strife is *not manifest*. In this sense, as Heidegger puts it, equipment-being provides ‘protection against the abyss’ (GA82:63), i.e. the a-byss of the affective opening of the clearing which ultimately lies at the (abyssal) ground of a context of intelligibility, whose consolidation and entrenchment reliable equipment both permits and secures. The clearing and the contentious nature of its projective articulation remain outside the scope of encounterability, so that we can be ‘at home and secure’ (*ibid.*) in the context eventually arising from its projection.<sup>56</sup> But although ‘[w]e believe to be at home [*heimisch*] in the closest neighbourhood of entities’, so that ‘entities are familiar, *reliable*, ordinary [*gebeuer*]’, ‘the ordinary is at bottom not ordinary; it is extra-ordinary [*un-gebeuer*]’ (GA5:41, my emphasis). As we shall see, this point is ripe with implications for the way artworks function.

With this in place, we are now in a position to capture the ontological specificity of equipment in terms of the way (reliable) equipment configures the world-earth strife. Recall the above-discussed template for differing modalities of strife-configuration according to how, through the functioning of a given kind of entity, (a) world and earth are (un)concealed and (b) strife itself is (un)concealed. Plugging the account of reliability we have just discussed into this template, we can see that in equipment, world and earth are at strife by (a) the world’s being *veiled* (i.e. concealed in its openness) and the earth’s being *familiar* (i.e. unconcealed in its contributivity), and thereby (b) strife’s being *conciliated* (i.e. concealed as strife). This brings into sharp relief the way in which equipment’s modality of world-earth configuration differs from that of artworks. The latter, as noted above (and as we shall return to below), involves (a) the *unconcealment* of the world’s openness (which equipment conceals) and the unconcealment of earth as *self-closing* (as opposed to as contributive), and thereby (b) the *unconcealment* of strife as such (which equipment conceals). Indeed, Heidegger himself explicitly notes how the

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<sup>56</sup> By a peculiar dynamic, reliable equipment’s very conciliatory function is the ground of what Heidegger in OWA describes as the ‘fading away’ (*Verschwinden*) of reliability itself. I take up the issue in the next chapter.

case of reliable equipment amounts to ‘precisely the reverse of [the case of] the artwork’ (GA82:64, emphasis omitted): what the artwork *unconceals* (i.e. world), equipment conceals, and what the artwork unconceals as *closing* itself vis-à-vis worldly projectuality (i.e. earth), equipment unconceals ‘precisely not in closure’ (*ibid.*), but on the contrary, as *contributing* to such projectuality.

Equipment’s distinctive way of configuring the world-earth relationship thus defines a distinctive modality of truth-establishment, i.e., on my reading, of participation in the projective process whereby an affective opening is developed into a context of intelligibility. As seen, reliable equipment makes it the case that a certain configuration of intelligibility can be taken for granted. Such equipment grounds the possibility of habitual, immersive human inhabitation of the context of intelligibility structured according to that taken-for-granted configuration. Equipment thus affords a ‘[c]ustody of the open’ (GA82:62) *qua* open, and does so precisely by veiling (the world in) its openness.<sup>57</sup>

Now, however, this very characterisation of the ontological make-up and function of equipment helps us to see that equipment-being is not only a modality of truth-establishment distinct from that of artworks. It is also a derivative one. The reason for this is straightforward. Equipment functions by immersing human beings in a thus-and-so configured context of intelligibility – or equivalently, by veiling the world. This, however, presupposes that a thus-and-so configured context is already in place for equipment to immerse human beings in, or that a world is already in place to be veiled. My pen successfully drives me into the practices of writing I participate in by using it, and in doing so it anchors the region of intelligibility such practices define. But the configuration of intelligibility underlying such practices, by virtue of which they are what they are, must already be there for the pen to immerse me in them with the immediacy which makes it reliable. It must already make sense, say, for me to seek to express my thoughts through journal writing, if the pen is to be able to anchor such practice so that I may inhabit it in the way I do. But this means that a context must be in place in which, say, human beings understand themselves as beings with inner lives to be nurtured through solitary verbal modes of exploration. A context of this sort in turn implies further

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<sup>57</sup> A custody which, moreover, ‘conceal[s] itself as such’ (GA82:62). In my habitual use of the pen, its function as a custodian of the open in which I stand is not salient. Nor could it be: were it salient, I would lose the very immediacy of immersion whereby the pen counts as a custodian of the open in the first place. This will be of relevance in the next chapter.

presuppositions, all of them prior to the pen's reliable functioning. The pen's primary achievement lies in the anchoring of a context that it assumes. To be sure, the pen *also* actively structures my field of encounterability by concretely centring the practice of handwriting and gathering around itself the relevant entities (notebook, ink refill, etc.) in terms of their respective significances. There are the significances (*Bedeutsamkeiten*) which, on SZ's analysis, make up the structure of world (see SZ:87 and *passim*). However, the configuration of intelligibility that grounds the possibility of such significances is something the pen's functioning passively presupposes. The possibility, say, of the notebook being a vehicle for the expression of selfhood is something the pen concretely facilitates but does not participate in deciding. Its contribution to the establishment of truth is thus derivative of a prior contribution by virtue of which the possibilities the pen concretely facilitates are first made available *as* meaningful possibilities. The pen anchors and makes available a network of possibilities which I must be able to recognise as possibilities for them to have any grip on me – an ability which is not the pen's doing. Thus, tool use is never ontologically neutral on Heidegger's picture, in the sense that it is always already informed by a certain way of shaping the context of sense-making within which it takes place – a context which tool use, if functioning properly, helps to maintain.

Note that the derivative status of equipment's contribution to truth-establishment can only be appreciated if the distinctiveness of equipment's modality of contribution is first acknowledged. As such, it is another dimension of Heidegger's account that is lost in standard readings of Heidegger's world-earth relationship, which, as I argued, are not receptive to the plurality of modalities of such relationship. This necessarily precludes such readings from further recognising the hierarchical ordering of these modalities, which constitutes the architecture of Heidegger's tiered picture of truth-establishment, both in its coming about and in its holding in place.

### 3.3 Textural Sense

Let us briefly take stock of the discussion so far. We saw that the resources needed to ground Heidegger's thesis about the function of works are not to be found in OWA itself, for OWA

lacks an account of its own theoretical foundations. I argued that such foundations lie in a conception of openings of sense as essentially affective in nature. In §§2.1-2.2, I developed such conception primarily through an analysis of *Contributions*. In §2.3, I discussed the senses in which an affective opening requires projection, ultimately due to the fact that attunement textures its respective opening while leaving it otherwise indeterminate. By distinguishing between the two forms of strife at play in OWA, I suggested that it is precisely at the level of projection – rather than, as many commentators have assumed, at the level of the underlying opening – that Heidegger’s doctrine of the world-earth strife finds its theoretical place. In this chapter, I have so far sought to address a further way in which world-earth strife has been misunderstood, namely by being read as monadic rather than pluralistic in nature. A reassessment of Heidegger’s conception of the being of equipment (i.e. reliability) and its distinctive mode of configuring the world-earth strife has allowed us to begin to redress this misconception. At the same time, such discussion provides us with a contrasting case against which to bring the projective modality distinctive of artworks into sharper relief, as well as to appropriately locate it within what begins to appear as a further tiered structure internal to Heidegger’s picture of the process of projection itself. Very schematically, equipment anchors a configuration of intelligibility on which it depends. Attunement transposes one into an opening of sense that requires to be projected into a configuration. Artworks lie in the middle, providing the configuration that attunement needs and equipment entrenches. This brings us back, this time equipped with a better-defined theoretical framework, to the question of what makes artworks distinctively suited to such function. In doing so, we aim to vindicate thesis (iii) in our overarching argument, namely the thesis that works are entities distinctively suited to projecting affective openings. Ultimately, this is done with a view to vindicating, through the overarching argument’s three theses taken together, OWA’s claim that truth has an inherent pull towards the work.

I will begin with a general observation about the modality of sense-making characteristic of artworks. I introduce it now to have it in place before embarking on an extended discussion of issues in OWA that will require close exegetical attention. After such discussion, I will bring back the general observation to show how it functions within Heidegger’s picture, as illuminated by the intervening analysis.

The observation concerns a feature of artworks that I take to be both essential to them and recognised as such by Heidegger. Specifically, it is essential to artworks that they carry and convey some particular meaning, recognisably distinctive to each artwork, and yet one whose contours and content cannot be exhaustively interpreted or univocally ascertained through propositional discourse.<sup>58</sup> Such resistance to discursive reduction does not preclude the determinacy of each artwork's particular meaning, blending each purported individual into another in an indeterminate blur, but rather it is part and parcel of the kind of individuality each artwork exhibits. That meaning be so conveyed is not a failure or limit of artistic sense-making, but precisely what constitutes the distinctive nature of the sense artworks make. This is reflected in the phenomenology of artistic encounters, whereby artworks are experienced as conveying an understanding of whatever they are about that is inextricably intertwined with a fecund elusiveness. As Gadamer once put it, the 'truth' of the work of art 'is not the flat laying bare of sense, but rather the unfathomableness and depth of its sense' (2012:115). In what follows, I will refer to this distinctive way in which artworks signify as their making *textural* sense, or equivalently, as making sense *texturally*.

In literary criticism, with a usage tracing back to the New Critics, it is common to employ the notion of texture to refer, very roughly, to the distinctive qualitative feel a particular work possesses by virtue of the unique interplay of its concrete, sensuous elements (including such features as imagery, metaphor, tone, etc.). A standard textbook way of capturing the notion of texture here is to define it negatively as what is necessarily left out by the paraphrase of a work's abstractable discursive contents (including such features as subject matter, plot, etc.).<sup>59</sup> While perhaps useful in critical practice, however, this way of construing the distinction risks distorting a more fundamental point – namely, that any such distinction is itself an abstraction from the underlying integral nature of artistic sense-making. Texture and structure are only distinguishable *a posteriori*, out of a whole which is itself prior to, and the basis of, such distinguishability. Strictly, and crucially, there is no texture of a work in addition to a discursively isolable structure, as though one could take each of such components *per se* and then create an artistic whole by juxtaposing them. Rather, an artwork's discursive contents are inherently textural. It is not simply that a paraphrase of the artwork's discursive contents leaves

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<sup>58</sup> This point is made much of by Pippin (2024), to whose discussion I am indebted.

<sup>59</sup> See e.g. Baldick (2001:257-58).

behind some additional, textural properties that the artwork possesses in addition to and beyond its discursive ones. Rather, any paraphrase of an artwork's discursive contents *ipso facto* involves a reductive abstraction from its discursive-textural whole.<sup>60</sup> Texture is integral to the kind of sense artworks make – or equivalently, artworks make sense texturally. This modality of sense-making is that by virtue of which the sense an artwork makes inherently defies definite and definitive grasp. Artworks are accordingly only amenable to a hermeneutic-experiential mode of critical engagement. Such engagement has as its task to succeed, by whichever strategy is suitable, in critically rendering the textural whole of sense whereby artworks mean what they mean.<sup>61</sup>

In apprehending, say, a line of poetry, I apprehend an interwoven whole of linguistic meaning and pure sound in which meaning constantly tends to fade into sound and sound to resound through meaning, without resolution. The line of verse is what it is precisely as the unity of sense made up of this ongoing dynamic relationship. It is successful *qua* the particular work it is to the extent that its inherent tension, while unresolved, achieves a fitting equipoise that holds the line together and keeps it going as this particular dynamic whole. The linguistic meaning of the line is grasped as charged with a richness of significance that *these* particular sounds confer on it without explication, and the sounds are grasped as resonating with a fullness that they reveal only in their sustaining *this* particular meaning. In this sense, their dynamic tension, for all its lack of resolution, and indeed because of it, is encountered as complete in itself. The achievement of such self-sufficiency is what Heidegger refers to as the rest, or quiet (*Ruhen*), exhibited by the work. Such rest 'is an intimate gathering of movement' (GA5:34), hence not a synthesis that sublates movement, but rather a dynamic equilibrium of elements in mutual tension, fitting together precisely in and through such tension.

That Heidegger himself sees things in this way is shown by his remarks on language as a (spontaneously) 'growing work' (*wachsende Werk*) (GA82:88). *Qua* work, language is a "unity" of '[t]he closing in "phonation" [*Lautung*] and the opening of naming' (*ibid.*). Such a unity is 'not "monistic"' (*ibid.*), but constituted by an inherent conflictual dynamic without resolution,

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<sup>60</sup> Herein are rooted the issues associated with what has come to be known as the 'heresy of paraphrase' in criticism, for whose classic statement see Brooks (1947).

<sup>61</sup> Pippin (2024) emphasises this point and its centrality to Heidegger's philosophical project at large. The propositional irreducibility of artworks, he writes, makes it so that '[i]n criticism and interpretation, the ideal cannot be paraphrase, but a way of re-creating the experience of reading the poem, say, or some way to awaken in one's audience what it is to read the poem attentively' (73).

hence ‘not dialectic[al]’ (*ibid.*, emphasis omitted). The key phenomenon at issue here is precisely the essential reciprocal interweaving between the conveyance of meaning, its being “‘pro’-nounce[d]’ (*aus’-sprechen*), i.e. spoken out (*aus*) ‘into the openness’, and the ‘closure – phonation – tonality [*Tönung*]’ (*ibid.*:89) with which such conveyance stands in unresolved, but self-contained tension. Such interweaving is essentially constitutive of the very way in which a linguistic work, such as our line of poetry, makes sense as a work.

With this general, preliminary point in place, I now return to OWA’s text to examine whether and how its own theoretical dynamics and conceptual apparatus support the interpretive picture I am presenting. This will take us on a detour through some of OWA’s most intricate exegetical knots, at the end of which I will show how the textural sense-making of artworks, as I have just introduced it, underpins their suitability for sustaining the kind of projection that, as our detour will show, OWA ascribes to artworks. This will ultimately vindicate claim (iii) that artworks are distinctively suitable for projecting affective openings. The detour will involve three main steps: first, interpreting OWA’s notions of rift and figure; secondly, showing how both depend on a prior understanding of being; thirdly, showing how such prior understanding itself depends on an affective opening. As noted above, my case will be presented through an extended interpretive reference to Heidegger’s own OWA example of a Greek temple.

### 3.4 Rift and Figure

If we turn to OWA to locate in it the outcome of what I call the artwork’s projection, the natural candidate is what Heidegger calls a rift (*Riß*). This identification may sound exegetically hazardous, given the elusive character of the notion and the fact that the passages in which Heidegger introduces it are among the most tortured in OWA (see GA5:51). Unsurprisingly, scholars have long struggled with it.<sup>62</sup> Nevertheless, this identification is suggested by Heidegger himself, as when he writes that ‘[w]hat poetry as a clearing project [*Entwurf*] [...]

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<sup>62</sup> Despite its centrality, the notion is not mentioned in Young’s book-length treatment of OWA (2001); it is mentioned without gloss by Dreyfus (2005:412); it is touched on with little elaboration by Harries (2009:155-59); it is given only an etymological gloss by Backman (2015:151-52). Thomson (2011) treats it more explicitly. I address his reading presently.

throws in advance [*vorauswirft*] into the rift of the figure is the open that it lets happen' (GA5:60).

Leaving aside for the moment the issue of the rift-figure relationship, we can see how Heidegger himself here construes rift as what an underlying open(ing) is projected into by poetry, i.e. as the outcome of artistic projection of such opening. Indeed, the framework I have been proposing fits naturally with this textual indication. On such framework, artworks function by creatively projecting openings of sense. Rift, as the outcome of such projection, would thus refer to a particular projective arrangement of the world-earth relationship, whereby world and earth are brought together according to a unified pattern. Such pattern may then function as (part of) the basic configuration of an opening of intelligibility. This makes sense of Heidegger's characterisation of the rift as what 'brings the controversy [*das Gegenwändige*] [i.e. of world and earth] [...] into a unique contour [*Umriss*]' (GA5:51). Through such contour, rift 'sketches [*zeichnet*] the fundamental traits [*Grundzüge*] of the emergence of the clearing of entities' (GA5:51). The rift is said thereby to function as an outline (*Aufriß*) (*ibid.*) of the respective clearing. In short, then, 'rift' would be Heidegger's name for what I have referred to as a configuration of intelligibility as the outcome of artistic projection.

This construal of the rift differs in one important respect from that offered by Thomson (2011). A discussion of my points of disagreement with him may help to better bring out my reading and its import. Thomson understands the rift as *prior* to artistic projection – i.e., in his terminology, to artistic *gestalting* (see 2011:101-2 and *passim*). On this construal, rift would be a name for 'the abundance of ways in which being [...] offers itself to us' (101), to which the artist would respond by projecting (*gestalting*) one among such ways and 'bringing it into the light of day' (see *ibid.*). Note, however, that this reading seems explicitly at odds with Heidegger's claim that strife is 'structured' (*gefügt*) by the work 'into the rift' (GA5:56). If rift were prior to projection, rather than its outcome, such claim would not be available to Heidegger. On Thomson's construal, the rift would have to be that which the work structures (i.e. the basis of the structuring), rather than what the work structures (strife) *into* (i.e. the result of the structuring, as per my reading). Similarly with regard to the following passage: 'What poetry, as clearing project, [...] preliminarily throws [*vorauswirft*] into the rift of the figure is the

open that it lets happen' (GA5:60). The rift is what poetry projects (the open) *into*, rather than the basis for poetry's projection. (More on figure below.)

The confusion appears to arise from Heidegger's admittedly tortuous, if much-quoted, OWA remarks on a dictum by Albrecht Dürer, whose conclusion Thomson quotes and explicitly bases his understanding of rift on. Dürer's saying, as reported by Heidegger, reads: 'For art truly lies in nature; whoever can wrest it out [*heraus reißen*] has it' (GA5:58). Heidegger reads Dürer as implying that the rift would be already in nature, prior to any artistic projection, so that art would be merely a way of bringing out what nature harbours within itself. He thus glosses Dürer: "'Wresting" here means extracting [*Herausholen*] the rift and drawing [*reißen*] the rift with the drawing pen on the drawing board' (*ibid.*). In construing art as a means of drawing out what lies implicitly within the realm of the intelligible, this view is broadly in line with the one Thomson ascribes to Heidegger. But it is precisely this view that Heidegger, in ascribing it to Dürer, wants to distance himself from. He thus continues:

But we immediately raise the counter-question: how is the rift to be wrested out, if it is not brought into the open as a rift, i.e. if it is not brought into the open *beforehand* [*zuvor*] as a strife of measure and unmeasure *through the creative project*?

(*ibid.*, my emphases)

Heidegger's objection to Dürer is that nature can be grasped as harbouring a rift (and hence art as bringing out what lies implicitly in nature) *only* if art has already ('beforehand') projected a rift on whose basis and in whose terms nature can be understood at all. The rift in the latter sense is the configuration of intelligibility in terms of which 'the fundamental traits of the emergence of the clearing of entities' are 'sketched' (GA5:51). But such rift cannot itself be found in nature, on pain of infinite regress. Nature can be grasped as harbouring something like hidden patterns of meaningfulness to be artistically brought out (i.e. the view Heidegger ascribes to Dürer) only on the basis of a configuration of intelligibility in accordance with which nature can be thus understood. Such configuration *is* the rift in the sense I ascribe to Heidegger, and is the outcome of a projective articulation which is *not* itself graspable as the extraction of something already implicit in nature. Heidegger thus concludes:

[(i)] There certainly lies in nature a rift, measure, and limit, as well as an ability-to-produce that is bound to them, [namely] art. [(ii)] But it is equally certain that this art in nature is first made manifest through the work, because it lies originally in the work.

That is to say: something like measure and limit, i.e. ‘rift’ in Dürer’s sense, can only be found in nature by virtue of the prior artistic projection of a configuration of intelligibility, i.e. rift in Heidegger’s sense, according to which nature can be so grasped. The sentence I marked as (i) in the quotation is a statement of Dürer’s view, which Heidegger accepts – provided it is understood as grounded on the prior claim expressed by the sentence I marked as (ii). In quoting this same passage in isolation from the broader context I have rehearsed, however, Thomson (2011:201) appears not to register the relation of dependence of (i) on (ii). Rather, he treats them as lying on the same theoretical plane, and accordingly reads Heidegger as saying that the rift is implicitly there in nature (as an inchoate possibility) and that art is what brings it out (in actually realised form). Thomson thus ends up attributing to Heidegger a variant of Dürer’s view contaminated by Heideggerian elements, rather than seeing Heidegger as tracing Dürer’s view back to his own as its ontological presupposition.<sup>63</sup> According to such presupposition, *contra* Thomson, the rift is a configuration of intelligibility which the artwork articulates projectively, and on whose basis only a view of the art-nature relationship such as Dürer’s is possible. The broader point here is that for Heidegger, nature is in principle never encountered as it were from outside of, but always already from within, an opening of intelligibility – an opening whose configuration is artistically projected. Such projection is thus prior to whatever is encountered as nature and in nature.<sup>64</sup> It is in this sense that the projection ‘lies’, as Heidegger writes, ‘originally in the work’.

‘Rift’, then, is Heidegger’s name for the basic configuration of an opening of intelligibility. The term is characteristically replete with resonances.<sup>65</sup> We can distinguish three main strands of meaning as coalescing in it. First, and most importantly, the idea of basic pattern and structure, made explicit by such compound variations as *Aufriß* (outline) and *Grundriß* (ground plan), which Heidegger uses to gloss the notion (see GA5:51), and which most readily capture its configurative function in relation to the fundamental traits of a clearing.

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<sup>63</sup> This kind of misreading, to which the passage culpably lends itself, is unsurprisingly widespread in the scholarship. See e.g. the versions offered by Sinclair (2006:146-47) and Harries (2009:166).

<sup>64</sup> The priority of the artwork over any encounter with a supposedly art-independent natural domain is explicitly emphasised by Heidegger in OWA itself (see GA5:28-29). The point is registered by McNeill (2019:296-97), who rightly sees that Dürer’s view is used by Heidegger as a foil to his own. McNeill, however, proceeds to identify the rift with time, in my view unwarrantedly.

<sup>65</sup> See Backman (2015:151) for some helpful etymological pointers.

Secondly, the idea of a forceful tearing (*reißen*), particularly in the sense of a tearing out (*entreißen*) of such fundamental traits by a projective act, thereby tearing open (*aufreißen*) the opening of intelligibility that they configure.<sup>66</sup> Thirdly, the very idea of a cleft or crevice, the most immediate figurative connotation of the term. This captures the fact that the configuration is to be understood as literally inscribed or embedded in entities, much like a fissure in a rock: ‘The rift must set itself back into the pulling heaviness of the stone, into the silent hardness of the wood, into the dark glow of the colours’ (GA5:51).

The artwork is supposed to be precisely that in and through which such embedding of the rift into entities is achieved,<sup>67</sup> hence that which, in projecting the rift, also brings it out into the open.<sup>68</sup> Indeed, the artwork achieves the embedding of the rift into entities by being the very entity into which the rift is embedded. Heidegger’s name for the rift as embedded into the work is *figure* (*Gestalt*). As he sums it up in a rather dense passage:

Strife that is brought into the rift, and thus set back into the earth, and thereby fixed [*festgestellte*], is the *figure* [*Gestalt*]. Being-created of the work means: being-fixed of truth in the figure. Figure is the structure [*Gefüge*] as which the rift arranges itself [*sich fügt*].

(GA5:51, original emphasis)

These three sentences contain, in impossibly condensed form, the key Heideggerian idea of how an artwork embodies truth. The relationship between rift and figure that they specify is, however, far from transparent. Rift, we have seen, names a configuration of intelligibility, which sketches the fundamental traits of a clearing. Such configuration must be embedded in entities, i.e. in and through that entity that is the work. *Qua* so embedded, Heidegger now writes, the rift ‘is’ the figure. But what could this mean? What is figure, such that it can function as the embodiment of a rift? Let us try to elucidate this with reference to Heidegger’s well-known OWA example of a Greek temple – an example that will accompany us for much of our subsequent discussion.

In the first version of OWA, Heidegger writes that the temple, in ‘enclos[ing] the figure of the god, at the same time lets it stand out through the open columned hall into the precinct which is thereby first founded as holy’ (GA80.2:576; cf. GA5:27). Here, I suggest, the

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<sup>66</sup> See GA82:512: ‘[T]earing open the “There”’.

<sup>67</sup> ‘In the creation of a work, strife must be set back into the earth as a rift’ (GA5:52).

<sup>68</sup> ‘As the earth takes the rift back into itself, the rift is first produced in the open’ (GA5:51).

columned hall and the particular design according to which the temple is built – its partition into an inner chamber (the *naos*) containing a cult image of the relevant deity and a surrounding sacred domain (*temenos*) – constitute (a subset of) the temple's *figure*. Figure, to a first approximation, would then be a name for the whole formed by its particular elements and the manner in which such elements are fashioned, making the work the particular work it is.

But note that the temple's figure, so construed, is not an arbitrary arrangement that could just as easily be replaced by another. Its division into a *naos* and a *temenos*, the positioning of its columned hall, respond rather to a certain experience of the human-divine relationship, to whose projection the temple's distinctive figural features are uniquely suited. Thus, the *naos* serves as a separate, protected dwelling place for the god, marking its pre-eminence and exalted status (its 'dignity and splendour' (GA5:30)), while simultaneously allowing the god's presence to reach out into the domain falling under its protection, and thus to enter into the sphere of the human being (who encounters the god by 'honour[ing]' it (*ibid.*)).<sup>69</sup> Thus, the figural elements that make the temple the entity it is sustain a meaningful configuration of sense tied to a distinctively Greek experience of the divine. It is here that we begin to see how figure embodies rift.

This is brought out by noting how the figure allows for world and earth to come into a relationship of contentious intimacy. As Heidegger writes, by virtue of the god's standing out into the precinct, the precinct is 'expanded and demarcated as holy' (GA5:27). What this means is that the otherwise indeterminate earthly base upon which the temple's figure is embedded comes thereby to function as the ground of what becomes the focal point of historical meaning for the community that recognises the god as its own. For, in emerging as holy, the precinct emerges as the core of the community's world (see GA5:27-28). The world is thus 'opened earthly' (GA80.2:576), i.e. opened as grounded in its underlying earthly ground. On the other hand, the earth upon which such world is grounded itself emerges within the meaningful opening of the world: 'Through the work, the earth first becomes worldly' (GA80.2:576). This means for the earth to manifest itself precisely *as* the underlying, ultimately unfathomable ground upon which the relevant world is grounded. The earth is thereby encountered as 'closed worldly' (*ibid.*), i.e. as something which 'closes itself, but in the open' (*ibid.*:581) of the respective

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<sup>69</sup> On the significance of the temple as the dwelling place of the respective god, see the insightful remarks in Harries (2009:105ff.).

world. It is in such reciprocal ingraining of world and earth that their strife achieves intimacy. Importantly, the way in which they achieve such intimacy is a specific one. It is the intimacy they achieve in *this* particular mutual configuration. The world is the so-and-so articulated world of *this* historical community. The earth itself, for all its unfathomability, does not dissolve into mere indeterminacy,<sup>70</sup> but rather becomes *the* ground of *the* world of *this* community. The specificity of this mutual belonging is the particular way in which the respective opening of sense is configured. This configuration is the rift. It is in this sense that Heidegger can write, in the relevant OWA passage, that

[the] rift pulls [*reißt*] the controversial ones [*Gegenwendigen*] together in the provenance of their unity from the unique ground. [...] This rift does not allow the controversial ones to break apart, it brings the controversy of measure and limit into the unique contour [*Umriß*].

(GA5:51, my emphasis)

Intimacy, that is, is achieved precisely insofar as world and earth are brought together in and through the relevant rift-configuration, whereby world is earthly and earth is worldly. They thereby enter into a complex, historically particular interrelationship, which the rift structures.

Thus, rift and figure are both outcomes of artistic projection, and yet are distinct from each other. Nevertheless, they stand in a peculiar unity. The figure picks out the specific way in which a given work is fashioned. The *naos* and *temenos* into which a Greek temple is characteristically subdivided are figural elements of its make-up. The rift, on the other hand, is the world-earth configuration that the figure sets in place and thereby allows to become operative. The emergence of the *naos* as a god's dwelling place and of the *temenos* as a holy domain, around which a community's world opens up as grounded on its earth, belong to the temple's rift. They trace the contours along which world and earth come to be configured in this historically specific contentious relationship. Such configuration transcends the work's figure, and yet it only emerges by virtue of the figure. In demarcating its site in the way it does, i.e. through its figure, the temple embeds the rift-configuration into entities and thereby brings it to light. It is in this sense that Heidegger can write that the world-earth 'strife is fixed in the work's figure and becomes manifest through the work' (GA5:57) – becomes manifest, that is, according to the rift-configuration which brings world and earth to their historically specific

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<sup>70</sup> 'The earth's self-closing [...] is not a uniform, rigid remaining-covered' (GA5:34).

intimacy. Conversely, the figure is the specific figure it is precisely insofar as it is suited to projecting the corresponding rift. In this sense, '[f]igure is the structure *as* which the rift arranges itself' (GA5:51, emphasis added), i.e. the particular embodiment within entities that allows the rift to manifest itself. The work is the entity whose figure embodies a corresponding rift. By being thus embodied, the rift comes to serve as the ordering configuration of the respective historical region of intelligibility. Artistic creation is thus the process of projectively embodying a world-earth rift in and through the work's own figure.

### 3.5 Whence the Rift?

Now, however, if the work projects a rift through its figure, what is the ground, if any, that calls for the work to project precisely *this* rift? What, if anything, necessitates that world and earth be united according to *this* configuration, and that the clearing be structured accordingly? In other words: where does the rift come from? The answer to these questions brings us back to our earlier discussion of the basic opening of the clearing in attunement, and allows us to come full circle in our reconstruction of Heidegger's account of the role of art in the establishment of intelligibility.

Let us continue with reference to the Greek temple as a case study. We saw that the temple's figure articulates a certain experience of the relationship between divinity and humanity whereby human beings encounter the gods as presencing into the sphere of the visible. The temple provides them with both a visible form (the cult image) and a protected dwelling place (the *naos*), delimiting a holy space within the visible (the *temenos*). This functions as the core of a form of life fundamentally informed by a corresponding sense of what it is to be human. In giving shape to entities through its figure, the temple thereby embeds a world-earth configuration for that form of life to unfold accordingly. But all this presupposes that the human-gods relationship *could* be projected by something like the temple. If such relationship, that is, were not of a sort *in principle* capable of finding adequate projection by bringing the gods into the sphere of visibility, the temple would be incapable of establishing a rift through its figure.<sup>71</sup> On Heidegger's account, what the possibility of such projection

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<sup>71</sup> Indeed, since figure is such only *qua* concrete arrangement of the rift, the temple's design would not count as a figure in Heidegger's sense.

depends on is an underlying ontological understanding that makes the very presencing of things the measure of what it is for anything to be. Thus, as he writes, the Greeks ‘experienced the gods and human beings in their differentiated essence and in their interrelation from out of the essence of being in the sense of self-deconcealing emergence [*sichentbergenden Aufgehens*]’ (GA54:163). For the early Greeks, for something to be was ultimately for it to be unconcealed (*unverborgen*), and that meant for it to emerge (*aufgehen*) into unconcealment as something stable and present in its form and limit (see GA45:129-31). ‘Unconcealment’ is Heidegger’s rendering of what the Greeks named *aletheia*, ‘emergence’ of what they named *physis*. And it is by virtue of this basic understanding of the being of entities, as he elaborates, that ‘the open and cleared determines what appears within it to the essential form of the look [*Anblick*]’, in correspondence with which the human ‘apprehending and grasping of entities [...] is conceived as a beholding and seeing’ (GA54:219). That is to say: a basic understanding of being *qua* emergence into unconcealment in turn grounds an experience of presencing *qua* appearing within the realm of human visibility. This means that something like the temple can function to bring the gods to presence in the way it does, i.e. by situating them within the sphere of the visible, only because what it is for anything to be is to be unconcealed, and this in turn means for it to offer a view of itself to human sight. The temple is what brings its respective god to presence, given what it is for anything to presence, based in turn on what it is for anything to be.

There is more, however. Not only is an underlying understanding of being as unconcealment the necessary condition for the kind of configuration projected by the temple to be in general possible. Such underlying understanding also *demands* that something like the temple come into place, precisely in order for such configuration to be projected. Why and how so? Note that to understand being as unconcealment implies a corresponding understanding of the human being. As Heidegger writes, the Greek determination of being in terms of *aletheia* and *physis* comprises ‘at the same time the [...] determination of the human being as that entity which, in the midst of entities as a whole, lets entities prevail in their unconcealment’ (GA45:147), i.e. its essential determination as ‘preserver [*Bewahrer*] of their unconcealment’ (*ibid.*:178).<sup>72</sup> Now, crucially, such letting and preserving cannot be fully

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<sup>72</sup> Or, alternatively but equivalently, as ‘apprehender [*der Vernehmende*] of entities as such’ (GA45:139, emphasis omitted) and ‘custodian [*Verwahrer*] of their beingness [*Seiendheit*]’ (*ibid.*).

achieved by maintaining a stance of mere passive reception vis-à-vis entities. Rather, adequately to sustain their unconcealment requires an active contribution on the human being's part. For without the proper conditions being in place, (some) entities will necessarily, by their very nature, fail to emerge into unconcealment. A mundane example of this would be the way in which some subtle details of, say, a painting can manifest themselves only to an appropriately trained eye. If such details are to show up at all, it is incumbent upon the human being to develop the required sensitivity. In general, unconcealment must be *achieved* by the human being against concealment, and this involves ongoing efforts not only to further extend and deepen the domain of the unconcealed, but also to safeguard what has already been unconcealed. In this vein, the conception of human essence implied by the Greek understanding of being carries a characteristic normative import. To fulfil its essence, that is, the human being ought to comport in such a way as to allow entities to manifest themselves. The 'fundamental attitude' (*Grundhaltung*, GA45:178) to be adopted by the human being seeking to satisfy this injunction is, on Heidegger's reconstruction, what the Greeks named *techne*. As he writes, *techne* in this original sense means for the human being

[t]o grasp entities emerging from themselves in that as which they show themselves, in their aspect [*Ansehen*], *eidos*, *idea*, in order to cultivate and let entities themselves grow in accord with [such aspect], and accordingly to establish oneself within entities as a whole through the production and installation [*Herstellung und Aufstellung*] of something corresponding to them.

(GA45:179)

The last clause is especially relevant for present purposes. The sense of *techne* Heidegger seeks to bring out is one entailing a distinctive modality of human production, namely one essentially geared towards, and only towards, the pure enabling of unconcealment. Part of what is required for entities to enter and remain in unconcealment is for human beings to engage in productive practices that intervene in entities precisely so as to facilitate such entering and remaining. On this understanding of *techne*, human beings set out to alter entities not with a view to mastering their autonomous emergence, but rather to scaffolding it more fully and thereby promoting it. In this sense, '*techne* is the way of proceeding *against physis*, but *here* not yet in order to overpower and exploit it [...], but conversely, in order to maintain the prevailing of *physis* in

unconcealment' (GA45:179-80, original emphases).<sup>73</sup> This task functions as the unitary underlying aim animating the manifold productive modalities through which the early Greeks unfold their historical existence. As Heidegger writes:

Letting-prevail [of entities in their unconcealment] is carried out by virtue of [the human being's] setting entities out in their shapes and presencings [*Gestalten und Anwesungen*] and safeguarding them in these – a happening in which poetry and the plastic arts, the state-founding deed and the worship of the gods first receive their essence[.] (GA45:147-48)

As this passage makes clear, this is the light in which Heidegger's interpretation of the temple's ontological import should be read. It has long been commonplace – indeed, one of the few points on which most OWA commentators seem to agree – to understand such import as a matter of making explicit the Greek people's pre-existing, but hitherto only implicit, way of being and self-understanding.<sup>74</sup> But if the temple does that, it is as a result of its functioning to constructively unfold what the Greeks experience as an essential historical task. The temple, that is, is not simply, or primarily, a way for the Greeks to *become aware* of and/or consolidate their fundamental ontological commitments, but first and foremost a way of *actively realising* the aims which such commitments set for them. Thus, in constructing an abode for its god, the temple's contribution is not so much that of giving an explicit rendering of the Greeks' sense of the divine. It is rather – given an overarching sense of being as emerging into unconcealment – that of creating the conditions, hitherto non-obtaining within entities, for the very appearance and persistence of the divine within such sphere. The temple's figure, the specific way in which it arranges the space of holiness and worship, is thus a creative response to and projective advancement of the goal to which Greek humanity is impelled by its sense of its own essence. The worldly-earthly rift thereby established develops and better determines the internal fabric of historical existence as informed by the relevant basic ontological understanding. In this sense, poetry and the arts, which receive their essence from the task of

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<sup>73</sup> Heidegger's emphasis on 'here' implies, of course, that the overpowering and exploitative character of *techné*, while not *yet* in place, will eventually become dominant. Indeed, and crucially for Heidegger, it is precisely the non-overpowering, non-exploitative originary Greek *techné* that will, in quasi-dialectical fashion, give rise to such an antithetical later development, as the Greek inception transitions into metaphysics and becomes increasingly forgotten.

<sup>74</sup> Different scholars cash out differently the notion of what exactly it is that is made explicit: it is the Greek world in Young's (2001), Han-Pile's (2011), and Pippin's (2013) readings; the style governing the Greeks' practices, in Dreyfus's (see 2005:410); or their 'sense of what is and what matters', in Thomson's (2011:43, emphasis omitted). But they all agree that the temple's basic ontological function is to bring out and reinforce an otherwise tacit (self-)understanding.

letting entities ‘prevail’ in their unconcealment, are ‘then to make [such essence] in-being [*seiend*] historically and as history’ ‘in their words and works’ (GA45:148).

Grasping the temple as a product of *techne* in this original Greek sense of ‘letting-entities-prevail’ also allows us to better capture the way Heidegger construes the temple’s relationship to (what we might pre-theoretically refer to as) ‘natural’ entities. Here it may be instructive to compare the relevant passages of OWA with some of Hegel’s – passages with which Heidegger’s temple discussion is in implicit but sustained dialogue.<sup>75</sup> Thus, in his *Lectures on Aesthetics*, Hegel construes architecture as an art form whose task ‘consists in so manipulating external inorganic nature that [...] it becomes cognate to spirit’, ‘work[ing] it free from the jungle of finitude and the monstrosity of chance’ with a view to ‘open[ing] the way for the adequate actuality of the god’ (1975:84). Architecture thereby

levels a place for the god, forms his external environment, and builds for him his temple as the place for the inner composure of the spirit [...]. It raises an enclosure for the assembly of the congregation, as protection against the threat of storm, against rain, tempest, and wild animals[.]

(*ibid.*)

The space thus arranged is then ready to host the statue of the god ‘as the lightning-flash of individuality’ (*ibid.*).

The manifest points of overlap between this characterisation and Heidegger’s allows us to neatly pin down the key difference between them. In Hegel, *techne* acts upon nature in order to spiritualise it. Through the architectural work, ‘the inorganic external world has been purified, set in order symmetrically, and made akin to spirit’ (*ibid.*). The point of this intervention is to alter nature in order to adapt it and make it hospitable to the needs and purposes of human spirit. The temple is functional for them insofar as it sets the stage for the subjective apprehension of divinity by the community, objectively mediated by the god’s statue (see *ibid.*:85-86). The specificity of Heidegger’s construal of Greek *techne* stands out precisely by noticing how the point of the temple’s intervention in nature is not that of bending nature to spiritual needs and purposes, but rather to foster the unfolding of ‘nature’ itself – i.e. *physis*

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<sup>75</sup> See the point in Harries (2009:103ff.), to whose discussion I am indebted. The way in which Hegel, as he puts it, ‘shadow[s]’ (*ibid.*:4) OWA in its entirety has been much noted in the literature. For an influential discussion, see Taminiaux (1993).

– in its own mode of being, against the background of an experience of being as unconcealment. He thus writes:

[T]he creators [...] throw the block of the work against the overwhelming prevailing and bind into it the world thereby opened up. Only with such works does the prevailing, *physis*, come to a stand in presencing. (GA40:66)

The shape and measure the architectural work establishes amidst entities are not a corrective to the shapelessness and measurelessness of entities themselves. On the contrary, by setting itself, in its orderly figure, within and against an unordered landscape, the temple precisely enables the appearance of landscape *as* unordered, which is to say, to appear as what it is in itself:

Standing-there, the building withstands the storm rushing over it and thus first shows the storm itself in its violence. [...] The work's unshaken character stands out against the surging of the ocean tide, and out of its rest lets the latter's roaring appear. (GA5:28)

The temple's steadiness contrasts with the sheer emergence of *physis*, and it is precisely in this way that it brings out the distinctive characteristics of the entities that emerge in its vicinity, allowing each to come into its own and present itself accordingly. The figural features of the temple, by virtue of which it establishes itself on its site by resting firmly on it and towering above it in its well-ordered traits, are not, as in Hegel, directed towards an affirmation of the human spirit against the finitude and contingency of nature. Rather, they are what they are because of their inherent suitability for eliciting from the entities constituting the temple's surrounding site the specificity of their manifold ways of appearing. The temple's particular figure, that is, does not arise out of an essential drive to spiritualise nature. What it responds to, rather, is an essential aspiration to let entities prevail in unconcealment – the kind of unconcealment that is most proper to each of them, thereby 'setting' them 'out in their shapes and presencings and safeguarding them in these' (GA45:147). Here, Greek *techné* as 'the production and installation of something *corresponding* to' entities (GA45:179, my emphasis) takes place precisely by producing and installing something that *stands in contrast* with them, as a foil against which they may stand out. One corresponds to the emergence of entities not by superficially striving to imitate it, but by sensitively adapting to its local character with a view

to sustaining its specificity.<sup>76</sup> It is in this sense that the artwork carries forward the Greek understanding of being as *aletheia* and *physis*, namely by giving it a distinctive creative projection within the local scope of its working.

Thus, while in Hegel the temple serves as a setting for spiritual activity proper, to which it is functional, in Heidegger the temple is *itself* what lets entities emerge. This is clearest when we elaborate on what strikes me as Heidegger's most subtly designed allusion to Hegel's passage. Hegel, as seen, writes that the temple's enclosure functions 'as protection against the threat of storm, against rain, tempest, and wild animals' (1975:85), thereby providing the kind of material security that is needed if spirit is to be 'direct[ed] on its absolute objects' (*ibid.*). For Heidegger, by contrast, as seen in the passage quoted above, the storm is not something against whose violence the temple protects the worshipping community, but rather what the temple allows to manifest itself precisely in its violence. This is not to deny, of course, that the temple *also* functions as a shelter facilitating worship. But such function is not part of the properly ontological import the temple has *qua* artwork. As with Hegel's storm, so with his wild animals. Through the temple, Heidegger writes,

[t]ree and grass, eagle and bull, snake and cricket first enter into their distinct figure and thus come to light as what they are. This coming forth and emerging itself and as a whole is what the Greeks once called *physis*.  
(GA5:28)

This well-known passage is, I submit, only properly understood when placed in the interpretive context I have been highlighting. By tacitly contrasting his understanding of the relationship between the temple and such surrounding 'natural' entities with that of Hegel's, Heidegger is subtly articulating the way in which the temple serves as an enabler of *physis* itself, rather than of a spiritualisation of it. And again, this is not the same as making explicit the Greek 'way of being', however understood. Rather, it is a projective unfolding of the Greek ontological understanding by way of a work that is figurally constructed out of and in accordance with such underlying understanding. Roughly put, the work does not show the Greeks that they tacitly understand being as unconcealment. Rather, given an understanding of being as unconcealment, it actively allows entities themselves to come into unconcealment. It does so by giving further, more specific and concrete determination to the 'content', to speak loosely,

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<sup>76</sup> See Harries's (2009) insightful remarks on the way architecture 'responds to the landscape' (107) out of a 'sense [for] the presence of divinity' (106-107).

of the underlying understanding. According to such understanding, ‘*aletheia* is [...] the fundamental determination of entities themselves’ (GA45:130). Now, the temple embeds itself amidst entities to let *these* entities *here* emerge into *aletheia*. The temple thus locally enacts and specifies that fundamental determination. What the fundamental determination gets specified into is the rift, according to the construal given above. That is to say, a determinate configuration of the world-earth strife, whereby the historical people whose overarching task is to be the preserver of unconcealment obtains a more richly textured world, embedded in the earth, in accordance with that task and within which to pursue it.

Thus, the core of such import is to sustain *aletheia* and *physis*. However, a point is worth noting here that will become especially relevant below. In OWA, Heidegger interweaves his discussion of the temple’s sustenance of *physis* with that of the temple’s setting forth the earth (see GA5:28). And indeed, it is important to appreciate that to enable emergence just is thereby to enable the manifestation of earth. For it is precisely in *letting* entities emerge – i.e. in granting them the leeway for appearing in their own character and of their own accord – that entities are also granted the leeway to appear as something independent of, and ultimately unfathomable for, human apprehension – i.e. to appear in their earthly dimension. As Heidegger writes: ‘Earth is that into which emergence shelters back everything that emerges, and indeed as such. In what emerges, the earth essences as that which shelters [*das Bergende*]’ (*ibid.*). For something to emerge just *is* for it to show itself as giving itself to human apprehension in a way that is not entirely reducible to such apprehension, and to that extent as being at the same time earthly sheltered. Note that this is *not* a matter of the entity’s offering some aspects of itself while at the same time withholding some other aspects, as would be the case on the reading of emergence proposed by Wrathall (2021d).<sup>77</sup> Rather, it is a matter of the entity’s offering (some aspects of) itself *as* ultimately non-reducible. Take Heidegger’s example of colour as an earthly phenomenon:

Colour glows and wants only to glow. If we measure it with understanding and break it down into numbers of oscillations, it is gone. It only shows itself if it remains undeconcealed and unexplained.

(GA5:33)

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<sup>77</sup> On Wrathall’s gloss, emergence is precisely the manner of presencing whereby an entity ‘opens itself up in one dimension by holding itself back or occluding aspects of itself in another dimension’ (2021d:271).

Crucially, this is not a withholding on the part of the colour, while it is glowing, of another dimension of itself, namely its calculability. Calculability is not *one* aspect of colour which, if salient, would imply the withholding of *another* aspect of itself, which is now salient, namely its glowing. Rather, colour shows itself as colour precisely *in* its incalculability and *as* incalculable. To attempt to calculate colour would *not* amount to a suspension of its glowing in favour of its occurrent physical properties. Rather, it would amount to suppressing colour *itself*. Colour *is* its glowing. Scientific calculation is not another mode of accessing colour, which brings to salience a dimension of colour other than that which is salient in glowing. Rather, it is access to another entity altogether (namely, oscillations). Colour thus is as what it is precisely insofar as it manifests itself, part and parcel of which manifestation is its manifestation of itself *qua* irreducible to human apprehension.

For entities to emerge thus is for them to manifest themselves as at least partly, and ultimately, so irreducible. To lose an appreciation for such irreducibility, and for the ultimate elusiveness of things that goes with it, means to understand things as in all relevant respects accessible to human apprehension. But that is to lose them *qua* emerging. It is in this sense that emergence and earth are of a piece. Accordingly, in sustaining *physis*, the temple is also thereby, and necessarily, sustaining the manifestation of ('setting forth') the earth 'as that which is essentially undisclosable, which recedes before every disclosing' and 'keeps itself constantly closed' (GA5:33).

### 3.6 Projecting Greek Wonder

Let us briefly take stock. We have seen how the work's key ontological achievement is its creative projection and embodiment of a rift – i.e. a specific configuration of world and earth – in and through its figure, thereby allowing the rift to be historically operative. We have also seen that the rift itself ultimately depends on a prior understanding of being. I illustrated this with reference to the case of the Greek temple. The temple's manner of working as sustaining the emergence of entities, hence the specific rift which it projects and embodies, accords with and stems from an underlying understanding of being – namely the distinctively early Greek understanding of being as unconcealment. The Greek temple's rift, that is, is a projection – a

more determinate creative-interpretive working out – of such understanding. Now, however, our guiding aim was to show that artworks are distinctively suited to the function of projecting *attunements* – or, more accurately, of projecting the opening of sense that an attunement opens up as it transposes us into it. What progress, if any, have we made towards that goal by our detour through the notions of rift and figure?

By showing that rift is to be interpreted as a configuration of intelligibility and that as such it amounts to a projection by the work of an underlying understanding of being, I have teased out of OWA's jargon and implicit assumptions the theoretical means needed for the next, crucial step in the argument. For we are now in a position to see that what the work ultimately projects by projecting its underlying understanding of being is, properly understood, an attunement. The need for such attunement to be projected in a rift is what underpins OWA's notion of a pull towards the work. And, as we shall finally see, the work can do so because its figure is distinctively suited to the projection of an affective opening. For the sake of consistency of exposition, I will continue to illustrate my case with reference to the Greek temple.

What is it for the Greeks to 'have' such-and-such an understanding of being? At the most fundamental level, it is for them to be *attuned* in a certain way to the way things make sense, and to have *grounded* such attunement – i.e. to have configured the context of intelligibility in which they exist historically on the basis and as a result of such attunement, in accordance with it, and so as to projectively articulate it. We saw in Chapter 2 that the clearing is construed by Heidegger as an affective opening of sense, so-and-so temporally-spatially textured. The distinctiveness of the early Greek understanding of being is ultimately to be traced back to the specific way in which the clearing opened up for them – and this means to the specific *attunement* in and through which it opened up for them. Heidegger accordingly goes to some lengths to offer a detailed historical-hermeneutic reconstruction of such attunement and of the being-historical dynamic to which it gave rise. It is now worth devoting some attention to such reconstruction, in the form it took in the period of our interest.

The relevant attunement Heidegger names *wonder* (*Erstaunen*).<sup>78</sup> *Stauen* is the standard German translation of the Greek *thaumazein*, the affective state to which both Plato and

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<sup>78</sup> The attribution of the attunement of wonder to the Greeks would remain a consistent feature of Heidegger's later thought. See e.g. his 1955 remarks in GA11:22-23.

Aristotle familiarly trace back the beginning of philosophy and of the activity of philosophising. Since ‘wonder’ is the standard English translation of Plato’s and Aristotle’s *thaumazein*, using this term to render Heidegger’s *Erstaunen* has the merit of cross-linguistically preserving the shared Greek source, and I shall retain it accordingly. Ordinarily, we understand wonder as an emotion embodying a sense of surprise and a feeling of amazement at something remarkable and unfamiliar. To grasp Heidegger’s intended attunement in its proper tonal character, it is important, however, to hear in it both a substantive affective force – wonder as a profound kind of astonishment, rather than, say, a mere superficial surprise – and the implication of a concomitant state of disorientation – wonder as bewilderment and dismay, rather than pure admiration or fascination, at the remarkable and unfamiliar: ‘wonder carries within itself its own kind of terror [*Schrecken*]’ (GA45:197).

To bring out his intended attunement, Heidegger draws a key distinction between wonder in an ordinary sense and wonder in the ontologically relevant sense. He further distinguishes several different forms of ordinary wonder, namely, amazement and marvelling (*Sichwundern*, *Verwundern*) (see GA45:157-58), admiration (*Bewundern*), and astonishment and awe (*Staunen*, *Bestaunen*) (see *ibid.*:163-65). The details of these ordinary phenomena are irrelevant for our purposes. What does matter is that, on Heidegger’s analysis, they all share a defining characteristic and an attendant dynamic. The characteristic is that what evokes wonder in them is always a particular entity as against some or all others (see *ibid.*:166, 173). The dynamic is one whereby the wonderful entity stands out from its context, and does so insofar as it is encountered as something non-ordinary (*ungewöhnlich*) against the background of something else which is, precisely thereby, apprehended as ordinary (*gewöhnlich*). Such conspicuousness is necessarily temporary, lasting until the non-ordinary entity ceases to be there or ceases to be non-ordinary for one. Importantly, the ordinariness of the ordinary comes to the fore only in contrast to something non-ordinary, which has itself come to the fore *as* non-ordinary. This is familiar from experiences such as when the habitual character of our everyday life is brought out in all its hitherto unremarked-upon habitualness only by the dramatic contrast with an unexpected event that disrupts its course. The subsequent disappearance of the non-ordinary throws us back into the ordinary, which precisely thereby

ceases to be explicitly apprehended *as* ordinary. Ordinariness and non-ordinariness, in their reciprocal demarcation, are determinations that inherently ‘need each other’ (GA45:164).

The peculiarity of ontological wonder, on the other hand, is that in it, it is not some particular entity that stands out as non-ordinary in relation to something *else* that (precisely thereby) shows itself as ordinary. Rather, it is what is most ordinary *itself* that comes to show itself *as* non-ordinary. What is *most* ordinary is the fact that entities *are*. As such, this fact is what is (proximally and for the most part) least noticed. That is, the utmost ordinariness of entities’ being is precisely an integral part of the fact that, in usual dealings, entities are never noticed *as* in being – we just deal with them, without further ado. The fact that entities are is ‘that most ordinary which goes so far in its ordinariness that it is not even so much as recognised and noticed in its ordinariness’ (GA45:166). In ontological wonder, by contrast, this ordinarily unremarked-upon fact about them emerges from its withdrawal and comes to strike one as utterly bewildering. Entities thereby strike us in (i.e. we wonder at) the sheer fact of their being – both the fact that they are (their that-being), and the fact that they are what they are (their what-being). And since all entities *are*, in one way or another, then in ontological wonder it is everything, rather than something particular, that stands out as non-ordinary. And since, moreover, not only all entities are (what they are), but everything about them also is (what it is), then it is not simply all entities, but everything *in* all entities that ontological wonder wonders at. Ontological wonder is thus all-encompassing, in the strong sense that it reaches not only, quantitatively, to each and every entity, but also qualitatively to each and every aspect of each and every entity – as Heidegger puts it, to ‘everything in everything’ (*Alles in Allem*) (GA45:166 and *passim*). Note, moreover, that the all-encompassing character of ontological wonder is a necessary feature of it. One can certainly be struck by some feature of something while failing to notice some other features. But one properly cannot be struck by the sheer being of (some aspect of) something without being struck by the being of ‘everything in everything’, precisely because to be in-being (*seiend*) is something that ‘everything in everything’ has in common. To notice that something is, as it were, necessarily triggers a cascade effect in noticing which stops short of nothing. Properly experiencing the being of entities is, in this sense, an all-or-nothing affair.

Concomitantly, due to the noted inherent reciprocity of ordinariness and non-ordinariness, the previous unremarked-upon-ness of entities' being becomes now contrastively salient. But unlike the case of ordinary wonder, such unremarked-upon-ness does not, and cannot, belong to some other entities against which a particular non-ordinary entity is, *qua* non-ordinary, set off. Rather, it is the very fact of all entities' being, i.e. what is now non-ordinary, that is grasped as what had hitherto been ordinary. In this sense, what was most ordinary is now grasped, not against something else, but *itself, as* what is most non-ordinary:

The ordinariness of the most ordinary only breaks out at the moment when the most ordinary becomes the most non-ordinary. It is in this transition that the most ordinary first steps *apart into* its ordinariness and *into* its non-ordinariness, precisely in such a way that the former [i.e. its ordinariness] comes to light *as* the latter [i.e. its non-ordinariness].

(GA45:168, original emphases)

Thus construed, ontological wonder (for which I will henceforth drop the qualifier 'ontological') is the attunement in and through which the being of entities first becomes problematically salient for human beings. In Chapter 1, I followed Heidegger in characterising attunement as essentially transposing (*versetzend*). In transposing, attunement brings about the very opening into which it transposes. Wonder is precisely the attunement that transposes into, and thereby brings about, the opening in which the being of entities becomes encounterable as such. Prior to wonder's taking hold of us, that is, we were immersed in entities as straightforwardly available to deal with (i.e. the being of entities was ordinary, which means that it was both non-salient and *not* grasped *as* ordinary). Now, in and through wonder's taking hold of us, the immediate accessibility of entities is disrupted, and they rather strike us in the sheer fact of their being. Thereby, a previously unavailable leeway opens up in which entities can be encountered precisely *in* their being and *as* in-being. As Heidegger writes:

[W]onder stands in a *between*, between the most ordinary – [i.e.] entities – and its non-ordinariness – [i.e. the fact] that they 'are'. It is through wonder that this between is freed and thrown apart as a between. Wonder [...] brings forth [*erbring*] the shining out [*Aufscheinen*] of the most ordinary in its non-ordinariness. [...] [T]hus, wonder opens up [...] entities *as* entities [...]. What is named here with the 'as' [...] is that 'between' thrown apart in wonder, the open of a leeway [...] in which entities come into play as such, [...] *into the play of their being*.

(GA45:168-69, original emphases)

For such a leeway to open up just is for the human being to be transposed into it:

Wonder is the throwing apart of this leeway, but in such a way that it simultaneously transposes the wonderer into the midst of what has been thrown apart.

(GA45:169)

By being so transposed, the human being is forced into an emergency (*Not*), in the sense that I charted in Chapter 2. There, I characterised an emergency in Heidegger's sense as a condition of needfulness obtaining when (i) a previous configuration of intelligibility has lost its grip on one, and (ii) there is no configuration in terms of which one can make sense of things in its place. In wonder, such a condition can be seen as arising insofar as one is transposed (i\*) away from the hitherto obtaining configuration, on whose basis one could straightforwardly deal with entities, and (ii\*) into an opening of sense which is not yet projected in any determinate configuration. Why so? With regard to (i\*), this is because the configuration obtaining prior to the onset of wonder depended on the unremarked-upon-ness of entities' being, an enabling condition which is utterly undermined by the coming to salience of such being as something non-ordinary. The availability of entities for straightforward dealings fails as soon as their being comes to bewilder us. Rather than dealing with them, we 'step back' before them and 'hold on to [ourselves]', 'enraptured' and 'captivated' by the sheer fact of their being (GA11:23). With regard to (ii\*), this is because it is part and parcel of the utter non-ordinariness of such being that we are at a loss in encountering it, i.e. we lack a configuration in terms of which to comport ourselves towards it. As seen, Heidegger refers to such a condition as the impasse of 'not-knowing-the-way-out-or-the-way-in' (*das Nicht-aus-und-ein-Wissen*).

Now, the all-encompassing character of wonder defines a further dimension of such an impasse. In general, the bewildering character of something non-ordinary is addressed by tracing what is non-ordinary about it back to something ordinary. This is done by resorting to explanatory means of some kind, whereby the non-ordinary comes to be understood in ordinary terms. One finds a way out of one's bewilderment by explaining away the non-ordinariness. Such a way out, however, is ruled out in wonder precisely by its all-encompassing character. Since *everything in everything* is non-ordinary, there is nothing on whose basis one 'could yet explain the non-ordinariness of the ordinary and thus once again take away its non-ordinariness and make it into something familiar' (GA45:167). There is, in this sense, no way out (of the non-ordinary).

On the other hand, one lacks any means of coping with the non-ordinary *qua* non-ordinary. For not only is the general way of dealing with the non-ordinary by explanatory means unavailable here, but its way of functioning is precisely to remove the non-ordinary as such. Any attempt to ‘break into the non-ordinary in an explanatory way’ would only result in ‘destroy[ing] it’ *as* non-ordinary (*ibid.*). There is, in this sense, no way in(to the non-ordinary as such). Thus, one can neither explain the non-ordinariness away nor take hold of it by explanatory means. One is stuck with the non-ordinary and at a loss as to how to deal with it.

Now, what wonder transposes one into (i.e. the leeway it thereby opens up) is a basic opening of intelligibility in the sense characterised in Chapter 2. That is, it is (i) a temporally-spatially textured affective opening of the field of possible encounter that (ii) grounds a-byssally (i.e., in the terminology introduced in that chapter, grounds<sub>2</sub>). How so? With regard to (i), note that in wonder, entities become salient in their purely being in-being. This is for them to be experienced in their pure emerging (*physis*) into unconcealment (*aletheia*). This, in turn, is for them to be experienced in their presencing (*Anwesenung*) into unconcealment and remaining constantly (*beständig*) present therein. On Heidegger’s (admittedly arduous) account, presencing and constancy are themselves construed as the two fundamental (temporal and spatial, respectively) warpings according to which ‘the open from out of which entities as entities (being) have truth’ is ‘constitute[d]’ (i.e., in my terminology, textured) for the Greeks (GA65:188).<sup>79</sup> Wonder thus entails a texturing of its respective leeway whereby the temporal present (*Gegenwart*) is made the pre-eminent temporal predetermination, intertwined with a corresponding spatial predetermination.

With regard to (ii), the key point is that the temporal-spatial texturing of the leeway opened in wonder *predetermines* but also and necessarily *underdetermines* a full configuration of intelligibility. Such opening thus grounds a-byssally, i.e. grounds<sub>2</sub> while refusing to ground<sub>1</sub>. From the fact of the emergence of entities into unconcealment, purely experienced as such,

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<sup>79</sup> The precise details of Heidegger’s account of the temporal-spatialisation of Greek ontological experience are complex and would require a dedicated study. What matters for our purposes is first and foremost *that* he understands such experience as temporally-spatially textured, so as to fit with the account of affective opening I have put forward. And his commitment to such understanding is explicit in *Contributions*. For his attempt to trace presencing back to time – the temporal present in particular – and constancy back to space, see especially GA65:191-92. Of course, and crucially for Heidegger’s broader account of the history of being, the temporal-spatial pre-determination of the field of intelligibility is not grasped as such by the Greeks (see GA65:188 and *passim*). This forms the basis of what Heidegger expresses in the more familiar claim that ‘in the inception of Western philosophy, the path of vision guiding the opening of being is time, but in such a way that this path of vision remained and had to remain still concealed as such’ (GA40:215).

no configuration of intelligibility can be read off. On the contrary, the experiential acknowledgment of entities' being is utterly bewildering. Entities strike us as maximally non-ordinary and force us into the emergency described. Far from providing a ground<sub>1</sub> for the projection of its opening, wonder is a 'most extreme' 'attunement[] to the ground-lessness and groundability of the truth of being' (GA66:236), where in the terminology I have introduced we should read the pair as indexed as follows: groundlessness<sub>1</sub>, (and thereby) groundability<sub>2</sub>. For wonder is precisely that which, in bringing the being of entities into salience for the first time, also renders such being problematic and questionable for the human being. In its salience in wonder, the being of entities does *not*, as it were, tell us *what* entities are. It only tells us *that* they are what they are. It thereby provokes for the first time the question of *what* then they might be, to be able to appear as what is most non-ordinary (see GA45:172):

[I]n the wonder that, by attuning the human being, enraptures it before the That and the What that co-glow in it [i.e. in the That], the inceptive attunement for questioning is simultaneously and for the first time gathered in such a way that [...] for the first time, the what-question breaks out: what are entities *as* entities?

(GA66:271, original emphasis)

And the answer to such question, in turn, cannot be read off from the wondrous experience of entities in their emerging into unconcealment. Rather, such experience is precisely what calls the human being to take upon itself the pursuit of the question that the experience raises without answering.

How is such pursuit to be conducted? We saw that any explanatory approach to the non-ordinariness of entities' being is not only unavailable, but even if available, it would trace being back to the ordinary, hence fail to take hold of it *as* non-ordinary. On Heidegger's reconstruction, the fitting response here is for the human being to resolve precisely to renounce any claim to explaining (away) the non-ordinariness of the being of entities, resolving instead to simply let it be in its non-ordinariness. The what-questioning to which wonder leads is thus not to be understood in terms of the habitual search for an explanation of the non-ordinary. Rather, it is the assumption of a restrained stance that strives to sustain the experience of unconcealment in its very resistance to explanation: 'this thinking questioning is [...] the bearing and withstanding [...] of the inexplicable as such' (GA45:172).

Here it is important to note that such human response is not a mere addition to the occurrence of the emergence of entities into unconcealment, whereby such occurrence is

registered as a fact of the matter. The point is rather that without such response, emergence itself would fail to occur. For, as seen in discussing the temple, emergence is precisely the self-showing of entities as what they are, while at the same time showing themselves as ultimately irreducible to human apprehension, i.e. as having an essential earthly dimension. Such a dimension is precisely what a renunciation of any claim to explanation seeks to preserve. It is in this sense that Heidegger can write that '[i]n this authentic what-question [...] entities as *physis* are first held into the *aletheia* that belongs to them' (GA66:271). The human being resolves to sustain the very leeway within which emergence can occur as such, which involves its being grasped in the earthly dimension that essentially co-constitutes it. At one and the same time, then, the human being comes to *both* 'apprehend[] and gather[]' entities as entities 'in the open *and* thus first [to] experience[] the closed and concealed *as* such' (GA45:170, emphasis altered). Indeed, this is the core feature of the peculiar mode of apprehension that Heidegger ascribes to the early Greeks, on the strength of which he is able to claim that their apprehending entities as emerging – in contrast to all subsequent, metaphysical modes of apprehension – is also and necessarily a letting entities be. Emerging entities are let be precisely insofar as they are granted their earthly dimension. This, in turn, is achieved insofar as human beings renounce any ultimately explanatory claim over entities, hence renounce the reduction of entities to the requirements of a complete human understanding. Emerging entities are indeed *grasped*, but

grasped in such a way that they are thereby released into their own essence, so as to prevail in themselves and therefore also to thoroughly prevail over [*durchwalten*] human beings

(GA45:178)

– rather than, as will then be the case throughout metaphysics, human beings over entities.

The assumption of such a stance marks a radical break with the way of encountering entities hitherto prevailing. Prior to wonder's taking hold, human beings were immediately immersed amongst the entities with which they dealt, based on a lack of any explicit recognition of their being. Wonder fundamentally disrupts this state of affairs by bringing the being of entities into salience and forcing the human being into an emergency that calls for (or compels, *ernötigt*) a response on its part. In resolving to sustain what wonder opens up, human beings do not merely add one compartment among others to their extant repertoire of possible

comportments towards entities. Such resolution amounts rather to a basic reshaping of their way of encountering entities as a whole. For it is a resolution to adopt a stance explicitly oriented towards the being of entities, and to mould all their ways of comportment accordingly. In this sense, the early Greeks' response to the emergency of wonder amounts to a letting themselves be *transformed* by it, in such a way that they come to be fundamentally oriented by what wonder opens up, i.e. by entities in their being. Human beings thereby 'conform to' (*gemäß werden*) *physis*, i.e. they 'hold[] on to' it as their 'measure', 'comport[] [themselves] and establish[] [their] comportment accordingly' (GA45:178). From now on, the acknowledgment of entities as entities will be the new basis for all human dealings with entities. Such resolving to allow one's own fundamental transformation is what Heidegger refers to as the enduring (*Leiden*) of an emergency so as to correspond (*entsprechen*) to it. The Greek endurance of wonder thus amounts to a transformation of the very essence of human being.<sup>80</sup> As Heidegger writes:

In such enduring, what is to be grasped is corresponded to in that the grasper is transformed in accordance with it. In accordance with it – that is to say: that which is to be grasped, here entities as such in their beingness, forces the grasper into a fundamental position by virtue of which the pure recognition of the unconcealment of entities can unfold.

(GA45:177-78)

Recall that, as seen above, Heidegger construes Greek *techné*, in its originary sense, as the basic human attitude oriented towards letting the unconcealed be unconcealed. We can see, then, that *techné* in this sense is precisely a name for the new 'fundamental position' the Greeks take up by enduring wonder. Greek *techné*, the attitude through which entities are grasped as emerging, is thus a way of withstanding the attunement of wonder by preserving and fostering what wonder itself opens up:

[B]ecause in the fundamental attunement of wonder the pure recognition of entities as such, the apprehension of *physis* in its *aletheia*, is the attuning emergency, therefore *techné* and its enactment become a necessity[.]

(GA45:180)

It is by corresponding to wonder, then, that the Greeks acquire what Heidegger construes as their essential historical determination and task – namely, as seen, that of being preservers of unconcealment. To preserve unconcealment thus means to engage in productive practices that

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<sup>80</sup> Indeed, the transformation that will be foundational to Western ontological history. The experience and endurance of wonder mark what Heidegger calls the first inception of such history. See the Concluding Remarks.

ever more extensively and determinately sustain and advance the emerging of entities in their various modalities and domains.<sup>81</sup> In this sense, Greek *technē* is an ‘enactment’ (or carrying out, or fulfilment) ‘of the fundamental attunement’ (*Vollzug der Grundstimmung*) of wonder (GA45:180) by means of a fitting kind of production capable of projectively articulating the leeway of intelligibility that wonder first opened up. Thus, ‘in attuning, [wonder] transposes the human being into that on which and in which word, work, and deed can be founded’ (GA45:170).

OWA contains no extended discussion of Greek *technē* (see GA5:46-48) and no discussion of wonder at all. Nevertheless, we saw above how OWA’s Greek temple counts precisely as a paradigmatic work of Greek *technē*, in the originary sense Heidegger is at pains to bring out. We have now seen that such Greek *technē* itself amounts to the basic attitude that, on Heidegger’s historical-hermeneutical reconstruction, the early Greeks adopt as a response to, and compelled by, the attunement of wonder by which they come to be gripped. As a product of *technē*, OWA’s Greek temple is thus, at bottom, a work projective of wonder. It works by sustaining what struck the Greeks as wonderful, i.e. the sheer emergence of entities, and does so by allowing their emergence and further determining the ways of their emergence within its locality. It thereby counts as a vehicle for the ‘enactment’ of the attunement of wonder – i.e., in my terminology, for its creative projection.

To speak, as I did above, of the temple as projecting an understanding of being as unconcealment should thus be seen as implying the claim that the temple projects an attunement of wonder – or, more precisely, a so-and-so temporally-spatially textured, a-byssal opening of sense which wonder transposes into and thereby co-grounds. The Greek understanding of being is something the Greeks come to have insofar as they resolve to correspond to the experience of entities in their being that wonder opens for them. To come to ‘have’ an understanding of being as unconcealment is for the Greeks to endure the wonderful experience of unconcealment and, by simultaneously essentially transforming themselves, to affirm it and to ground a historical form of life on its basis:

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<sup>81</sup> A project which, crucially for Heidegger’s being-historical narrative, necessarily carries within itself the seeds of its own eventual breakdown. Greek *technē*, by an inherent dynamic, will ultimately fail to maintain itself in its originary form and will give way to a basic attitude whereby *physis* is increasingly reduced to the requirements of human understanding and accordingly dominated (hence destroyed *qua physis*), rather than sustained in its ultimate irreducibility to understanding. See e.g. GA65:190-91.

Attuned to wonder, [the human being] [...] must gain a foothold in the recognition of what has been broken open [...] and experience and withstand *aletheia*, unconcealment, as the initial essence of entities. (GA45:169)

Such recognition *is* the projection of an understanding of being *as* unconcealment, whereby entities are gathered in the light of what wonder opens up (i.e. their emergence into unconcealment) and collectively grasped *as* that which emerges into unconcealment. Such projective grasp is

the originary anticipatory gathering of all that is encountered into the One, [i.e.] to be entities [*Seiendes zu sein*], as a result of which individual entities become first of all visible as such. (GA45:139, emphasis omitted)

The transformation of the human being into preserver of unconcealment by assuming *techne* as the basic attitude guiding all its comportments towards entities is one and the same occurrence as such a projection of entities in their being *qua* unconcealment. *Techne* guides comportments precisely on the basis of and in accordance with such projection, in order to further unfold the understanding that it projects (and thus further project the attunement that grounds the projection). For the projection of entities in terms of unconcealment marks only the beginning of a process of progressive determination of the opening thereby inaugurated (see GA45:131). The temple, as seen, is essentially determined by the role it plays in this process.

### 3.7 Preserving Elusiveness

How exactly does the temple accomplish this? We are at last in a position to address this question with all the elements of the picture in place. Recall the previous discussion of how the temple creatively embeds a rift in its figure, thereby bringing forth the rift itself and allowing it to effectively function as the configuration of the (thereby opened) domain of intelligibility. Thus, as an example, we have seen how the partitioning of the temple's site into a *naos* and a *temenos* (both being figural aspects of the temple) allows the precinct thereby demarcated to count as sacred. Such figural partitioning thus contributes to the broader arrangement of a worldly referential structure centred around such sacred place, and to the corresponding

appearance of the underlying earth as its unfathomable ground (both being aspects of the rift that the temple projects). Thus, we have a figure (i.e. the way in which the temple's own constitutive elements are arranged) in and through which a rift (i.e. a corresponding worldly-earthly configuration of intelligibility) is embedded in entities. We then saw that the rift itself depends on an underlying, distinctively Greek understanding of being. To continue with the example: the precinct demarcated by the temple counts as sacred because it is the site of the god's presencing into unconcealment. This, however, presupposes that what it is for anything to be is for it to be unconcealed. Therefore, the temple's figure is suited to embedding the relevant rift, but such rift can count as a configuration of intelligibility only because being is thus-and-so understood. We have seen that the Greek understanding of being as unconcealment is in turn based on an opening of sense in the attunement of wonder. The temple's figure thus traces back to such attunement as its (a-byssal) ground. It is such ground that ultimately accounts for why the temple has the ontological import it has. If wonder had not opened a leeway for entities to be grasped in their being unconcealed, the temple's figure would have been powerless to let the god presence, etc. On the other hand, and conversely, given the underlying opening of sense in wonder, the temple's specific figure turns out to be distinctively suitable for giving it a specific projection. The temple's figure, that is, is distinctively suited to preserving and promoting the wonder at entities' being.

Now, the question is: what makes a work's figure something in principle capable of preserving and promoting attunement? That is: given that it succeeds in doing so, what about it makes it capable of succeeding at all? This is the specification into which our discussion so far allows us to distil our broader, guiding question in this chapter, namely: what about artworks makes them suited to projecting attunements?

Earlier in the chapter, I introduced the notion of textural sense-making, observing that artworks, by their essence, make sense texturally. The example was how a poem's line conveys its meaning in a way that is inextricable from, and indeed essentially co-determined by, its embeddedness in sounds. In a poem, as Heidegger puts it, '[w]ords mean soundingly [*bedeuten klingend*] – and sound-meaningfully [*klingen-bedeutend*]' (GA82:478, emphasis omitted).

In the light of the intervening discussion, we can now see how this idea fits into Heidegger's ontological construal of artworks. Recall that figure is the specific way in which a

given work is fashioned, such that the relevant world-earth strife is embedded ('fixed', *festgestellt*) therein (see GA5:57). Such embedding takes place through patterning the earth in a way that is apt to embody and sustain the relevant (worldly-earthly) configuration of intelligibility. Figure is that portion of so-and-so fashioned earth which constitutes the concrete existence of a particular work.

Translating this to our poetry line example, we have that the line's figure is the whole made up of its sounds *qua* so-and-so linguistically fashioned. Figure is the earthly inscription of signification, taken as a discrete whole, whereby a work is circumscribed as the particular entity it is. But this means that figure is precisely that aspect of the work that we encounter as making sense texturally. Thus, in encountering the line, I do not at first encounter the rift it embeds. Rather, I encounter the line's figure. But the line's figure makes sense texturally – i.e. it is a word-sound whole which, as Heidegger puts it, means soundingly and sounds meaningfully. But it is precisely as such that it is suited to embedding its rift. Its inherent meaning-sound dynamic allows for the contentious dynamic relationship between world and earth to be contested in and through it. The line's meaning, as seen in §3.3, speaks 'out' 'into the openness' (GA82:89) – that is to say, the openness of world, tracing the pattern of worldly structure according to the rift-configuration it embeds. At the same time, the line's 'phonation' and 'tonality' (*Tönung*) (*ibid.*) immerse such meaning in sounds, which thereby show themselves in their 'closure' (*ibid.*) – so that the world is opened up as earthly, and *vice versa*, in a self-sustaining and self-sufficient dynamic. It is in and through this experiential process that the artwork sets up world and sets forth the earth, as per OWA's well-known central *dictum*. By apprehending figure, then, we come to experience the rift as it is embedded in the work, i.e. we encounter world and earth in their strife, according to the configuration set by the relevant rift, which brings them to their intimacy. Thus, it is by making sense texturally that the artwork can 'withstand[] strife as such' (GA80.2:575) and let it 'be opened up from out of it[self]' (GA5:50), i.e. unveil strife *as* strife, with implications that we will continue to chart below in this and in the next chapter. The experience of textured sense as such – i.e. of the unified tension between signification and inscrutability in the dynamic interplay between, in our example, the line's meaning and sound – is the way we encounter world-earth strife as contested in and through a particular work. Heidegger's claim in OWA's first version that the

work ‘ignites and preserves strife’ because ‘the work’ itself ‘*is* such strife’ (GA80.2:575, emphasis added) may then be cashed out as the claim that the work makes textural sense.

Another crucial point is related to this. Let us continue with our example of the line of poetry. The point is that, insofar as the line makes textural sense, it has inherent *attuning* power – that is, the capacity to attune its experiencer to the attunement it embodies (more on which in the next chapter).

The locus of the embodiment of the attunement is precisely the line’s textural dimension. Heidegger is explicit in this regard:

[I]n the language of the poem, the sound and vibration [*Schwingen*] of the saying are not something superficial, but rather the profound [element] [*das Hintergründige*], the originally and properly attuning [element] of the poetic saying, and therefore inseparable from the sense [*Sinn*] of what is said, which it co-predetermines. (GA13:159)

Heidegger’s talk here of ‘co-predetermination’ (*Mitvorbestimmung*) of sense by sound and vibration is precisely a way of capturing my notion of artistic sense being inherently textural. Poetically expressed linguistic sense cannot be encountered purely semantically, as would be the case if it were expressed propositionally, since in propositional utterances sound is transparent to propositional content. Poetic sense, by contrast, is always already caught up in an essential interweaving with its constituent sounds. The ‘inseparability’ at issue here is thus a stronger relationship than would be had by the mere outer decking of a propositionally expressible content: ‘The poetic is not a modification of the non-poetic, an addition’, an ‘embellishment of’ it (GA82:479), ‘a merely decorative rhetoric for some implied assertoric judgment’ (Pippin 2024:214). Rather, poetic ‘content’ is partly but essentially determined by the sounds (*co*-determined), and it is so from the outset (*predetermined*). Thus, the line’s sounds do not let meaning transparently through, but rather resound into the meaning itself. Poetic language, as Pippin puts it, is unique in that ‘it constantly works against the determinacy language requires without leading us into a merely undifferentiable indeterminacy’ (2024:208-9). It does so, on Heidegger’s account, because its language is inherently textural, and as such it is, as it were, a concretion of the attunement that underlies it – an ‘attuned saying’ (GA39:223) – and of its way of texturing the poet’s underlying experiential field.

And it is here that the attuning power of the poetic line lies. We saw how the ground of intelligibility is ultimately affective and, as such, a-byssal. By co-predetermining meaning

through sound, the line does not abstract meaning away from its ultimate sources in an affective opening of sense, but rather plunges it precisely into such sources. The unfathomable richness characteristic of the apprehension of poetry essentially rests on the way a poem gives linguistic form to, whilst preserving, a thick, inexhaustible (because a-byssal) affective experiential ground. That is, the experience of poetry is affectively charged precisely because it is an experience of a signifying-textural whole (or figure), specifically of sound-permeated verbal meaning and verbally patterned sound. Such whole is in turn itself the embodiment of an ultimately affective ground. This means that the poetic line's attuning power derives from its being a (linguistic) projection of attunement.

This dovetails with Heidegger's own explicit tracing the closing dimension of phonation in language back to attunement ('phonation out of attunement') and the opening dimension of language's naming power back to projection ('opening out of projection') (GA82:88), glossing 'attunement – projection' as a 'contesting of strife' (*ibid.*) – where attunement and projection are understood in the updated mid-1930s sense discussed in Chapter 1. The unity of phonation and naming in our poetic line is an attunement-projection whole, i.e. a figure whose sense is textural. Nothing here, of course, hinges on the example at issue involving *linguistic* sense being texturally embedded in *sounds*. Any artwork essentially involves the textural embedding of some kind of sense in some medium. This allows for a generalisation from the case of the line of poetry, whereby we get the general claim that textural sense-making, *qua* grounded in affect, is inherently attuning. Thus Heidegger: 'The work is what attunes [*das Stimmende*], because itself determined-attuned [*Be-stimmte*]' (GA82:525).

With this, we have finally arrived at the key feature that makes the artwork distinctively suited to projecting an affective opening. One way to look at it is as follows. We saw that affective openings are inherently a-byssal. Now consider the following condition of adequacy for any putative projection of an affective opening:

- (1) An affective opening O is adequately projected by some projection P only if P is such as to preserve O's inherently a-byssal character.

We saw that a-byssality amounts to the opening's ultimate refusal to ground<sub>1</sub>, hence the inherently interpretive-creative nature of any attempt to project it more determinately. The necessary condition (1) I have just stated derives from the fact that any projection that would lose the opening's a-byssal character would not preserve it *as* the kind of opening it is. Indeed, we already witnessed this condition implicitly at work in our analysis of the temple as a projection of wonder. There, we saw how an adequate response to the affective opening of wonder required the renunciation of any explanatory attempt vis-à-vis wonderful entities, so that they might be preserved in their ultimate inexplicability – that is to say, so that the opening of wonder might be preserved in its a-byssal character. To explain the non-ordinary character of entities would have been to undo them *as* wonderful, and thus to fail to project the opening that wonder had opened up. The temple thus succeeds in projecting wonder partly because it succeeds in preserving the a-byssal character of wonder's opening, i.e. it fulfils condition (1) above.

Now, the artwork is inherently suited to this task precisely because it is an entity that makes sense texturally, hence an entity that preserves the ultimate a-byssality of the opening in which it occurs, even as it projects it into a more determinate configuration. Looked at another way: an opening is a-byssal because it is affective; the artwork embodies the attunement that it projects, and preserves a-byssality precisely by preserving such attunement. Through the artwork, '[p]rojection remains [*bleibt zurück*] [...] in attunement' (GA82:95). Thus, the temple projects wonder insofar as it *embodies* wonder itself. Adequately to encounter the temple is to encounter it and the entities it illuminates as wonderful, i.e. to come to be attuned to the attunement it embodies (more on which below).<sup>82</sup>

This allows us to better appreciate the full import of the difference between artwork and equipment in their respective roles within Heidegger's layered picture of the establishment of truth. Equipment, by veiling ('warding off') strife, conceals the a-byssality of its opening ('protects against the abyss'). This means, however, that it fails to fulfil condition (1) for adequately projecting an opening. Accordingly, equipment's distinctive way of dealing with the ultimately a-byssal character of intelligibility – i.e. veiling it while affording smooth navigation within a context encountered as familiar – comes at the price of risking a distortion of it.

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<sup>82</sup> Exactly how this takes place will be the focus of the next chapter.

Thanks to reliable equipment, '[w]e believe' entities to be 'familiar, reliable, ordinary [*gebeuer*]' (GA5:41). But 'the ordinary is at bottom not ordinary; it is extra-ordinary [*un-gebeuer*]' (*ibid.*). Reliable equipment operates by veiling the extra-ordinary character of what it, precisely thereby, makes appear as ordinary. But in doing so, it contributes to a broader tendency to 'forget' the extra-ordinary as such. In such forgetting, the ordinary comes to prevail, which in turn feeds back into the very way in which things are understood and dealt with. A prevailing of the ordinary breeds ordinary ways of understanding and doing. The extra-ordinary, once forgotten, becomes unretrievable through the now prevailing ways of understanding and doing, which, bred by the ordinary, are fit to deal with nothing but the ordinary. (Indeed, as we shall see in the next chapter, this dynamic is at the heart of the process whereby reliability, which grounds equipment's usefulness, leads to its own forgetfulness in favour of sole usefulness.)

The artwork, on the other hand, by preserving a-byssality through preserving affect, preserves the bottom-level extra-ordinariness inherent in an affective opening. The temple, as seen, works by fostering entities in their emergence, i.e. in their irreducibility to apprehension, i.e. in their irreducibility to the ordinary, which is what wonder wonders at and thereby opens up (the emergence of entities *as* what is most non-ordinary). The artwork works constitutively against ordinariness. Its working is an active, ongoing preventing of the forgetting of a-byssality (or the undoing of such forgetting, where it has already set in) (see GA80.2:578). Thus Heidegger:

By virtue of the project, set into work, of the unconcealment of entities that throws itself towards us, everything ordinary [...] becomes, through the work, a non-entity. (GA5:59-60)

This brings out a corollary of condition (1) above. The corollary can be stated as follows:

- (1.1) The preservation of an a-byssal opening O by a projection P requires that one be able to experience O, as projected by P, *as* a-byssal.

This condition derives from the fact that there is no a-byssality unexperienced. The case is analogous to the way in which, as seen above, there is emergence only if it is apprehended as

such, i.e. in its partly earthly dimension. Not being able to experience a-byssality is already tending to fall into the non-abyssal ordinary and to forget the foundational extra-ordinary lying underneath. A-byssality must constantly be won over against its inherent tendency to be absorbed into and neutralised by the apparent familiarity of things. To win it over is to allow the human being to experience it anew and to call upon the human being to sustain it. In this sense, Da-sein, as mid-1930s Heidegger construes it, involves insistence (*Inständigkeit*), i.e. a withstanding of the a-byssality of the opening in which we stand: ‘Dasein itself essences as the insistence of the contesting of strife’ (GA82:25, original emphasis).

It is in this sense that the work, as opposed to equipment, unveils strife *as* strife. By making sense texturally, the work sets in motion a world-earth strife (in the locally determined terms that its rift configures). But this means for the work’s experiencer to encounter world *as* earthly, hence – we can now see – as ultimately a-byssal. ‘Worlding’, as Heidegger writes, is ‘local [*Hiesige*] and ordinary [*Heurig*] and yet non-local and extraordinary’ at the same time (GA82:67). Equipment secures its user in her immediate belonging to the world. As we saw, however, this presupposes precisely world-veiling. By contrast, the *explicit* worlding of world, i.e. the unveiling of world as such, is an occurrence that partly estranges its experiencer from the very site of historical dwelling that is simultaneously opened up for her. ‘The world [...] springs from strife’, and as such it is both ‘homely [*Anheimend*] and uncanny [*Befremdend*] at once’ (GA82:67). The unveiling of world thus involves both one’s ‘inclusion into the openness’ and ‘at the same time, however, [one’s] exposure to the abyss of the ‘There’ (*ibid.*). Such occurrence, unavailable through equipment, is made available by the artwork, by virtue of its distinctive way of projecting its opening.

We saw how the temple sustained and furthered the wonderful experience of being as emerging into unconcealment, giving it a more determinate configuration in its locale. But to preserve wonder is for the Greeks to acknowledge and embrace the irreducible non-ordinariness of entities in their being. The world that the temple sets up is precisely one built on and in response to this acknowledgment. The early Greek world is thus one that constitutively embodies its grounding in an underlying experience of the extra-ordinary. Just as the emergence of entities within such world is an encounter of them as ultimately irreducible to apprehension, so the world itself is experienced as grounded in something ultimately

inscrutable. The earthly ground of world is both one's native ground and an unfathomable depth: 'a ground which, because essentially and always self-closing, is an a-byss' (GA80.2:574). The temple thus succeeds in creatively projecting the Greek opening of sense, insofar as it works it out more determinately, while at the same time preserving its a-byssal character (thus fulfilling condition (1) above), thereby making it experienceable (according to the corollary (1.1)). This character is vividly evoked by Nietzsche:

Everything in a Greek [...] building originally signified something, and indeed something of a higher order of things: this atmosphere [*Stimmung*] of inexhaustible significance lay about the building like a magical veil. Beauty entered this system only incidentally, without essentially encroaching upon the fundamental sense of the uncanny [*Unheimlich*] and sublime, of consecration by magic and the proximity of the divine; at most beauty *mitigated* the dread [*Grauen*] – but this dread was everywhere the presupposition.

(Nietzsche 1996:101, original emphases, translation altered)

The temple's creative projection of its underlying a-byssal opening is embedded in the temple's figure as a textural whole of signification. We saw how the experience of wonder transposed the Greeks into an emergency that demanded an adequate response, namely, the preservation of unconcealment. Part and parcel of such preservation is the preservation of wonder itself, i.e. of the affective encounter of entities, in their being, as extra-ordinary (i.e., in Nietzsche's words, uncanny). This can only be achieved in a projection capable of furthering the unconcealment of entities in its wonderful character (a character which, as seen, 'carries within itself its own kind of terror [*Schrecken*]' (GA45:197)). The temple achieves this insofar as it, *qua* work, has the capacity to project attunement in an attuned and attuning projection – a tonal atmosphere that, like Nietzsche's 'magical veil', pervades the work and emanates from it. This is because the temple makes textural sense and as such can set in motion a world-earth strife that is unveiled as strife.

By generalising on the temple case, we can thus see how the ultimate source for OWA's claim that truth has a 'pull towards the work' lies precisely in the affective character of truth's happening. An affective opening requires projection, in the senses charted in Chapter 2. The artwork, by virtue of its distinctive way of making sense, is inherently suited to fulfilling this requirement. Otherwise put: an artwork's figure is inherently textural. As such, it is inherently suited to preserving strife as strife, and thus to projecting an opening that is ultimately affective. The textural sense-making of art is distinctively suited to projecting (i.e. preserving while further determining) an opening of sense that, *qua* affective, is inherently textured. The inherent

elusiveness of the artwork's meaning is fit to correspond to, work out, and bring out the ultimately abyssal character of the clearing of intelligibility.

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This brings us to the end of our extended reconstruction of how Heidegger's mid-1930s theoretical framework, in which the clearing is explicitly construed as affective and its occurrence (in and as the clearing-concealing *ur*-strife) is distinguished in principle from that of its creative projection (in and as the world-earth strife, in its manifold modalities), allows for a vindication of the claim that the work is necessary for the happening of truth – a claim that OWA advances without providing sufficient resources to establish.

We have traced this via an overarching three-step argument consisting of the following three claims: first, that the clearing is affective (§§2.1-2.2); secondly, that the clearing, *qua* affective, requires creative projection (§2.3); and thirdly, that works are distinctively suitable vehicles for such creative projection (in this chapter). In the process of establishing each of these three claims, we have had occasion to deal with several interpretive issues raised in the OWA scholarship and to situate them within the overarching theoretical frame through which, I have argued, OWA is best approached.

*Pace* Young, for whom, consistently with his collapsing of the two forms of strife, OWA 'stands in need of radical surgery; the excision of the *Urstreit*' (2001:64), we have thus traced how the *Urstreit*, or *ur*-strife, is precisely the ground that only allows OWA to fulfil its intended task, i.e. to construe the artwork as an entity capable of and necessary for the sheltering, or creative preservation-cum-articulation, of truth. Rather than requiring the removal of its very foundational concept, OWA requires integration from coeval textual sources that more adequately fill in the theoretical picture that such concept implies and fits into. In this picture, artworks feature as entities characterised by their distinctive way of configuring the world-earth strife (by contrast to other kinds of entities, such as equipment, whose own, contrasting modality of strife-configuration we have charted in detail), tied to a distinctive modality of sense-making, which I have called textural. As such, artworks are able to creatively project their underlying affective opening into a more determinate configuration,

while at the same time preserving the opening's ultimate indeterminacy as inherently linked to such configuration. Artworks, that is, preserve the a-byssal character of their underlying opening even as they make it more determinate. They project their opening into a specific historical rift, embedded in their figure, so that entities may appear in accordance with it.

For Heidegger, intelligibility as such is ultimately grounded in affect. Intelligibility as such – i.e. not simply (as per SZ) our being-in-the-world, which, as seen in Chapter 1, always already depends on a certain, historically determined way of taking up and giving shape to our fundamental exposure to intelligibility as such. That intelligibility is grounded in affect implies its being grounded a-byssally. This means that our basic relationship to the intelligible is inherently interpretive. An interpretation of our affective exposure to the intelligible takes place in and through a creative projection of what such exposure inceptively delivers us to (i.e., at bottom, a so-and-so temporally-spatially textured field of encounterability). Such creative projection is an ongoing, dynamic task whose character is inherently contentious between the setting of determinate (worldly) traits and an (earthly) resistance to such setting, whereby the a-byssality of the ground is preserved. Sustaining this strife requires experiencing it as such against the ever-present threat of its forgetting. Artworks allow us to creatively project our openings of sense in such a way that strife is both configured and explicitly set into motion, i.e. contested.

Artworks do so, at least, for as long as they are preserved in their distinctive 'workly' (*werkhaft*) being. A lack of adequate preservation would amount to a failure to let strife be unveiled *as* strife, hence a failure to adequately experience what artworks project. This need for artworks to be preserved brings us to the theme of the next chapter, in which I will discuss the conception of artistic experience that stems from and complements that of artistic creation pursued so far.

## Artistic Experience as Retunement

Our discussion so far has aimed at a detailed reconstruction of Heidegger's understanding of artworks against the background of his mid-1930s conception of the constitution of the field of intelligibility in terms of attunement and projection. The account given has been focused on the way in which artworks are needed for, because suited to, the projection of attunements, themselves understood as basic affective openings of sense. We have accordingly focused on the affective grounds for the need for a creative projection and on the work itself as a kind of entity inherently capable of meeting such need. As the end of the last chapter began to suggest, however, such need cannot, by its very nature, be fully met without the outcome of projection's being adequately taken up by a recipient. The preservation of a-byssality which projecting an affective opening demands (condition (1) in §3.7) involves an experiencer capable of taking up the projection *as* a-byssal (corollary (1.1)). Otherwise, a-byssality tends to be lost and forgotten. An account of the artwork and artistic creation as the projection of attunement thus inherently requires being complemented by a corresponding account of artistic experience.

This chapter is devoted to providing that account. I proceed as follows. In §4.1, I discuss Heidegger's OWA notion of a work's preservation, with particular emphasis on how it involves a displacement of the experiencer from the context of sense-making in which the work is encountered. In §4.2, I examine the ontological import of artistic experience thus understood. In §4.3, with reference to Heidegger's discussion of the experience of reliability in OWA's Van Gogh episode, I argue that such ontological import is to be read as stronger than a mere explicit articulation of an implicit ontological understanding, and thus as again implying an irreducibility of Heidegger's views on art to the SZ framework. In §4.4, I show how such a construal of artistic experience hinges on its being fundamentally affective, thereby integrating it into my overarching interpretive approach. In §4.5, I conclude by arguing that this account of artistic experience provides the resources for a novel and compelling interpretation of OWA's exegetically controversial Van Gogh episode.

#### 4.1 Preservation as Displacement

While the point about the essential need for works to be experienced is hinted at in OWA's first version (see GA80.2:569 on manifestness as essential to work-being), both the first and second versions of the essay lack an explicit discussion of the issue. The final version remedies this with a more sustained treatment of what Heidegger now names 'preservation' (*Bewahrung*) of a work by 'preservers' (*Bewahrenden*). The claim that adequate reception is integral to work-being is more thematically articulated:

This: letting the work be a work, we call the work's preservation. It is for preservation that the work first gives itself [...] [as a work] that presences workly [*werkhaft anwesende*].  
(GA5:54)

What is it to preserve a work? On OWA's most concise gloss:

Preservation of the work means: standing within [*Inmestehen*] the openness of entities that happens in the work.  
(GA5:55)

Such openness, as seen in some detail, takes place as a world-earth strife configured in the specific way (i.e. the rift) that each particular work embodies (in its figure). And indeed, in line with our reading, we find Heidegger writing that to 'stand within' the relevant openness is 'to stand within the strife that the work has structured [*gefügt*] into the rift' (GA5:56) and 'fixed in the work's figure' (*ibid.*:57).

The work, *qua* work, projects an a-byssal opening. But, as corollary (1.1) required, such opening only counts as projected (hence the work only functions as a work) to the extent that a human being comes to stand within it – hence to encounter herself, other human beings, and non-human entities accordingly. But, as we began to see in the previous chapter (§3.7), what this implies is that properly to encounter a work is for the recipient to undergo an experience of a peculiar kind. We have seen how works, in preserving the a-byssality of the opening they project (i.e. in unveiling strife as strife), work constitutively against ordinariness, since ordinariness presupposes the concealment of a-byssality (i.e. the veiling of strife).

Now, however, the human being exists, proximally and for the most part, within ordinary contexts – an existential 'state' that mid-1930s Heidegger names 'being-away' (*Weg-*

*sein*), as the privative form of the ‘being-there’ of Da-sein (in the renewed sense broached in Chapter 2).<sup>83</sup> As being-away, we primarily deal with entities against the background of deep familiarity whose structures Heidegger analysed, in SZ’s I.1, in terms of being-in-the-world. But this implies that artistic experience necessarily disrupts the normative texture of everyday dealings, by undermining the very familiarity with entities that it presupposes. This means that adequately to encounter an artwork involves a rupture of the very (ordinary) context of sense-making within which the artwork is encountered. Artistic experience thereby reshapes the very context of its encounter according to the configuration that the artwork embodies – one that is, *qua* a-byssal, constitutively extra-ordinary. Artistic encounters are essentially characterised by this double movement whereby the work ‘transports us into [*rückt ein*] [its] openness and thus at the same time away [*(rückt) aus*] from the ordinary’ (GA5:54).

This transportation ‘away’ and ‘into’ is what Heidegger calls a displacement (*Verrückung*). Its two moments are to be matched by a correspondingly twofold resolve on the experiencer’s part:

A work is only actual as a work if *we* remove [*entriicken*] *ourselves* from our ordinariness and transport [*einriicken*] *ourselves* into what the work opens up, in order to bring our very essence to stand in the truth of entities.  
(GA5:62, my emphases)

The experiencer’s concurrence is needed in two senses. First, it is needed to the extent that the ordinary context within which artworks are encountered inherently tends to deaden their power. Artworks are by their very nature such as to exert a characteristic pull on their experiencer (more on which below) – a pull, that is, towards the extra-ordinary. As such, however, this pull necessarily tends to be covered over and distorted by an ordinary context of sense-making that is essentially predicated on the concealment of a-byssality. For ordinary modes of understanding and experiencing exert normative force over what can and cannot be understood within the context of sense-making that they structure. In particular, experiences that have the potential to disrupt such context tend to be neutralised within it. This is achieved by their being, as it were, pre-filtered through the lenses of ordinary modes of understanding. In this way, the potentially extra-ordinary is preliminarily reduced to the ordinary and its destabilising import domesticated. In the case of artworks, this happens through a dynamic

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<sup>83</sup> ‘Proximally and for the most part, we remain in being-away’ (GA65:301). The being-away/being-there pair is the *Contributions*’ recasting of SZ’s inauthenticity/authenticity pair. See Keiling (2021:735-36).

that, following Heidegger, we might call the *aestheticisation* of the artistic. Broadly speaking, ‘aesthetics’ is Heidegger’s name for the framework of conceptualisation of artistic phenomena whereby they are understood as essentially grounded in subjective inner states of feeling (*Gefühlszustände*).<sup>84</sup> Artistic experience (*Erfahrung*) in its essentially extra-ordinary displacing character tends thereby to be reduced to aesthetic *lived* experience (*Erlebnis*), that is, to the arousal of feelings of pleasure within the subject, which are bereft of any disruptive import with regard to her context of sense-making.<sup>85</sup> Ordinary ways of sense-making thus perpetuate themselves.<sup>86</sup>

Human resolution, in the first sense we are distinguishing, is needed precisely in order to acknowledge the work’s own experiential pull, as against the tendency to reduce it to one’s own lived experience. This involves making room for the work to work on oneself, hence resisting the contextually pressing tendency to ‘drag it into the sphere of mere lived experience’ and thus ‘reduce the work to the role of a stimulant of lived experience’ (GA5:55). In this sense, then, the experiencer’s contribution has the character of a letting (*Lassen*), analogous to that involved in the renunciation of one’s explanatory claims as part of the early Greeks’ response to the call to preserve emergence in its earthly dimension. The self-removal from ordinariness and self-transportation into the work’s opening, of which Heidegger speaks in the above passage, are thus not carried out by the human being alone, but are necessarily mediated by the work. They are, that is, respectively a *letting* oneself be removed and *letting* oneself be transported, which respond to the work’s own displacing character. One thereby ‘follow[s]’ (*folg[t]*, GA5:54) the displacement, i.e. lets oneself be carried where the displacement leads, and ‘exposes’ (*aussetzt*, *ibid.*:55) oneself to what one is led to. The experiencer’s response thus involves a characteristic ‘restraint’ (*Verhaltenheit*, *ibid.*:54) on the human being’s part.<sup>87</sup> Just as the Greeks’ response to the call to preserve unconcealment involved a transformation of their very essence, so artistic experience harbours an inherent transformative potential. By allowing

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<sup>84</sup> On aesthetics and Heidegger’s project of its ‘overcoming’, see the Concluding Remarks.

<sup>85</sup> As the reference to aestheticisation already suggests, ordinariness here is not merely to be understood in terms of the SZ model of a context of inauthenticity, but rather has a being-historical dimension. See the Concluding Remarks.

<sup>86</sup> Heidegger’s lapidary statement in OWA’s Afterword is well known: ‘Everything is lived experience. But perhaps lived experience is the element in which art dies’ (GA5:66).

<sup>87</sup> A significant lexical choice, given the centrality of the notion of restraint in other texts of the period, notably *Contributions*. There, however, it is recast as the name for a fundamental attunement – a sense of the term that we will discuss in the Concluding Remarks.

the work to work on one, one exposes oneself to the reconfiguration of one's context of sense-making, hence of one's own experience and understanding of oneself, in accordance with the configuration that the work embodies.

The second sense in which the experiencer must concur in the work's working is in sustaining the exposure she has let take place. Artistic encounters are marked by a characteristic fragility. Just as ordinariness hindered the work's experiential pull to be acknowledged in the first place, so it exerts a constant pressure on the perdurance of such acknowledgment. The opening into which the work has displaced one, that is, tends to close again, and its configuration of intelligibility to conceal itself again and become inaccessible from within a reinstated ordinary dimension. To 'follow' the displacement, then, is not only to favour the unconcealment of the work's domain of sense, but also to resist the recurrence of its concealment. The restraint of letting must be followed and accompanied by a restraint of 'lingering' (*Verweilen*, GA5:54). Having exposed oneself to the transformative potential inherent in the experience, one now supports its actualisation and consolidation:

To follow this displacement means: to transform one's ordinary references to world and earth, and henceforth to withdraw from [*ansichhalten mit*] all prevalent doing and appraising, knowing and looking, in order to linger in the truth that happens in the work.

(*ibid.*:54)

In this way, the extra-ordinary – i.e. a projected opening of intelligibility that preserves the a-byssality of its grounding – is allowed to pierce through the ordinary (by the experiencer's restraint of letting), which is to say to subvert the ordinary, and to persist in unconcealment (by the experiencer's restraint of lingering). To preserve a work is thus to strive to inhabit the opening into which the artwork displaces one, which inherently involves withstanding and sustaining its extra-ordinary (a-byssal) character:

Preservation of the work is [...] the sober insistence in the extraordinary [*Ungebeure*] of the truth happening in the work.

(GA5:55)

Restraint of lingering in this realm of the extra-ordinary.

(GA82:490, emphasis omitted)

Artistic experience is thus construed by Heidegger as a happening of truth in the sense that the work can (and, if properly received, will) function as a locus for the dispelling of

ordinariness and the bringing to the surface of its a-byssal ground, in the way that the work configures it. This bringing to the surface takes place through the displacement of the experiencer herself into the relevant (a-byssal, so-and-so configured) opening. Note that displacement away from the ordinary also means that the ordinary is simultaneously revealed as what it is and had been all along, i.e. a framework for making sense of things that purchases a generalised familiarity with entities at the cost of concealing both its own grounds and its own levelling function:

[A]s this intimacy of the open counterstrife between self-concealing and self-deconcealing happens, what had so far counted as the actual becomes manifest as a non-entity. It comes to light, i.e. into the open, that hitherto there prevailed occlusion and dissimulation and distortion of entities.

(GA80.2:581, emphasis omitted)

This is because, much as we noted in the analysis of the onset of wonder, ordinariness functions precisely by not being grasped *as* ordinariness. So long as it prevails, it just *is* the way we make sense of things, and remains so until something comes along to disrupt it – a disruption which, as seen, is itself impeded insofar as potentially disruptive forces are preliminarily distorted by being grasped in ordinary ways. As noted, access to the grounds underlying the ordinary must be constantly won over. For even if, within an ordinary context of sense-making, I ‘know’, perhaps on the strength of past experiences of its undoing in artistic encounters, ‘that’ ordinariness is distorting, this purported knowledge is powerless to give me access to an opening of the extra-ordinary (for reasons that will become clearer below). Acquaintance with an opening of intelligibility as such is not propositional, but experiential. Any purported propositional knowledge I might derive from such experience is itself hollow in the absence of its experiential grounding. Previous experiential acquaintance may certainly predispose me to ‘follow’ artistic displacement more readily. But I still have to first-personally undergo such displacement again if I am to be genuinely wrested from ordinariness.<sup>88</sup>

To encounter a work, then, is to (let oneself) be transported into the domain of sense that the work itself projects and embodies. The converse of this is that the work itself determines the configuration of the opening within which, in being experienced, it comes to

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<sup>88</sup> At least so long as the a-byssality of intelligibility is not adequately grounded in an overcoming of metaphysics. This is the broader project to which Heidegger’s thinking on art belongs. See the Concluding Remarks.

stand. As Heidegger writes, the work ‘itself first creates the space that it thoroughly dominates’ (GA80.2:571) and ‘belongs [...] solely to the realm that is opened up by it’ (GA5:27). To properly encounter the Greek temple, on Heidegger’s account, is not to have a pleasurable lived experience at its sight. Rather, it is to be displaced into the opening of sense at whose core the temple stands, gathering around itself the earthly emergence of entities within the world it thereby configures, so that ‘[a]ll things that are then included in its realm become as though something inexhaustible and inexorable had come over them’ (GA80.2:571).<sup>89</sup>

The artwork thus defies being encountered according to standards other than those set by itself (i.e. the configuration it projects and embodies). The standards by which it is initially encountered run up against a characteristic resistance on its part. Its presence accordingly exhibits a peculiar detachedness – a ‘seclusion’ (*ibid.*). Phenomenologically, the artwork, as Rilke once put it,

faces people in the same way that nature does, full in and of itself, occupied with itself [...], or, if one wants to call it that, indifferent.

(2012:39)

The artwork thus presences as something ‘standing-in-itself’ (*Insichstehen*, GA5:34 and *passim*) or ‘resting-in-itself’ (*Insichruhen*, *ibid.*:45 and *passim*). This way of showing up makes the artwork stand out among other entities. As though a proud being, it draws attention to itself as something worthy of special regard. Its presence is conspicuous and arresting. By their very nature, artworks lure us to themselves as loci of prominent manifestness, compelling us to look. As such, they are never fully assimilated into the domain of ordinariness, a domain which rather tends to maximise familiarity with entities by allowing nothing to interrupt its continuous referential texture. Compare the way a piece of equipment naturally lends itself to human use, showing up as affording action while simultaneously effacing itself, ensuring a seamless transition to whatever it is useful for. The artwork, on the other hand, is characterised by a kind of non-affording, and is thus liable to break the smoothness of one’s ordinary engagement with entities. Amidst the ordinary, the artwork tends to make noticeable the fact *that it is*:

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<sup>89</sup> I choose this example for the sake of continuity with previous discussions. On Heidegger’s account, however, the experience described is no longer available to us as it was to the early Greeks, since their world has irreversibly ‘decayed’ (*zerfallen*, GA5:26).

[T]he work casts in front of itself, and has constantly cast around itself, the event-like [fact] [*das Ereignishafte*] that the work is as this work.

(GA5:53)

Importantly, noticing this striking fact does not remove its strikingness. Having been arrested by the sight of a painting, no amount of time spent in front of it will suffice to regiment it back into the ordinary. Ultimately, this has to do with the fact that the work, as seen, makes sense texturally and is therefore essentially irreducible to any complete, univocal grasp of it. Indeed, the more we attend to the painting, the more conspicuous its presence grows, rather than fading. The greater one's attentiveness, the more fine-grained one's sensitivity for works in a given medium, the richer such presence will reveal itself to one. As Wollheim once put it, 'it is part of the spectator's attitude to art [...] that he should make it the object of an ever-increasing or deepening attention' (2015:82). Where functioning equipment humbly and reliably withdraws to make room for us to carry on with our tasks, artworks claim our awareness in its fullness, as though seeking, by an innate tendency, to fill all available space. Absorptive engagement with equipment is such that everything may be in focus except the relevant piece of equipment itself. Absorptive engagement with artworks, on the other hand, is such that everything will be out of focus except the relevant artwork itself. To fail to notice the artwork in one's coping with it, by accident or design to direct one's focus elsewhere, is already to have lost one's grip on it, to have dealt with it without properly engaging it. It belongs to works, that is, that the more they are (experienced as) what they are, the more their That comes to the fore:

The more essentially the work opens itself up, the more luminous becomes the uniqueness of the fact that it is rather than is not.

(GA5:53)

By the very modality of its presence, the artwork thus tends to break through and disrupt the texture of the ordinary: 'In the work [...] what is non-ordinary is that it *is* as such' (*ibid.*, original emphasis). The effect produced by this tendency is what Heidegger calls the 'thrust' (*Stoß*) of the work. By thrusting forth its That, the work stands out in its standing-in-itself as against all ordinary entities: 'The more essentially this thrust comes into the open, the more estranging and solitary the work becomes' (*ibid.*). And since, as noted, the work's standing-in-itself

ultimately depends on its presencing only within its own opening (hence its resisting being encountered according to ordinary standards), the work's thrust goes hand in hand with our being displaced into such opening, i.e. away from the ordinary and into the extra-ordinary (see *ibid.*: 54).

## 4.2 Being Shining

The displacement that artworks effect is part and parcel of their ontological import. Recall how, in our discussion of wonder, we noted that since *everything* is, then noticing that *something* is has a cascading effect. Once the being of something comes to salience, the being of everything tends to come to salience. The same applies to the present case. By thrusting forth its That, i.e. by displacing us into its opening, the work makes the That of everything (within the scope of that opening) stand forth (according to the configuration of that opening). In his notes, Heidegger is explicit about this in a way that he is not in OWA:

[W]orkliness [*das Werkhafte*] places the 'That' of itself in its open – and thereby also the That of what is opened up – [the fact] that entities are [...]. Being is guarded [*verwahrt*] in the thrust and thus in the constant vibration [*Erschütterung*] – provided that the work [itself] is guarded.

(GA82:523, original emphases omitted, emphasis added)

We saw how to encounter the temple is to be displaced into the abyssal opening that it configures. This at the same time means for the temple to presence as the radiating core of such opening, in the terms set by its own configuration (i.e. as the dwelling place of the god, delimiting a sacred precinct, etc.). The That of its being thereby stands out. This *also* means for the entities in the locale of its working to emerge into unconcealment, i.e. for their being to manifest itself *as* emergence, each (kind of) entity according to the specific manner of its own emergence (the storm in its violence, the waves in their raging, etc.), part and parcel of which is an earthly dimension. The That of *their* being stands out, alongside that of the temple, in the terms the temple sets by configuring its abyssal opening, which the temple opens up by displacing us into it. Thus,

[i]n the temple's standing there, truth happens. This [...] mean[s] that [...] entities as a whole are brought into unconcealment and held in it. To hold originally means to watch over [*hüten*].

(GA5:42-43)

The temple brings entities to manifestness in their being *qua* emergence. That is to say: through it, we experience the *being* of entities *as* emergence. Entities are made to appear in the light of their emergence, so that emergence itself comes to manifestness in them. Through the temple's displacing us into its opening, the being of entities *itself*, in its early Greek understanding, is brought to appearance within it.

Explicit ontological talk is remarkably scarce in OWA. But what the essay predominantly couches in terms of the happening of an open, of a clearing, and of truth admits of a direct translation into an ontological register. What has just been noted for the temple generalises to a claim about artistic experience as such. In artistic experience, as we are displaced into the (a-byssal) opening opened up by the artwork, the being of entities comes to manifestness, according to the configuration the artwork projects. This correlation between happening of truth and manifestness of being is explicitly licensed by a passage occurring almost in passing in OWA:

The work of art opens up, in its own way, the being of the entities. In the work there happens this opening, i.e. deconcealing, i.e. the truth of entities.

(GA5:25)

The 'in its own way' in the quote refers to the fact that the ontological happening taking place in artistic experience is of a distinctive kind. The most explicit statement of what such kind amounts to occurs in the course of OWA's Van Gogh episode (more on which below), hence again away from the core of the essay's argument and in a language that is not the prevailing one in it. Heidegger writes:

In the work of art, the truth of entities has been set to work. 'Setting' [*Setzen*] here means: bringing to stand [*zum Stehen*]. In the work, an entity, a pair of peasant shoes, comes to stand in the light of its being. The entity's being comes into the constancy [*Ständige*] of its shining [*Scheinen*].

(GA5:21)

The Van Gogh episode presents its own well-known interpretive issues. Abstracting from these for the moment, however, we can isolate the passage just quoted as encapsulating the most explicit statement in OWA of the way Heidegger conceives of the distinctive kind of

ontological occurrence taking place in artistic experience.<sup>90</sup> The statement matches the way I construed such occurrence in the case of the Greek temple and gives us a language to capture it. In artistic experience, being ‘shines’ forth, and as such it stands forth within the field of encounterability opened up by the work, and remains ‘constantly’ within it so long as the relevant field (i.e. the work’s opening) remains open (i.e. so long as the work is adequately experienced). This means that the being of entities becomes somehow, and for a while, available for direct apprehension, insofar as the respective entities stand out *in* their being, i.e. their That(-they-are) (and, we should add, their How(-they-are)) stands out purely as such.

Directly apprehensible – how? In our period of interest, the most relevant elaboration of Heidegger’s notion of ‘shining’ in its relevance to the manifestness of being is to be found in the context of his seminar on Schiller from the Winter semester 1936/37. There he distinguishes between three senses of the relevant German word and its cognates: (1) *Schein* as mere seeming (*bloß Schein*) or semblance (*Anschein*), as opposed to what is actually the case; (2) *scheinen* as giving off a bright light, glowing, as in ‘the sun is shining’; and (3) a sense rooted in German idiomatic usage in words such as ‘banknote’ (*Geldschein*), ‘seminar attendance certificate’ (*Seminarschein*), insofar as, through such items, ‘something is brought to light’ (*zum Vorschein gebracht*) (GA84.2:677).

It is this third sense that pertains to the notion of ‘shine as letting being appear’ (*Schein[] als das Erscheinen-lassen des Seins*) (*ibid.*:551). The point of the banknote example, as I read it, is that a banknote does *not* merely *provide evidence* that one possesses a certain amount of money. Rather, the banknote *makes* it *evident* that one possesses it, in the sense of making it visible and apparent, of showing such possession, displaying it, bringing it to the surface (another available rendering of *zum Vorschein bringen*). When I take a banknote out of my wallet, the further question of whether the corresponding sum is in fact at my disposal is misplaced, since my possession of the sum is open to view in my very wielding of the banknote.<sup>91</sup> A sense germane to this connotation of the German *scheinen* in English might be that captured by the verb-particle construction ‘to shine through’. When someone’s talent genuinely shines through,

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<sup>90</sup> Provided, of course, that Heidegger actually *endorses* his own claims in the quoted passage. This has been disputed by Mulhall (2019). As I argue below, I disagree with Mulhall’s proposed reading and believe that Heidegger’s claims should be taken at face value.

<sup>91</sup> There are senses in which the further question would not be misplaced, e.g. whether the banknote is in my possession not only *de facto* but also *de jure*. However, they are irrelevant for our purposes.

there is no room for further wondering whether the person *really* has the talent. For it is, as it were, *already there* to be seen, manifest in full light – provided one has the right sensitivity to ‘see’ it. A virtuoso’s skilful performance is not ‘evidence’ of her artistry in the sense of providing a clue from which her artistry might be inferred. Rather, it makes her artistry ‘evident’, it is a *manifestation* of it. The distinction between senses (1) and (3) may also be brought out by reference to the semantic ambiguity of the English adjective ‘apparent’ (translatable into German as *scheinbar*, which however does not exhibit the same ambiguity). Suggestively, the word covers both the sense of something’s being conspicuously the case (‘We all were happy, for the improvements in his condition were *apparent*’) and the sense of something’s seeming to be, while actually being at odds with, what is the case (‘Despite some *apparent* improvements, his condition had in fact somewhat worsened’). This disambiguation might be seen, albeit roughly, as tracking the distinction Heidegger is after between, respectively, *Schein* in the desired sense (3) and *Schein* as *mere seeming* or semblance, as per sense (1). The shining of being in artistic experience is thus to be understood as a becoming-apparent in the sense of an appearing in full manifestness for direct apprehension.

While these clarifications help to pinpoint Heidegger’s intended sense for the key term at issue, however, they are hardly more than pointers when it comes to grasping the *phenomenon* that the notion of being’s shining attempts to capture. For what is at issue here is ultimately a *sui generis* kind of phenomenon, which does not admit of reduction to anything other than itself. That being shines in artistic experience ultimately amounts to a phenomenological claim which finds its ground and validation (or lack thereof) in (appropriately informed) first-personal experience.<sup>92</sup> In the same way, the metaphorical import of ‘shining’ cannot be fully discharged (any more than those involved in the notions of ‘clearing’, ‘opening’, etc.). It is either an adequate or an inadequate name for a peculiar phenomenon, whose peculiar mode of occurrence the naming – through the connotations of the words, suitably understood – attempts to match.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> See Thomson’s (2013) remarks on Heidegger’s method of ‘phenomenological attestation’, along with the verifiability issues to which it is inherently prone.

<sup>93</sup> The claim that being shines in artistic experience is also the basis of OWA’s claim that ‘beauty [*Schönheit*] is a way in which truth essences as unconcealment’ (GA5:43, emphasis omitted). See also: ‘[T]he shine of being – as beauty’ (GA82:478). The etymological link between *Schein* and *Schönheit* is appealed to by Heidegger as part of his attempt to construe an ontologically laden notion of beauty aimed at reclaiming beauty from its aestheticisation. A detailed treatment of this point, however, would take us too far afield and must be reserved for further work.

Ultimately, then, one cannot do otherwise than point to examples: the shining of being is the kind of phenomenon we encounter when, e.g., entities manifest themselves *as* emerging within the locale the temple configures. In such encounter, emergence shines through emerging entities, and such entities *are* in the light of emergence. The passage from OWA in which the notion occurs referred specifically to the shining of the being of equipment, i.e. reliability, in the experience of Van Gogh's painting. We discussed reliability at some length in Chapter 3. The point here is that reliability itself *manifests itself* through the painting. The shoes depicted in the painting, i.e. a piece of equipment, are grasped *as* reliable. Again, the claim that reliability shines in such experience is to be understood as formally pointing to a thick phenomenological finding that is ultimately available only via a concrete experiential undergoing, and at the same time as an invitation to look and notice in the way indicated. From this point of view, Heidegger's recourse to literary language in the Van Gogh episode may be seen as his attempt, whether successful or not, to articulate a first-personal undergoing of the relevant experience (more on this below). The infamous passage may thus be seen as justified in its intention, if not vindicated in its outcome, by the fact that we enter here a territory in which the resources of regimented, 'objective' speech constitutively fail us, and in which reaching for new, tentative expressive means is called for by the matter itself.

Artistic experience thus involves a displacement into the work's a-byssal opening, wherein and whereby the being of entities shines forth. But given that Heidegger *is* committed to such a correlation, in artistic experience, between happening of truth and manifestness of being, what is the ground of such correlation? Put another way – why should the being of entities, in order to shine through, need an *a-byssal opening* of the kind artistic experience displaces the experiencer into? At the root of this is a conception, left implicit in OWA but at play in it, of the 'essencing' (*Wesung*) of being (the way in which being 'is') as inherently contentious. Being, as Heidegger repeatedly states in his notes of the period, essences 'as strife' (GA82:60; see also GA73.1:212-13).

We have seen how intelligibility opens up affectively, hence a-byssally, and how this implies that the opening, inceptively textured but indeterminate, must be creatively projected. Translated into an ontological register, this means: being must be creatively projected, on the basis of a temporal-spatial texturing of the field of encounterability that predetermines, but

underdetermines, the contours of such projection. In the case of the early Greeks, we saw how an affective opening, in wonder, of the field of encounterability in temporal-spatial terms (crucially involving a pre-eminence of the temporal present) was projected into an understanding of being as emergence into unconcealment. Such projection, to count as such, must remain rooted in its underlying affective thrownness. As such, it takes place as a strife between world and earth, i.e. between the structuring of the opening into an ordered network of determinate relations of meaning and a resistance to such structuring. Projecting being as emergence into unconcealment is not a once-and-for-all achievement, but an ongoing effort to structure worldly meaning in such a way that entities are in fact granted their emergence, as against an earthly tendency to undo such effort into meaninglessness, as well as against a tendency for ordinariness to set in and impose its own, dissimulating standards of intelligibility. We have seen how the artwork is inherently suited to participate in such ongoing effort, insofar as it unveils the strife *as* strife. The strife that the artwork unveils is a strife to project its underlying opening into such-and-such a configuration – i.e., now in ontological terms, a strife to project being according to such a configuration. In experiencing the work – in being displaced into its abyssal opening – we thus experience being in its contentious character, i.e. as projected by the work into an inherently unstable, tentative configuration. The ‘constancy’ of the ‘shining’ of being that Heidegger speaks of in relation to artistic experience is thus a constancy that is achieved through strife and lasts only as long as it is preserved in the way we charted. (Standing in front of Van Gogh’s painting, I may well fail to ‘see’ reliability, and may well rest content with the pleasing lived experience its artistry engenders in me. This prevents the shoes’ being from shining forth.) The shining of being is itself obtained through strife by the work: ‘The work’s becoming [*Werkwerden*] [...] as an obtaining of shining through strife [*als Erstreitung des Scheinens*] [...] lets being come into the open’ (GA82:524, emphasis omitted).

A term to capture this point that Heidegger experiments with in his notes on OWA, although one that does not make its way into the essay’s published version, is *Erstellung*. We might render it as ‘placing forth’. Put formulaically: by making being shine and bringing it to constancy, artworks place being forth. How does this help us? Literally ‘to construct’, ‘to erect’, *erstellen* is caught up in an interesting web of contrastive significations, which together give us some more purchase on Heidegger’s efforts to capture the relevant phenomenon. First, and

importantly, the term contrasts with the notion of depictive representation, or simply (artistic) presentation (*Darstellung*). To present something artistically is to give a representation of it in an artistic medium. Presentation in this sense is eminently of entities. Through it, a given entity is artistically rendered. Works work as works, however, not insofar as they present entities, but rather insofar as they place forth being:

Art [is] placing forth of being [*Erstellung des Seins*] (Not presentation of entities [*Nicht Dar-stellung des Seienden*]).  
(GA82:483)

They place it forth insofar as they, as seen, let being shine:

Placing-forth of being. Hence: [...] shining-forth [*Er-scheinen*] – bringing being to shine.  
(GA82:467)

Here, as often in his middle and later ontological language, Heidegger exploits the *er-* prefix to modify the root verb in a generative sense. Among the various grammatical functions of the prefix, the relevant one in such cases is primarily that of signifying the obtaining of something by the means expressed by the root verb (e.g., *etwas erarbeiten* = to obtain something by working for it). Accordingly, the kind of placing at issue in *Er-stellen* is one in which what is placed is obtained precisely in and through the placing itself. While *Darstellung* takes a given entity as its point of departure and proceeds to offer a presentation of it, then, there is no ‘given’ being for *Erstellung* to reproduce or instantiate. To place forth being means to creatively-interpretively, hence contentiously, project it, in the way seen. Thus:

Not presentation – as any kind of rendering of the already established ‘entity’ [...]; rather, placing-forth of being.  
(GA82:467)

But the placing-forth – does not have being at its disposal so as to then simply set it into work; rather, it is in the work’s becoming that being first arises [*erstehet*].  
(*ibid.*:491)

The inherently projective, hence contentious, character of placing-forth allows us to appreciate the second set of relationships that define its meaning. The work’s *Erstellung* of being is linked to the work’s setting up (*Aufstellung*) of world and setting forth (*Herstellung*) of earth. The linguistic relationship cannot be preserved in English while retaining the standard terms for *Aufstellung* and *Herstellung*, as I have done for consistency with the scholarly literature. But what

matters for us is to be aware of this relationship in order to see how it is harnessed by Heidegger to bring out the philosophical point I have emphasised – namely, that it is in and through strife that being is brought to shine by the work. This is summed up most explicitly and effectively in the following note:

Placing-forth as the originary unity of setting-up [of world] and setting-forth [of earth]. (Placing-forth: to bring being to (presencing)-essencing [(*An*)-*Wesung*]). The contesting of strife (the shining of ‘being’ as the strife of world and earth)[.]

(GA82:467, emphasis omitted)

Artistic experience, then, in unveiling strife as strife by displacing us into the work’s opening, allows the being of entities, which is obtained *in such strife*, to manifest itself:

The placing-forth of being – as a grounding and at the same time a transposition in [...] (the There) – [is] the ‘effect’ of the work.

(GA82:491, emphases omitted)

Van Gogh’s painting *Shoes*, insofar as it depicts a pair of shoes, offers a presentation (*Darstellung*) of them. However, its working as a work of art does not lie in such offering. Rather, the point is that the presentation of the shoes is only a means to (a ‘co-condition[]’ of, GA82:478) its properly ontological end – namely, to place forth (*Erstellung*) their being, i.e. reliability, by letting it shine. Reliability, as a mode of being, is nowhere to be found as an entity among entities. This means that, unlike the shoes themselves, it cannot be presented. To make it manifest is for the artist to creatively project it so that it can be experienced through the work by a suitably responsive recipient.<sup>94</sup>

#### 4.3 Retrieving Reliability: Beyond *Being and Time*, Again

The ontological dimension of artistic experience, as discussed, allows us to further characterise the import of the displacement away from the ordinary that such experience involves. Consider the SZ framework. In it, the human being is construed as the inherent bearer of an implicit (‘pre-ontological’) understanding of being (*Seinsverständnis*). Such implicit understanding is, as it were, the reservoir for phenomenological thematisation. Human beings may well

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<sup>94</sup> More on the Van Gogh episode, in the light of the points just discussed, below.

misunderstand, in their explicit conception, the being of some entity. For instance, they may mistakenly take entities such as hammers to be present-at-hand substances bearing properties. But underneath that explicit conception, they nevertheless understand, if only implicitly, what a hammer ‘really’ is – namely, a ready-to-hand piece of equipment. By engaging in phenomenology, one can unearth such implicit understanding and make it thematic, as a corrective to the previously held, phenomenologically uninformed explicit conception. We always already understand being pre-ontologically, and by phenomenologically analysing our comportments and their conditions of possibility, we can become thematically aware of the structures that govern such understanding and the modes of being that they enable us to encounter.

On such framework, in order to grasp the being of entities, say of equipment, there would be no need for something, say an artwork, to displace us from our ordinary context of sense-making into an extra-ordinary opening of sense. Indeed, in being displaced from our ordinary contexts, we would be deprived of the very basis we need to rely on if we are to grasp the being of equipment at all. For it is by analysing the ways in which we ordinarily encounter equipment that we can excavate such being in terms of the structures that already orient our dealings with it – that we already implicitly understand – but that we have hitherto failed to grasp. Artistic experience as a displacement away from ordinariness is thus at odds with the SZ framework. If artworks are to be conducive to phenomenological ontology, within such framework, what they must do is rather work to help us unearth our implicit understanding of being.

And indeed, as anticipated in the Introduction, this is how Heidegger explicitly construed the ontological import of art in the years leading up to the publication of SZ. This is best illustrated by reference to his discussion of a painting of deer by Franz Marc – presumably *Deer in the Forest I* or *II* – in a lecture course delivered in the Winter semester 1925/26. There he construes the specificity of the content of visual artistic presentation (the deer painted by Marc) in contraposition to that of the mere reproduction of a given entity (e.g. the deer in a wildlife photograph) or in the sensibilisation of a concept (e.g. the deer schematically illustrated in a zoological manual). The content visual artworks convey is neither a sensible particular nor a general concept, but rather a content of a *sui generis* kind:

The deer in the forest as painted by Franz Marc [...] are not these deer in this particular forest, but rather 'the deer in the forest'. Such a presentation [...] can also be called [...] the sensualisation of a concept, if the concept is not understood as a theoretical concept, [...] but rather as the concept of an entity that is found with me in my world and that, like myself, has its environment in the common world; the deer as a 'forest dweller', as it were[.] (GA21:364)

The painting thus conveys not some particular deer, nor the concept 'the deer' as zoology grasps it, but the way in which the deer, as the *kind* of entity it is, is encountered by human beings within the domain of the ordinarily intelligible. What Marc gives us is a presentation that captures the deer's mode of being as it is always already implicitly understood by Dasein, by virtue of Dasein's understanding of being. Heidegger here experimentally names the 'content' thereby conveyed as a 'hermeneutic concept' of deer. Like an empirical concept, it does not refer to any particular, but rather to the deer as such. Yet, unlike empirical concepts, it is not a generalisation which abstracts marks common to all relevant particulars, but rather somehow the concretion of our implicit understanding of deer-being:

In artistic presentation, a concept is presented which, in this case, represents the understanding [*Verständnis*] of [...] an entity [that is] with me in my environment, the understanding of an entity and its being in the world; [...] what is presented is the deer's being-in-the-forest and the manner of its being-in-the-forest.

(*ibid.*)

Thus, we already implicitly understand the way the deer is *qua* 'dweller' of its forest environment, as part of a wider worldly environment which is common to both animals and human beings. Such understanding is part and parcel of what allows us to grasp the deer as an animal, and as the kind of animal it is, in the first place, and comport ourselves accordingly. Of course, such implicit understanding need not be reflected in any conception of deer-being we explicitly entertain. Indeed, our explicit conception may be at odds with our implicit understanding, thereby distorting it or covering it over, and we may well comport ourselves towards deer in a way that, guided by such explicit (mis)conception, treats them inappropriately. Marc's artistic gesture, then, is to give sensual articulation to our implicit understanding of deer-being, bringing it out into the open for us – whereby we may come to realise that we had not realised what we already understood.

Here, the projective moment of artistic production consists in the successful extraction and articulation of a certain preliminary understanding. Such understanding is not something

that could be copied or produced according to some formula, but must rather be creatively interpreted and realised. If successful, such realisation can then be recognised by suitable recipients as a compelling articulation of what they themselves, *qua* understanders of being, already understood. The transformative potential of this recognition lies in its ability to reveal what may have been misconstrued by extant ways of sense-making. We might have regarded deer as natural resources to be disposed of at our will, but we might now recognise them as entities that share a world with us and relate to it in a way that is distinct from and yet to some degree continuous with our own,<sup>95</sup> and which we cannot dispose of any more than we can other human beings. Thus, as Heidegger construes it in the mid-1920s, the ontological import of artworks consists in their making explicit, by sensualising (*Versinnlichung*, see GA21:364), our implicit understandings, thereby revealing to us (to potentially transformative effect) precisely what it is that we already understand.

It is tempting to extend this conception to OWA. Indeed, some interpreters do so. Consider Wrathall's gloss on Heidegger's mid-1930s discussion of the famous Dürer watercolour *Young Hare*, which Wrathall takes (correctly, in my view) to 'follow[] exactly the same pattern' as that of Van Gogh's *Shoes* in OWA:

[Dürer's] painting makes salient for us the relational structure of 'animal-being' – a relational structure that we already understand but might not otherwise have attended to as such.

(Wrathall forthcoming)

*Mutatis mutandis*, Wrathall thus proposes a reading of the Van Gogh episode whereby what the encounter with the painting gives us, in bringing reliability to shine or placing it forth, is an articulation of our implicit understanding of equipment-being. We already understand reliability as equipment-being – our comportment towards pieces of equipment is already guided by the 'relational structure' to which reliability amounts. Van Gogh's painting makes reliability thematic, just as Marc's painting made deer-being thematic, by providing a sensualisation of our pre-thematic understanding of it – of what mid-1920s Heidegger called our hermeneutic concept of it.

To ascribe to Heidegger a continuity in his conception of art's ontological import between the mid-1920s and the mid-1930s thus depends on ascribing to him a continued

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<sup>95</sup> In the passage, Heidegger refers to deer, *qua* inhabitants of their environment, as *Daseiende* (see GA21:364).

commitment to relevant aspects of the SZ framework as it underlies such conception. Artworks work to make explicit our implicit understanding of deer-being and equipment-being because we are already guided by the relevant understandings as part of our broader understanding of being. However, as we saw in Chapter 1, Heidegger's SZ framework underwent significant revisions in the 1930s. One implication of such revisions, I believe, is that, *contra* the early Heidegger, reliability is not to be construed as the understanding which already, if implicitly, guides our dealings with equipment. On the contrary, I submit, it is precisely an understanding that does *not* guide our dealings with it. We do *not* already understand reliability as the being of equipment, and – again *contra* the early Heidegger – the ontological import of Van Gogh's *Shoes* lies elsewhere than that of Marc's *Deer in the Forest*. Let us see how.

In Chapter 3, we saw how Heidegger construes equipment's reliability as the ground underlying reliability's usefulness, where usefulness is a mark of equipmentality in the SZ account. On such account, a hammer is a hammer insofar as it is useful for the activity of hammering nails, itself in turn useful for the activity of joining boards together, and so on, ultimately with a view to the carpenter's goal of building a house as shelter. Equipment, that is, is inherently caught up in networks of 'useful-for' relationships, ranging over human activities, and aimed at basic human ends. In this sense, 'the reference "usefulness for" [...] is an ontological-categorical determinateness of equipment as equipment' (SZ:78, emphasis omitted).

In SZ, Heidegger construes equipment in terms of the role it plays within human activities (of the way it is 'useful for' them, each piece of equipment being the node of a wider worldly network). However, as Heidegger began to appreciate in the 1930s, this fails to do full justice to what equipment is. Grasping equipment in terms of its sole usefulness reduces it to its instrumental functioning within and for the sake of human activities and purposes. However, equipment not only, and not primarily, serves our purposes – more fundamentally, it enables them. It does so by contributing, as we have seen, to the very configuration of the contexts of intelligibility within which human beings exist. By veiling strife, equipment (*qua* reliable) veils, thereby keeping us immediately immersed in, the very world within which we relate to equipment itself (*qua* useful) to achieve our practical ends.

There is, then, a sense in which equipment, in its reliability, exceeds and transcends our use of it. It is *this* dimension of its being, Heidegger implies, that Van Gogh's work captures and renders in bringing reliability to shine. By showing the shoes in their reliability, the painting *Shoes* restores equipment to what Heidegger now calls its resting in itself: 'The repose [*Ruhe*] of equipment resting in itself [*in sich ruhend*] lies in its reliability' (GA5:20). Resting *in itself*, that is: beyond and independently of *our* making use of it. Crucially, in our ordinary dealings with equipment, we do *not* encounter it as resting in itself. When we *use* equipment, equipment shows up in terms of its usefulness for *our* activities. In encountering, say, the pen, in the light of one of my purposes, I am immediately led to one or the other of these possibilities – e.g. to write an entry in my journal. What I encounter is the pen in its being useful-for, say, writing-down-my-thoughts. What I do not, and cannot encounter, however, is how the pen, by being the entity it is, has already configured the context in which my encounter with it can take place, pre-determining a certain range of practical possibilities in the field of my concern as a writer.

Now, the pre-configurative work equipment performs runs the inherent risk of leading us to overlook both the work itself and our own dependence on it. Crucially, this in turn feeds back into the way we make sense of, and consequently comport ourselves towards, equipment itself. We depend on equipment to exist in a familiar world. But, as seen, such familiarity may lead us to forget the non-familiarity that underlies it. Reliability, that is, harbours an inherent tendency to be forgotten. We begin by failing to acknowledge reliability, and as a result, we come to understand and consequently comport ourselves towards equipment in a way that has no place for its reliability. As Heidegger writes, not only pieces of equipment themselves can be worn out by their use. There can be 'wear and tear' (*Vernutzung*) of *usage* itself, whereby such usage 'grinds itself down and becomes ordinary' (GA5:20). Such becoming-ordinary of usage retroactively affects the very being of equipment, which itself 'falls into desolation' (*Verödung*) (*ibid.*):

Such desolation of equipment-being is the fading away [*Hinschwinden*] of reliability. [...] The worn-out ordinariness of equipment then imposes itself as the only way of being that is – seemingly – exclusively its own. Only sheer usefulness is now visible.

(GA5:20)

By a characteristic dynamic, then, reliability, not grasped and preserved as such, tends to conceal itself in favour of sole usefulness. Importantly, the 'fading away' of reliability is not to

be understood as equipment ceasing to be reliable. To the extent that we remain immersed in our practical worlds, equipment remains reliable, enabling such immersion. Reliability fades away from our context of sense-making, i.e. from our ways of understanding equipment, and consequently from our ways of comporting towards it. Equipment remains reliable – but we have no way of grasping this. Once only usefulness remains graspable, we form conceptions of equipment that have usefulness at their basis:

It [i.e. usefulness] gives the impression that the origin of equipment lies in the mere fabrication which imprints a form on a material. Nevertheless, equipment in its genuine equipment-being comes from further afield. Matter and form and the distinction between them are of deeper origin.

(GA5:20)

Crucially, Heidegger does not offer this as a merely theoretical point, but as a genealogy of *our own* ways of understanding equipment. It is for *us* that reliability has faded away. *We* relate to pieces of equipment as merely useful means to our ends, rather than as reliable co-constitutors of our practical worlds. Matter and form are the concepts through which *we* grasp equipment, because usefulness has become the only ground we have to work with.

Heidegger greatly understates (and, admittedly, underdevelops) his point here. He presents his remarks on reliability's fading away in passing and in mostly metaphorical language, without signalling what their full import is. It is not surprising that such import should have gone unnoticed.<sup>96</sup> The proper context for the passage is given by linking it back to Heidegger's discussion, earlier in OWA's first lecture, of the matter-form conceptual pair as one of the traditional ways in which thinghood has been understood. This is the very discussion that eventually leads to the Van Gogh episode, and with it to the account of reliability's fading now rehearsed. The latter account can thus be seen as the conclusion of the whole meandering path that began with the introduction of the matter-form pair, before the essay moves on to the issue of work and truth, which will be the main subject of the second lecture.

In that discussion, in brief, Heidegger claims that the matter-form pair is unsuited to adequately capturing the being of things (or thinghood) because it is a conceptual device whose proper purchase belongs to the ontological domain of equipment. Things can be grasped as

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<sup>96</sup> For an exception, see Harries (2009:88), who hints at, without developing, the being-historical dimension of reliability's fading. Both von Herrmann (1999:125ff.) and Wrathall (forthcoming) emphasise reliability's fading, but do not construe it being-historically.

hylomorphic wholes only by extension from the paradigmatically hylomorphic entities, namely, pieces of equipment (see GA5:13). In equipment, the distinctive arrangement of each piece's hylomorphic compound is determined by what that piece is to be useful for, i.e. by its specific usefulness. Usefulness is the ground of equipmental matter and form. Now, for a variety of reasons beyond the scope of the present account, in the history of Western thought, the matter-form pair, modulated in various guises, comes to prevail as a way of grasping 'the constitution of every entity' (GA5:14, original emphasis), eventually becoming 'common and self-evident' (*ibid.*:15). It thus forms a leading constituent of the complex array of conceptual tools that we today inherit as a 'way of thinking' in whose terms we preliminarily encounter entities. It 'anticipates all immediate experience of entities', thereby 'prevent[ing] us from pondering [*Besinnung*] the being of the respective entity' and 'block[ing] our path' to such being (GA5:16). To unblock such path would be to succeed in freeing the entities themselves from their entrapment in the inherited conceptual framework in which they are always already caught, insofar as we approach them in its light. This would be for them to come to, i.e. for us to let them, 'repose [*beruben*] upon [themselves]' (GA5:16) in their respective modes of being. However, Heidegger adds, this task is 'what is most difficult' (*ibid.*).

This discussion, which from early on in OWA evidences the newly acquired being-historical dimension of Heidegger's thinking, has several implications for us here. In its light, we can return to Heidegger's account of the fading of reliability and better appreciate what is really going on in it. The conclusion of that account was that such fading leads to the sole visibility of equipment's usefulness. We have now seen how usefulness in turn grounds the matter-form pair that eventually becomes part of our stock ontological framework. The fading of reliability thus amounts to the backdrop for the very possibility of the matter-form pair's coming to prevail. It comes to prevail insofar as an equipment-based way of thinking comes to prevail, itself based on a usefulness-based understanding of equipmentality, itself ultimately based on the fading of equipment's reliability. The account of such fading is thus a strand of the history of being.<sup>97</sup> The point is that in the course of such history, the forgottenness of

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<sup>97</sup> A note by Heidegger to this point in OWA suggests how the account he provides there is part of a broader story: 'The predominance of the form-content distinction; origin of 'form' (here only the path from *techne*, insofar as related to equipment)' (GA82:486, emphasis omitted). Multiple strands co-determine such predominance. The broader story is ultimately that of the Greek first inception and 'the inner history of its

reliability breeds usefulness-based ways of understanding equipment (and indeed, all entities), which become sedimented and ultimately render us incapable of encountering equipmental entities in their reliability. The path to equipmentality is blocked by them, so that we are unable to let equipment repose upon itself.

While OWA does little more than broach such issues, they have far-reaching consequences. The most immediate for us is that they entail the unavailability of a SZ-type framework for ontological inquiry, with implications for what artworks can and cannot do. We saw how such a framework relies on our implicit understanding of being as a basis for such inquiry. The being-historical cast of Heidegger's thinking in OWA, however, makes such a basis unworkable. We cannot rectify our explicit conception by appealing to an implicit understanding that always already guides our ways of comporting towards the relevant entities. For such implicit understanding is *itself* shaped by inherited ways of thinking that 'anticipate[] all immediate experience of entities' (GA5:16). Our very encounter with entities is already permeated by such ways. But this means that a reflection on the underlying structures that govern such encounter, i.e. the very methodological engine of SZ's existential analytic, would fail to provide any insight into the mode of being of entities that is not already shaped by the very ways of thinking we were trying to rectify. Our understanding of being, that is, is *itself* epochally determined. In SZ, the hermeneutic circle between our ways of encountering and our ways of explicitly conceiving entities was virtuous. Even while setting out from a starting point necessarily inflected by the inherited tradition, one could dig down into the implicit understanding governing our encounters and unearth atemporally, universally valid structures capable of rectifying the explicit conception. One could phenomenologically bootstrap one's way out of traditional modes of understanding and 'destroy' them on such basis. Now, by contrast, the hermeneutic circle in which we are caught is vicious. In appealing to our implicit understanding of being, we are consigned to the presently prevailing outcome of being-historical dynamics – an outcome from which our implicit understanding is, as such, incapable of extricating us. In Chapter 1, we noted a passage in which Heidegger glosses understanding of being (*Seinsverständnis*) as a 'project-of-being' (*Seins-entwurf*) that has been 'set still' (GA73.1:619, emphasis omitted). Understanding depends on a prior ontological projection

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'failure' (*ibid.*). A sketch can be found at GA65:190-91, in a section which, not coincidentally, ends with a reference to OWA.

into which it ‘settles’ and which it ‘brings to a stand’ (*ibid.*) in the familiarity of entities. SZ’s understanding of being is as such ‘something superficial’ (GA82:106). If we dig down, all we get is the already solidified prior projection. Rather than digging into our epochally determined context of sense-making, we need to be uprooted from it.

Our inherited way of thinking prevents us from letting entities repose upon themselves (*auf sich beruhen*). Thus, when Heidegger, having experienced reliability through Van Gogh’s painting, claims that ‘the repose of equipment’s reposing in itself [*in sich ruhend*] consists in reliability’ (GA5:20), the implication is that the work has let equipment-being manifest itself *beyond* what our inherited way of thinking could lead us to grasp. This in turn implies that reliability is *not* the way in which we *already* understand equipmental entities. The way we already understand them depends precisely on reliability’s having faded away. This means that the way in which Van Gogh’s painting works is not reducible to that which mid-1920s Heidegger ascribed to Marc’s painting. Van Gogh’s painting, in manifesting reliability, does more than creatively *make explicit* our *implicit* understanding of equipmentality. Rather, it creatively *retrieves* a *forgotten* understanding of it, i.e. equipmentality-as-reliability. Such forgotten understanding lies at the very root of our being-historically determined, currently prevailing implicit understanding. While reliable equipment has indeed grounded our being-in-the-world all along, this has found no reflection in our extant ways of making sense of and comporting ourselves towards equipment. Once we are presented with an experience of reliability, however, we may recognise how such ways were in fact dependent on it.<sup>98</sup>

This brings us back to our analysis of the displacement involved in artistic experience with a better appreciation of its full import. For a corollary of the above is that the experience of Van Gogh’s painting must have uprooted Heidegger from the context of sense-making in which, in his fictive telling of the Van Gogh episode, he first encountered it. Consider Heidegger’s retrospective (and, by that early point in OWA, certainly cryptic) remark on the episode:

In the vicinity of the work, we were suddenly somewhere else [*anderswo*] than we are ordinarily accustomed to being.

(GA5:21)

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<sup>98</sup> For more on what follows from achieving such recognition, see the Concluding Remarks.

Somewhere else – where? How is such spatial talk to be cashed out? In the light of our discussion so far, we can identify the ‘somewhere’ with the leeway of intelligibility into which Van Gogh’s painting displaced Heidegger in his experience of the work. Thus, later in OWA we read:

[Art] breaks open an open place [*offene Stelle*] in the midst of the entities, in whose openness everything is different than usual.

(GA5:59)

It is in such an open place, opened up by the work itself, that Van Gogh’s painting had suddenly displaced Heidegger earlier in the essay. Heidegger’s spatial talk refers to a local region of intelligibility temporarily held open by the experience of the artwork. The painting’s work, whereby reliability is brought to shine and thereby placed forth, amounts to a double movement away from the context of intelligibility in which Heidegger stood before encountering the painting, and into the one brought about by the experience itself. Of course, such movement is *sui generis* in kind:

[W]hat is strange is that the work does in no way act upon [*einwirkt*] the entities hitherto [in being] through causal connections. The work’s impact [*Wirkung*] does not consist in an efficaciousness [*Wirken*]. It rests in a transformation, happening from out of the work, of the unconcealment of entities, and that means: of being.

(GA5:60)

This notion of the work as ‘effecting’ a *transformation* of the *unconcealment* of entities contrasts sharply with Heidegger’s mid-1920s ascription to Marc’s work of a *sensualisation* of our *understanding* of entities. Our discussion so far helps us to chart some of the considerable territory Heidegger covered in the decade between these two statements. While both conceptions imply a view of art as interpretive-creative projection, the grounds, nature, and import of such projection are strongly discontinuous. Marc’s achievement was the unveiling of something latent *within* the experiencer’s own context of sense-making. Van Gogh’s achievement is the retrieval of something latent *beneath* the experiencer’s context of sense-making. Such retrieval thus requires a transformative displacement *away from* that very context. Marc’s deer painting, by contrast, makes us thematically aware of exactly *where* we ordinarily, albeit implicitly, are. Van Gogh’s shoe painting disrupts our ordinariness to show us what it both depends on and conceals:

In the project, that ‘different than usual’ steps into the open, but this different is at bottom not foreign, but rather only the ownmost, hitherto concealed, of historical Dasein.

(GA80.2:587)

To recognise that equipmentality is reliability is *not* to take note of a *fact* about what it is for equipment to be equipment. At a minimum, it means recognising that the ways of understanding equipment that have hitherto guided our comportment towards it are inadequate for letting it be what it is, i.e. for letting it rest in itself. This amounts to an injunction to *transform* those very ways of understanding. Recall our discussion of preservation as consisting of two moments involving two kinds of restraint. First, it involves a restraint of letting, insofar as the experiencer allows herself to be displaced into the extra-ordinary. Secondly, it implies a restraint of lingering, insofar as the experiencer strives to inhabit the opening into which the artwork displaces her. Lingering in the opening into which Van Gogh’s work displaces us would require us to come to understand equipment in terms of its reliability. But this would involve a fundamental reorientation of our practices, which have historically been marked by a ‘restricted ordinariness of usage’, based on an understanding of equipmentality in terms of ‘mere usefulness’ (GA82:492, emphasis omitted), itself dependent on the forgetting of reliability, and such that reliability was unretrievable in its terms.<sup>99</sup>

#### 4.4 The Affective Pull of Works

Now, however, if artworks are to displace us from the ordinary in the ways and with the implications described, the question naturally arises of just how they can do so. After all, if our ordinariness is so epochally shaped as to block our path to an immediate encounter with entities in their being, then presumably this should apply as much to equipment as to artworks. This is indeed the case, as we saw above in relation to the aestheticisation of artworks and artistic experience, which itself is to be understood as the result of the same broader being-historical dynamic whereby equipment is reduced to its usefulness. Both ultimately amount to

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<sup>99</sup> Importantly, such forgottenness is itself only a piece of a broader being-historical dynamic. Reorienting our practices towards equipment in the light of its reliability cannot be a stand-alone intervention, but belongs within the broader reorientation away from our being-historical situation, whose theorisation is the overarching project in the background of OWA – on which, see the Concluding Remarks.

a subjectivisation of the respective entities. Useful equipment is subjectivised insofar as it effectively facilitates human practical projects. Aesthetic artworks are subjectivised insofar as they effectively stimulate aesthetic feelings in human recipients. Nevertheless, there is a crucial difference. The reduction of equipmentality to usefulness is enabled by *equipment itself*, precisely *qua* reliable. Reliable equipment veils strife and thus immerses its user in a familiar context of sense within which equipment shows up precisely as merely useful. Reliability is inherently self-effacing. Not so the workly character of artworks. We began to see above that and how such character is inherently resistant to a reduction to ordinariness. Aestheticised artworks are never completely neutralised in their underlying disruptive power. They retain what I called an inherent *pull* towards the extra-ordinary that, while proximally and for the most part covered by its aestheticisation, can sometimes resurface within the ordinary and thereby subvert it. The question we are concerned with in this section can thus be reformulated as: what does the nature and ground of the pull of artworks amount to?

In short, I suggest that the answer is: it amounts to the inherent *attuning* power of artworks. Artworks' pull is attuning in nature and is grounded in their essence as projections of affective openings, preserved in and through their making textural sense, as we detailed in the previous chapters. Here, however, is a striking fact. If we were to look for the letter of OWA's text to substantiate this claim, we would come up empty-handed. OWA's discussion of artistic experience contains no reference to affect, just as its discussion of art's essence and artistic production did not. We thus come up against, on the side of artistic experience, the mirror reflection of the same peculiar absence of attunement in OWA that we noted in Chapter 1. And once again, Heidegger's reticence in OWA can be compensated for by reference to his recently published contemporaneous notes on the essay. Such notes fill in the OWA picture precisely at the juncture and in the way that our overall reconstruction of Heidegger's views would predict. Summing up his conception of artistic experience as involving a 'thrusting up of the extra-ordinary and thrusting down of the ordinary', Heidegger asks himself, as if to emphasise the very absence I am pointing out: 'And [...] feeling? – attunement?' (GA82:489). On this matter, his notes are unambiguous: 'The work is what attunes [*das Stimmende*], because itself determined-attuned [*Be-stimmte*]' (*ibid.*:525). OWA omits the affective dimension of artistic experience, and in so doing deprives itself of the means of fully accounting for its own doctrine

of such experience as displacement, just as by omitting the affective dimension of artistic production it deprived itself of the means of accounting for its doctrine of truth's pull towards the work. Let us then remedy this omission.

The most explicit statement of the relevant point is couched by Heidegger in terms of what we might, slightly paraphrasing him, call the work's unsettling (*entsetzlich*) power. As he writes: 'The work un-settles (*ent-setzt*)' (GA82:525) its experiencer. What does this mean? First of all, it must be noted that the notion of *Entsetzen* comes to occupy a prominent place in Heidegger's thought in the late 1930s, particularly in the period 1938-40, as a new name for the fundamental attunement of Heidegger's envisioned other inception of Western history (see e.g. GA65:483-84).<sup>100</sup> This later development of the notion need not concern us here, since our context makes clear that it is not yet used in such a specialised sense. The term itself, in its primary sense, can be rendered as 'fright' or 'horror', with the corresponding transitive verb signifying 'to horrify', 'to fill with horror'. A secondary, more specialised meaning involves the idea of 'relieving', as in relieving a town of enemy forces. A third, more old-fashioned, is that of 'removing', as in removing someone from office (*seines Amtes entsetzen*). Heidegger, moreover, exploits the hyphenation to bring out its constituent elements: *Ent-setzen* could thus be translated as 'de-setting', 'de-positing', etc., according to the relevant sense of *setzen*. As usual with Heidegger, all such connotations are operative, to a greater or lesser degree, at once. I follow Rojcewicz and Vallega-Neu in their choice of 'un-settling',<sup>101</sup> as it preserves the 'negative' affective connotation of the original's primary sense, together with the idea of an undoing of a previously established stability and order, thus approaching part of what Heidegger emphasises by hyphenating the term.

What is it for the artwork to un-settle its experiencer? It is to affect her in such a way as to relieve her of, by removing her from, her entrapment in ordinariness, thereby undoing ('de-setting') the prevailing of the ordinary context of sense within which she first encounters the work. In essence, then, it is to *displace* the experiencer in the way we have charted – away from the ordinary, into the extra-ordinary. But now the affective dynamic underlying and enabling such displacement is brought to the fore. Recall that attunement is fundamentally

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<sup>100</sup> Thereby replacing restraint – on which, see the Concluding Remarks.

<sup>101</sup> See their translation of *Contributions* (Heidegger 2012:370 and *passim*).

transposition (*Versetzung*) into an opening of sense (a There) that attunement itself thereby opens up. Heidegger thus writes:

Un-settling [*Ent-setzen*] [...] is directed [...] into the There, just now pre-set [*das eben vor-gesetzte Da*], into which the un-settling *transposes* [versetzt].

(GA82:525, original emphasis)

This means that the work works by affectively transposing its experiencer into the opening that the work opens up precisely in and through such transposing. Again, this is not a causal occurrence. Heidegger's elaboration of why it is not in this context is worth considering:

An 'impact' [*Wirkung*] of the work is not possible because that on which it [i.e. the work] would have to be efficacious [*wirken*] is removed [*beseitigt*] by the work (thus the work 'removes' – yes! in un-setting; but not a cause-effect relationship [...]), and because the work, as that which would have to be efficacious, is itself transposed [...] into its truth and transformed – as against the initial givenness in ordinary encounter! / Un-settling is the fundamental way in which a work attunes.

(*ibid.*)

The point made here is radical, and appropriately so. The basic idea is that the very *relata* of a supposed cause-effect relationship in artistic experience are done away with by the experience itself. To construe artistic experience in causal terms is to construe the work as an object of experience standing against a subject of experience. The work would, by virtue of its (aesthetic) properties, be causally efficacious on the subject insofar as it causes in her appropriate (aesthetic) feelings. Such feelings, in turn, would be the ground of the subject's judging the work to be a beautiful (or other relevant aesthetic predicate) object. This basic scheme is the model for any aesthetic account of artistic experience. Now, however, if the experiencer is affectively displaced by the work into the opening of sense that the work itself opens up, the very *relata* of such model cease to be available. For in being displaced, the experiencer ceases to be a subject and becomes rather an affectively transposed *Da-sein*, while the work ceases to be an object and becomes rather an affectively opening projection of truth. The work, that is, in undoing the ordinary context of sense-making within which it is at first encountered, *ipso facto* undoes the very way in which it itself and its experiencer made sense within that context. The ordinary terms in which the work is first encountered by its experiencer (its 'initial givenness in ordinary encounter') are transformed by the experience itself. Initially, the work

is stumbled upon as an object by a subject. If the experience takes place in its full potential, however, the very distinction between subject and object ceases to make sense.

As much is implied in OWA's more abstract claim that, 'through the work, everything ordinary and hitherto [in being] becomes a non-entity', thereby 'los[ing] the ability to give and preserve being as measure' (GA5:60). In and through artistic experience, the experiencer-*qua*-subject and the work-*qua*-object *themselves* become non-entities. They do so because the work *attunes* its experiencer. This means, however, that the experiencer is transposed into an affective opening which, as such, is itself the dimension underlying any subject-object distinction (see GA39:142). If 'attunement, properly understood, leads to an overcoming of the hitherto [prevailing] conception of human being' (GA45:154), then artistic encounter is precisely the undergoing of an experience that cannot be captured in the terms of such a conception, because it is such as to suspend the very context of sense-making within which such a conception makes sense. What OWA does not say, but presupposes, then, is that its claim to the non-causality of the artwork's working (its lack of 'impact' in the sense of causal efficacy) is grounded in the fact that its working is an attuning, i.e. that it affectively transposes its experiencer into the work's own opening. Artistic experiential displacement (*Verrückung*) is thus an un-settling (*Ent-setzen*) in the sense of an affective transposition (*Versetzung*). This is *not* to deny, of course, that there *are* causal goings-on in artistic experience, as if the encounter and its dynamic could float freely in some ethereal realm. Heidegger's point is rather that any causal description of the interaction between artwork and recipient necessarily underdetermines the phenomenologically attested change in normative texture that artistic encounters afford, and is thus not the proper level of analysis to target in an attempt to do justice to the relevant phenomena in their ontological dimension.

Attunement is the underlying engine of OWA's doctrine of artistic experience as a displacement into the extra-ordinary. Correspondingly, the abyssal opening into which OWA claims the work transposes its experiencer can be cashed out as the *affective* opening which, as we reconstructed, the artwork projects and embodies. Such projection we construed as a creative-interpretive determination of the underlying texturing of the relevant attunement. This results in a (worldly-earthly) configuration (i.e. the rift) which the work embodies in its (textural) figure. On the experiential side, then, the experiencer first encounters the work's

figure. Her interpretive experience of such figure sets in motion the dynamic whereby she is displaced into the opening that the figure embodies. I encounter the Greek temple as a particularly patterned set of texturally signifying architectural elements and features. If my response is adequate, I am displaced into the affective opening that the temple projects, in the way the temple projects it, i.e. as a domain of wonderstruck receptivity to the sheer emergence of entities.

Thus, the work ‘create[s]’, i.e. creatively projects, its underlying attunement and, in creating it, ‘preserve[s]’ it (GA82:531). But preserving an attunement is not a matter of inertly storing it, as if a treasure in a safe. For attunement, in its very ‘essential character’ (GA45:161), is transposition. There is no attunement unexperienced, and to experience it just *is* to be transposed into it, i.e. into its distinctive, so-and-so textured opening. For the artwork to preserve its underlying attunement thus means ‘in-ton[ing]’ (*An-stimmen*) and ‘transpos[ing]’ its experiencer into it (GA82:531, emphasis omitted). Heidegger continues:

Attunement itself – *happens* – does not arise ‘in’ us [...], but rather we come into *it*. / The work does not contain attunement (in the way wine contains alcohol), but rather the *attunement* [...] makes the work possible and thus [makes] itself [possible] [...], holds it together (‘contains the work’) and holds it out[.]

(GA82:531, original emphases)

To say that the work ‘embodies’ its projected attunement is not to say that the attunement is materially located in it. Wonder is nowhere ‘in’ the temple as something occurring in it and ready to be discovered, nor is it a property the work has, or an inner state it is disposed to causally produce, etc. Rather, it is wonder that ‘contains’ the temple in the sense that it is the underlying, enabling affective texture of the opening within which only the temple is the particular work it is. Wonder opens up and textures the affective domain that underlies the temple and informs the temple’s own distinctive figural structure. It is in this sense that wonder ‘holds’ the temple ‘together’: wonder is the ultimate source and ground of the distinctive unity that *this* work has as the particular it is. If the temple is not a jumble of disaggregated, heterogeneous parts, if it makes sense as a unified figural structure, it is ultimately because there is a certain affective (a-byssal) ground that, we might say, impels it into existence. As seen in Chapter 2 in discussing affective emergency (*Not*), attunement impels and compels (*nötigt*)

the human being to project it.<sup>102</sup> Attunement, therefore, demands its own projection. The work is a creative response to such demand, working to determine the attunement's opening and make it experienceable through itself. But this means, as Heidegger writes, that the attunement makes *itself* possible through the work. Attunement, that is, 'procures its figure for itself [*sich ihre Gestalt verschafft*] in the inner outline of the whole' of the work (GA39:15). Of course, this is not meant in the sense that attunement would possess some sort of agency through which it would deliberately exercise such demanding and procuring. Rather, the claim captures the sense that attunement is experienced by the artist as an overpowering impelling force, to which the artist resolves to be subservient by creatively enduring it. In Heidegger's characteristic formula, then, it is not human beings that have attunements (as inner occurrences within them), but attunements that 'have' them – as the fundamental grounds and vehicles of their being exposed to sense at all.<sup>103</sup>

The artwork may thus be regarded as the crystallisation of an affective domain of sense into an entity. Artworks are loci of affective concentration and emanation. Now, attunement is not only the ground of the artwork and its displacing power. Attunement is also, and relatedly, the ground of what above I described as the artwork's resistance to complete reduction to mere ordinariness – as against, e.g., equipment's complete reduction to its usefulness. What I called the pull of artworks is, at bottom, an *affective* pull. The key to seeing this is to consider Heidegger's familiar claim that human beings are, by their very essence, always so-and-so attuned. Thus, the context of sense-making that defines our ordinariness is itself grounded in and permeated by a certain way of being attuned:

It is only because fundamental attunement originally transports and transposes that it can also restrict and constrict Dasein into the sphere of everyday closest entities, that it can let Dasein stagger along on the surface of being[.]

(GA39:142)

Since intelligibility is essentially affectively grounded, each of its configurations is at bottom affective. Our ordinariness, as structured by one such configuration, is thus itself attuned.<sup>104</sup> But crucially, this means that ordinariness is not completely hermetic and sealed off from

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<sup>102</sup> 'Emergency compels by attuning, and attuning is transposing' (GA45:161, emphasis omitted).

<sup>103</sup> For the formula as applied to attunement, see e.g. GA45:162.

<sup>104</sup> Albeit in such a way as to conceal precisely its being attuned. This is an important point, but one that would take us too far afield. See the Concluding Remarks.

disturbance. While ordinariness' levelling power succeeds in keeping the extra-ordinary at bay by reducing it to itself, its own affective groundedness ultimately exposes it to a potential *affective* disruption. Admittedly, this risk is (proximally and for the most part) averted. For ordinariness has its own way of distorting attunement itself. It does so, roughly put, by reducing attunement to lived experience (*Erlebnis*). Proximally and for the most part, we are not transposed by attunements, but rather 'have' lived experiences, i.e. the transposing power of attunement is defused by being preliminarily grasped in subjectivistic terms (see e.g. GA65:238 and *passim*).<sup>105</sup> Attunement is ordinarily distorted and concealed, by an underlying dynamic roughly analogous to that we have traced in the case of the fading away of reliability.

With one key difference, however. Namely, that the very context of sense-making within and according to which attunement is distorted is *itself* attuned. And attunement is inherently susceptible to what, as seen, Heidegger calls retunement (*Umstimmung*). It is part of what it is for me to be, say, joyful that I can cease to be so and fall prey to, say, despair. Attunement is processual (a 'happening', GA39:142) and as such not fixed but ever ongoing. Conversely, only another attunement can retune an attunement. We experience this fact commonly when, say, in the grip of despair, we are powerless to reason or will ourselves out of it, any more than we can will ourselves to will what we do not already will. No matter how many reasons for rejoicing I can lay before me, no matter how strong my will to rejoice, joy will be denied to me until, as it were, *joy itself* retunes me. A retuning attunement Heidegger calls a counterattunement (*Gegenstimmung*): 'Because Dasein – insofar as it is – is attuned, therefore attunement can only ever be retuned by a counterattunement' (GA39:142).

This implies that however successful an ordinary context of sense-making may be in reducing everything to the familiar, its foundations remain fragile precisely to the extent that they are ultimately rooted in affect. This fact can be covered but not eliminated. Ordinariness is thus ultimately amenable to retunement.<sup>106</sup> As Heidegger sums it up: we 'are always at

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<sup>105</sup> The above-mentioned aestheticisation of artworks is thus essentially a subjectivisation of their attuning power. This claim, I believe, lies at the heart of Heidegger's critique of aesthetics. See the Concluding Remarks.

<sup>106</sup> This may not be so easy. An epochally established and comprehensive regime of sense-making can only be retuned by an appropriately foundational counterattunement, i.e. a *fundamental* one: 'a retuning from the ground up can only be effected by a fundamental attunement [*Grundstimmung*]' (GA39:142). This, however, does not impinge upon the question of principle as I present it in the main text. The issue of what fundamental attunement would be capable of being-historically retuning us is one to which Heidegger devotes much attention. See the Conclusions Remarks.

bottom' in such-and-such an attunement. This, however, is proximally and for the most part 'dissimulated' (*verstellt*). Such dissimulation is 'to be removed [*beseitig(t)*] through the clearing of being-there', which is 'only possible through' the 'establishment' of 'the extra-ordinary'. And it is the work that establishes it by 'creating and preserving attunement' (GA82:531, emphases omitted). On the other hand, it is *only* through retunement that ordinariness can be undone. We cannot reason or will ourselves out of ordinariness any more than, indeed precisely because, we cannot reason or will ourselves out of an attunement. The work, then, is more than just an occasion for a displacement that we could just as well achieve on our own. Rather, we *need* the work as that which, by virtue of its inherent displacing power, we can let displace us.

Herein, then, lies the ground for the artwork's ability to retain a pull within the ordinary. As an embodiment of preserved, potentially radiating attunement, the artwork is a potential retuning force. Insofar as ordinariness is inherently attuned, it carries within itself the seeds of its potential affective undoing. The fact that the artwork rests in itself within the familiar landscape of everydayness, i.e. that it always resists a seamless integration into the texture of ordinary intelligibility, lies in the fact that it harbours and tends to radiate a counterattunement to the extra-ordinary that underlies ordinariness itself. Its inherent lack of fit is due to its affective irreducibility. Any attempted reduction of it is necessarily contingent. Through the artwork, the extra-ordinary intimates itself within the ordinary. The permanent possibility that such intimation be picked up and responded to by a suitable recipient is what makes the artwork a constant source of potential disruption of ordinariness. For suitably to respond to it would be thereby to be displaced into the extra-ordinary. As an embodiment of attunement, the artwork can pierce the layers of concealment to which ordinariness proximally and for the most part subjects it, and undo the ordinary as such. Conversely, the human being is never, nor could be, entirely impervious to the artwork's attuning capacity, however strong and entrenched the tendency to reduce such power to mere lived experience. Ultimately, then, it constitutively belongs to the nature of human being to be vulnerable to the power of art. This is precisely because the human being, *qua* Da-sein, is, at the most fundamental level, exposed to sense affectively. This guarantees an ineradicable basic measure, more or less historically and individually realised, of susceptibility to the pull and working of artworks.

#### 4.5 Reassessing Heidegger on Van Gogh

By appreciating the role of attunement in artistic experience, we have completed the reconstruction of a picture of such experience that matches the previously reconstructed picture of artistic production, itself based on an appreciation of the respective role of attunement in it. Both serve to integrate the incomplete doctrine of art that Heidegger presents in OWA, thereby shedding new light, as I have argued, on its central theses. To the constructive dynamic whereby an affective opening is projected by and into an artwork, there corresponds a receptive dynamic whereby the artwork affectively displaces its experiencer into the affective opening that it projects, structured according to such projection. Such projection, embedded in the work's figure, is worldly-earthly (i.e. a rift) and such as to obtain being through strife, thus letting it shine. The extra-ordinary is thus won over against the hitherto prevailing ordinariness and can be sustained as long as the work is preserved. To experience a work is to be retuned into, and thereby come to stand within, the attuned opening which compels the artwork and which the artwork, in response, so-and-so configures. The work is, i.e. works, in being preserved, i.e. in the experiencer's letting herself be attuned by the work so that being may shine accordingly, and in her lingering in the respective opening.

In this section I bring such account to bear on what remains, for better or worse, the most debated issue in the OWA secondary literature, namely, how to interpret OWA's Van Gogh episode. I already mentioned the episode above in relation to the broader issues of being's shining in artistic experience and of reliability's fading away. I will now zoom in on it, paying particular attention to its role within OWA's overall argumentative economy. My suggestion is that the conception of artistic experience reconstructed so far enables us to solve the long-standing puzzle of what actually goes on in the episode, and hence of what such role might be. I will begin by briefly rehearsing the way the painting is introduced in OWA. Then, by examining some of the episode's key structural features, I will argue that the episode amounts to a performative staging, within OWA's text, of (an instance of) artistic experience as I have construed it.

Van Gogh's painting is introduced by Heidegger well into OWA's first lecture.<sup>107</sup> The path by which Heidegger arrives at this introduction is highly convoluted (a 'digressive, meandering, essentially errant' path, as Mulhall (2019:203) effectively puts it). It may be summarised as follows. In OWA's introduction, Heidegger resolves to approach the question of the artwork's origin through a preliminary examination of the artwork's ostensible thingly character (see GA5:5-9). This leads him to the question of what a thing is. He addresses it by examining what he identifies as the three main ways of conceptualising thinghood (*das Dinghafte*) that emerged in the history of Western thought (each of which is found wanting): the thing as bearer of property, as unity of a sensuous manifold, and as hylomorphic whole (see GA5:11-19). The last of the three is then claimed by Heidegger to have enjoyed a predominance in the traditional conceptualisation not only of things, but of entities as such. This already surfaced in our discussion of reliability above. There, we saw how Heidegger traces back the predominance of a hylomorphic conception of entities to its origins in the framework for conceptualising equipment (see GA5:13), a framework which has come to prevail in our conceptualisation of entities as such. This then leads him to the further question of what equipment is, and to the problem, itself surfaced above, of finding a way of accessing the essence of equipment, or equipmentality (*das Zeughafte*), that is not itself already informed by the traditional ways of conceptualising it (see GA5:17-18).

In seeking such a way, Heidegger suggests going back to basics. In good phenomenological fashion, he proposes that we start with the simple, direct description of an instance of equipment, endeavouring in so doing to dispense with any pre-commitment to a philosophical theory of equipmentality. He suggests taking a pair of peasant shoes as such an instance. It is at this juncture that the Van Gogh painting is introduced. As he writes:

[S]ince it is a matter of immediate description, it may be good to facilitate [the shoes'] visualisation. A pictorial presentation [*Darstellung*] is sufficient for such aid. We choose a well-known painting by Van Gogh, who painted such footgear several times.

(GA5:18)

This is followed first by Heidegger's well-known account of an experiential engagement with the painting (see GA5:19), and then by two claims: (i) that equipmentality is reliability; and (ii)

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<sup>107</sup> Note that there is no mention of Van Gogh in any of the earlier versions of OWA.

that it is through the engagement with the painting that equipmentality was found to be reliability (see GA5:19-21). From this, Heidegger then derives an initial characterisation of the being of artworks in terms of (what he labels) the setting-itself-into-work of the truth of entities (see GA5:21ff.), which sets the stage for the inquiry to follow.

Having briefly reviewed the context and overall structure of the Van Gogh episode, let us take a closer look at it. The first point to note here is that there is a discontinuity between the way Heidegger introduces the painting and what happens after its introduction. For Heidegger's way of introducing Van Gogh's painting into OWA actually amounts to a kind of deliberately deceptive ruse. As we shall see, Heidegger's aim is to set up the encounter with the painting in such a way that the experience of reliability is presented as coming about in a surprising, unexpected way.

The mentioned discontinuity can be glimpsed through a telling textual clue. Heidegger introduces the painting as a helpful representational device for describing a pair of shoes. The painting would thus serve 'to facilitate their visualisation [*Veranschaulichung*]' (GA5:18). However, in the aftermath of the encounter with the painting, in reflecting on what had transpired, Heidegger remarks:

Above all, however, the work did not, as it might at first have seemed, merely serve to better visualise [*zur besser Veranschaulichung*] what a piece of equipment is. (GA5:21)

Thus, while Heidegger introduces Van Gogh's painting ostensibly to facilitate a visualisation of the shoes, he later explicitly acknowledges that whatever else the painting may have done, it did *not* simply facilitate a visualisation of equipment. Compare also the way Heidegger summarises the juncture at issue in his own notes on OWA:

What a piece of equipment is? Footgear [...] 'Visualising' – (apparently!) [*»Veranschaulichen«* - (*scheinbar!*)] and describing – with the aid of a painting. (GA82:486)

The scare quotes around the word 'visualising' and its gloss with '*scheinbar!*' (to be heard as '*merely* apparently', '*only* seemingly') support the idea that Heidegger constructs the introduction of the painting in a studiously deceptive way.

If not a visualisation of shoes, what then took place? Having introduced the painting, Heidegger seems suddenly to become absorbed by its contents in a way that is far less straightforward than any mere description. The resulting passage is well known:<sup>108</sup>

From out of the dark opening of the well-worn insides of the shoes the toil of the worker's tread stares forth. In the crudely solid heaviness of the shoes accumulates the tenacity of the slow trudge through the far-stretching and ever-uniform furrows of the field [...].

(GA5:19)

The familiarity of the passage obviates the need to cite it in full. The important point for us is that what we get in it is not a neutral, pre-theoretic, mere description of shoes, with the painting serving merely as a visual aid to such end. Rather, it is an unexpected articulation, highly interpretive and couched in evocative literary language, of the specific way the shoes are depicted in the painting and what such depiction reveals about them. The passage gives voice, first and foremost, to an engagement, not with a pair of shoes (thanks to the visualisation by an artwork, irrelevant *qua* such), but with an artwork (and the specific way it depicts a pair of shoes).<sup>109</sup> And it is on the basis of such artistic engagement that Heidegger goes on to draw a thesis about the being of equipment. Thus, after the encounter with the painting, the purported original purpose of its introduction is explicitly contrasted by Heidegger with what actually transpired in the encounter:

[T]he work did not, as it might at first have seemed, merely serve to better visualise what a piece of equipment is. Rather, the equipment-being of equipment explicitly comes to its light first through the work and only in the work.

(GA5:21)

That is to say, the painting did not function as a mere (and ultimately dispensable) aid to visualising the shoes for the sake of describing them, in order to then inquire into equipmentality on this basis. Rather, as it turns out, it is through the painting *itself*, Heidegger claims, that equipmentality comes to light at all. The painting's purportedly merely auxiliary purpose is subverted by an unexpected occurrence – namely, the coming-to-light of equipmentality in and through an engagement with the painting itself. In the terminology

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<sup>108</sup> Arguably more infamous than famous. '[O]ne of [Heidegger's] most notorious passages of prose', as Mulhall (2019:207) puts it, also citing the disparaging remarks of Derrida, who finds the passage 'ridiculous and lamentable' (1987:292).

<sup>109</sup> The point is perceptively noted by Sassen (2001:162).

introduced above, we can construe the contrast between purported purpose and actual happening as follows. The painting is deceptively introduced as offering a mere presentation (*Darstellung*) of an entity, i.e. a pair of shoes. (The painting may serve to better visualise the shoes precisely because it presents them.) However, what the painting actually, and surprisingly, turns out to offer is a placing-forth (*Erstellung*) of the being of such entity, i.e. the shoes' reliability.

We can thus begin to discern the anticipated performative element at play in the Van Gogh episode. The episode is designed to set up a kind of theatrical disruption in the progression of the essay. This allows Heidegger to mark the ontological discovery offered by the artwork not as the expected outcome of a predictable argumentative trajectory, but as an unanticipated turn of events, at odds with the intended line of inquiry.

This dovetails with the way Heidegger first introduces the idea that the encounter with the painting might have afforded an experience not only of equipmentality (i.e. reliability), but also of workliness (*das Werkhafte*), or work-being (*das Werksein*). Thus, after the encounter and the ensuing discussion of reliability, he writes:

It is in it [i.e. reliability] that we first learn what equipment is in truth. But we still [...] know nothing at all of what we are properly and solely looking for: the workliness of the work in the sense of artwork. / Or have we now not inadvertently [*unversehens*], in passing [*beiber*] as it were, already learned something about the work-being of the work?

(GA5:20)

The argument's progression is carefully orchestrated so that the artwork's being should enter the stage via a retrospective realisation, as if in an afterthought. Here, the performative dimension of the Van Gogh episode redoubles. Not only have we unexpectedly experienced equipmentality. As it turns out, and just as unexpectedly, we have thereby experienced workliness as well – the very thing we had been looking for before we even set out to inquire about equipment, and indeed what had led us to inquire about equipment in the first place. The unexpected character of such a finding is reiterated and made fully explicit in Heidegger's recapitulation, towards the end of the section, of the path followed therein:

We let a work tell us what equipment is. Thereby there came into the light of day, underhand as it were [*gleichsam unter der Hand*], what is at work in the work: the opening up of entities in their being: the happening of truth.

(GA5:23-24)

The choice of expression in this passage is revealing. In the Van Gogh encounter, in experiencing equipmentality, we have also experienced workliness. The latter experience, however, took place *unter der Hand*, ‘on the quiet’.<sup>110</sup> The painting is introduced in such a way that the discovery of equipment-being, and consequently of work-being, should take Heidegger (and us) by surprise.

There are, of course, two different levels here – one external and one internal to the workings of the essay. Heidegger’s text only stages his being surprised by the discovery of equipment-being and work-being. As seen, Heidegger writes in full awareness of the theatrical effects I am highlighting. He writes, that is, having already arrived at, before and outside the textual space of the essay, the claims about equipment-being and work-being that he stages in the essay as being discovered through the Van Gogh encounter. The staging serves precisely the expository function of leading the reader to the claims Heidegger himself has already arrived at off-stage. But, as we shall see, it also, and indeed primarily, serves the function of showing *how* such claims may be arrived at.

Thus, the unfolding of the Van Gogh encounter can be reconstructed as follows: (1) Heidegger pretends to aim to discover equipment-being partly via an immediate description of a piece of equipment; (2) he introduces the painting as a purported aid to this end; (3) equipment-being is unexpectedly discovered via an encounter with the painting; (4) along with equipment-being, work-being is also, and indeed thereby, discovered – it too in an unexpected way. Of course, for the reasons outlined, the unexpectedness mentioned in (3) and (4) is to be understood as only textually staged.

All this naturally raises the question of why Heidegger should have chosen such a peculiar way of presenting his case. Should we dismiss it as a mere stylistic whim on his part – and an ill-advised one at that, because distracting and confusing, at least judging by the lingering perplexity the Van Gogh episode has caused among commentators? Or might there not be a deeper reason for Heidegger’s unusual choice, rooted in the very nature of the thing to be exposed? Remarkably, for all the discussion the Van Gogh encounter has generated, this aspect of the issue has found little attention in the secondary literature.<sup>111</sup> Against this trend, I propose

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<sup>110</sup> The phrase is noted by Harries (2009:89), who, however, does not pursue the issue further.

<sup>111</sup> An important recent exception to this trend is Mulhall (2019), to whose treatment I am indebted. In a fascinating discussion, he notes the ‘highly non-linear’ (203) character of OWA’s first lecture – stressing the need to understand it as a context necessary to appreciate Heidegger’s approach (204) – as well as the ‘patent’

that we take seriously the idea that the episode's presentation may be intimately linked to the way artworks work on Heidegger's account. Let us see how.

Heidegger dramatises the discovery of equipment-being and work-being as if they were unexpected findings – ones that suddenly came upon us, catching us unawares. This is particularly so in the case of work-being. We mentioned how it enters the stage of OWA's argument surreptitiously and in intimate connection with the apprehension of equipment-being. This circumstance bears closer examination. Consider the following passage:

The equipment-being of equipment was found. But how? [...] [O]nly by placing ourselves in front of Van Gogh's painting. It spoke. [...] What is happening here? [...] Van Gogh's painting is the opening up of that which the piece of equipment, the pair of peasant shoes, is in truth.

(GA5:20-21, emphasis omitted)

These sentences mark the crucial point at which Heidegger moves from the claim that the painting afforded a grasp of equipment-being to the claim that *the very circumstance of such affording* in turn affords a grasp of work-being. Note how this takes the form of a retrospective reflection on what took place in the encounter with the painting. There are two steps here. First, the encounter is interpreted as an experience of the shoes' equipment-being. Secondly, the experience of the shoes' equipment-being is *itself* interpreted as an experience of the painting's work-being. At one level, in experiencing the painting, we experience the shoes in their reliability. At another level, precisely *through* experiencing the shoes as reliable, we experience the painting *as* something that brings reliability to light.

In the Van Gogh encounter, then, the experience of equipment-being nests in the experience of work-being. This is reflected in Heidegger's statements that at first we experience workliness only inadvertently and underhandedly. We only *realise* that what we experienced was actually the painting *in its work-being* by first realising that what we experienced through the painting were the shoes in their equipment-being. We arrive at workliness through the experience of equipmentality, because once we realise just what the latter was – i.e. a happening of (the) truth (of equipment) in and through the work – we realise what the former must then be – i.e. the setting-itself-into-work of the truth of entities: 'We let a work tell us what

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'duplicity' (206) at work in Heidegger's introduction of Van Gogh's painting, and more generally the 'dramatis[ing]' and 'enact[ive]' elements at play in the Van Gogh episode as a whole. However, as I argue below, the conclusion he draws from this I regard as unwarranted.

equipment is. *Thereby* there came into the light of day [...] what is at work in the work: [...] the happening of truth' (GA5:23-24, emphasis added).<sup>112</sup> With this determination of work-being in place, OWA can then move on, in the second and third lectures, to inquire into the relationships between work and truth, and between truth and art, respectively.

The process whereby Heidegger identifies work-being is not only convoluted, but also peculiarly circular. We determine work-being through an experience of equipment-being, an experience afforded by an artwork, and we determine work-being precisely as that which is capable of affording experiences of this kind (namely ones in which being is manifested, i.e. truth happens). While Heidegger (internally to the essay) stages the introduction of the Van Gogh painting as accidental, the outcome of the Van Gogh episode retrospectively shows something Heidegger (externally to the essay) must have known in order to choose to stage the introduction of the painting as accidental at all – namely, that the artwork was in fact somehow needed for us to determine equipment-being, and thus for us to determine its own work-being. For while Heidegger pretends to introduce the artwork as a mere aid to visualising equipment, the unfolding of the episode eventually leads him to claim that equipment-being comes to light *first* and *only* through artistic experience:

[T]he work did not [...] merely serve to better visualise what a piece of equipment is. Rather, the equipment-being of equipment explicitly comes to its light first [*erst*] through the work and only [*nur*] in the work. (GA5:21)

The claim is echoed later in the essay, this time in relation not only to equipment-being, but also to thing-being:

What applies to equipment, [i.e.] that it is first through the work that we expressly experience equipment's equipment-being, also applies to the thing's thinghood. (GA5:57)

Of thing-being, Heidegger continues, 'we never know anything directly', and 'thus require [*bedürfen*] the work' to experience it (GA5:57). These claims should remind us of our discussion of reliability's fading away and its unavailability within our inherited context of sense-making. We said then that Van Gogh's painting effects a retrieval of reliability as something latent

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<sup>112</sup> The concomitance of the experiences of equipmentality and workliness is registered by von Herrmann (1994:132).

beneath – hence irretrievable within – such context. This implies precisely that the painting affords us an experience (of equipment-being) that, given our historical situatedness, would not have been available without it. Thus, in order to experience equipment-being, we *need* the work. On the other hand, as we saw a moment ago, it is through equipment-being that, in OWA, we arrive at work-being. Taken together, we thus have the curious circumstance that Heidegger introduces the painting with a deceptive ruse, in order that we may undergo an experience of equipment's equipment-being, on whose basis we can determine the work's work-being – and from *this*, we can then realise that the artwork was in fact needed to determine both equipment-being and (as a result) work-being itself.

This is a very unusual argumentative structure, to say the least. What could motivate it? As anticipated, I contend that my account of artistic experience provides the key to the puzzle. How so?

Above, we already had occasion to pause on a telling remark by Heidegger in the wake of the episode:

The equipment-being of equipment was found. But how? [...] [O]nly by placing ourselves in front of Van Gogh's painting. [The painting] spoke. In the vicinity of the work, we were suddenly somewhere else than we are ordinarily accustomed to being.

(GA5:20-21)

My interpretive suggestion was that this passage, inevitably cryptic at the point of its occurrence early in OWA, should be read as a hint to the displacement out of the ordinary that, as I argued, artistic experience involves. What Heidegger is implying here, then, is that in standing before Van Gogh's painting, we were suddenly transposed out of the context of sense-making in which we first encounter it. The Van Gogh encounter, so construed, amounts to a performative rendering of an undergoing of artistic experience *qua* displacement into the extra-ordinary of the artwork's own opening.

Indeed, once the Van Gogh episode is seen in this light, many of its puzzling features cease to be so. Foremost among these is the sudden shift in tone and style that marks the paragraph in which the encounter itself is related, and which sets it apart from the preceding and subsequent text. Rather than seeing this as an arbitrary, pseudo-literary self-indulgence on Heidegger's part, we can interpret such a switch as motivated by the very phenomenon he is

trying to articulate. In §4.3 above, we saw how the resort to literary language may be regarded as grounded in an attempt to capture the non-ordinary dimension of the manifestation of reliability. Now we can add that the tonal and stylistic switch may be seen as tracking the very disruption that artistic experience effects on the normative texture governing the context of sense-making within which the artwork is initially encountered. The ‘suddenness’ of our finding ourselves ‘somewhere else’ than ordinary is the suddenness of the underlying non-causal, ontological displacement whereby ‘everything ordinary and hitherto [in being] becomes a non-entity’, thereby ‘los[ing] the ability to give and preserve being as measure’ (GA5:60). The abruptness and strangeness of Heidegger’s description of the Van Gogh encounter gives articulation to the underlying experience of abrupt denormalisation and rearrangement – ultimately, of retunement – to which artistic encounters amount.<sup>113</sup>

Above, we saw how, in artistic experience, the experiencer’s displacement and being’s shining (or placing-forth) go hand in hand. One is displaced into the abyssal opening within which being can be contentiously brought to shine. In the Van Gogh episode, the shining of reliability takes place in and through the displacement effected by the painting. This co-belonging of ontological manifestation and contextual displacement in the encounter with Van Gogh’s painting corresponds, in turn, to the nesting of the experience of equipment-being within the experience of work-being that we highlighted above. The fact that Heidegger ultimately arrives at work-being via (reflecting on our having undergone an experience of) equipment-being depends on the fact that work-being manifests itself *by* equipment-being’s manifesting itself. The displacement we undergo in encountering Van Gogh’s painting *is* our being repositioned in a new opening of sense in which the reliability of the depicted shoes shines forth. The *shining* of reliability *is* the painting’s working *as* a work. Work-being thus manifests itself *in and through* the self-manifesting of equipment-being.

This is a whole, internally complex phenomenon, whose structure may be grasped by recourse to conceptual tools introduced by Heidegger in SZ. There (see SZ:29ff.) Heidegger distinguishes between appearing (*Erscheinen*) (in a technical sense), self-showing (*Sichzeigen*), and self-announcing (*Sichmelden*). Something X appears (in the technical sense) if and only if X does

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<sup>113</sup> This is not to say, of course, that Heidegger’s description, both in its content and in its tone and style, is in fact successful. One may well continue to regard it as a poor attempt, while appreciating the need for *some such* attempt. All I am arguing is that Heidegger’s attempt was well-founded, given his underlying picture of work-being.

not show itself *and* X announces itself through something else Y which does show itself. In this terminology, one way of understanding the relationship between equipment-being and work-being in the Van Gogh encounter is to say: in the encounter, equipment-being shows itself, whereas work-being appears, i.e. it does not show itself, but *announces* itself through the self-showing of equipment-being. Thus, Heidegger's working his way back from equipment-being to work-being in his *ex post* reflection on the encounter could be understood as his moving from what shows itself in the encounter (i.e. equipment-being) to what announces itself through such self-showing (i.e. work-being). Our experience of the self-showing of equipment-being is at the same time an experience of the self-announcing of work-being. The fact that 'what is at work in the work' comes 'into the light of day' inconspicuously at first ('underhand, as it were') (GA5:23-24) is thus accounted for by the fact that we are initially caught up in the (unexpected) self-showing of equipment-being. It is only afterwards, by reflecting on just what it means that equipment-being should have shown itself through an encounter with the painting, that we realise that in our experience of equipment-being's showing itself, we have also experienced work-being's announcing itself. For work-being just *is* the happening of the displacement whereby the being of entities (here, of equipment) shows itself. As Heidegger writes:

[A] work's work-being essences and essences only in such an opening up [i.e. of the domain to which it belongs]. We said that the happening of truth is at work in the work. The reference to Van Gogh's painting attempted to name this happening.

(GA5:27)

Thus, in the argument's progression, the experience we undergo in encountering the painting is first to be understood as one of reliability's manifesting itself (i.e. as an ontological manifestation). But this very manifestation, properly understood, involves our being transposed from the ordinary into an extra-ordinary opening of sense (i.e. to the occurrence of a contextual displacement). Understanding *this* marks the step by which work-being is grasped in the essay. Consider again the sentences encapsulating this step: '[E]quipment-being [...] was found. But how?', Heidegger reflects. '[O]nly by placing ourselves in front of Van Gogh's painting', he concludes. 'In the vicinity of the work, we were suddenly somewhere else than we are ordinarily accustomed to being' (GA5:20-21). Work-being can now be determined as the mode of being whereby such an ontologically manifesting displacement takes place.

Heidegger thus continues: ‘Van Gogh’s painting is the opening up of what the piece of equipment [...] is in truth’. ‘If here there happens an opening up of the entity in what and how it is’, however, *then* ‘at work in the work is a happening of truth’ (GA5:21, emphasis altered).

We thus get a coherent way, grounded in the matter itself, i.e. work-being, of accounting for why Heidegger constructs the Van Gogh episode in the peculiar way he does. In order to arrive at a determination of work-being as (what I refer to here as) ontologically manifesting displacement, the artwork is presented *in* its work-being by *embodying* in the text the very experience of undergoing an ontologically manifesting displacement. But in displacement, we get transposed away from our *ordinary* context of sense-making and into an *extra-ordinary* opening in which an ontological manifestation may take place. *Hence*, crucially, the need for Heidegger to introduce the painting, at the outset, under a pretext (i.e. its serving as a mere aid for visualising a pair of shoes). For, in doing so, he sets the stage for dramatising the experience of displacement by a beholder who approaches the artwork in an ordinary way. (Recall from our discussion of wonder that ordinarieness is not grasped as such so long as it prevails, but only through contrast with the non-ordinary, when the latter manifests itself.) Thus, we approach Van Gogh’s painting in ordinary fashion, as offering a mere presentation (*Darstellung*) of an entity (i.e. a pair of shoes), only to find ourselves displaced by the painting away from the context of ordinary sense-making as such. The functioning of work-being is thereby *enacted* in the way it strikes us, of its own accord, with the full thrust of its ontologically displacing (ultimately retuning) power. Such thrust is performatively displayed in its breaking into the context of our everydayness, thereby disrupting the course of its ordinary unfolding. The disruption consists in an experience of equipmentality, whose recognition *as* an experience of equipmentality then enables us to recognise the disruption itself as both a contextual displacement and as the work of the painting, and thence to determine the artwork’s work-being, in the way described.

This new account of the Van Gogh episode, I submit, provides us with the resources to address and dispel the perplexities that have long surrounded it in the scholarly literature. Much of the confusion could perhaps have been avoided if more attention had been paid to the specificities of the peculiar way in which the episode is presented – a task which the literature has neglected to a surprising degree. A recent exception to this tendency, as noted in

fn. 111 above, is Mulhall's (2019) account. I will therefore conclude this section by addressing his interpretive approach to the peculiar features that I have argued to be explained by reading the episode in the light of my account of artistic experience. Given the very different conclusions he draws from them, the comparison will help to bring out the specificity of my own approach and of its implications.

Mulhall notes and gives prominence to the performative elements at play in the Van Gogh episode and the disruptive effect that Heidegger's description of it has on the course of the essay, highlighting Heidegger's key remark on our finding ourselves, in the encounter, somewhere other than the ordinary (see 2019:206-7). What Mulhall takes these features to imply, however, is that the Van Gogh episode in fact amounts to a *failed* attempt at encountering an artwork. He thus offers what we may call a 'revisionist' reading of the episode. For Mulhall, what Heidegger stages is actually a refusal on the work's part to be approached in an inadequate manner. The episode would thus illustrate 'not how [Heidegger] really thinks the truthful work of an artwork is meant to happen, but rather what happens when a certain violence is done to it' (*ibid.*:207). The 'violence' at issue would be the attempt by Heidegger to use the painting as a mere means to an end (i.e. as an aid to visualising the shoes), and moreover to do so by treating it as a mere representational device (*ibid.*:206). What many see as the poor quality of Heidegger's prose in the passage articulating the Van Gogh encounter would be a way for Heidegger to enact the inadequacy of his own attempt at engaging the painting (*ibid.*:207-8).

The radicality of this ingenious reading, whereby the Van Gogh encounter would be the staging of a failure, is motivated by a much-needed attempt to take seriously the highly peculiar dynamics of the Van Gogh episode. However, the reading's revisionism is, in my view, misaligned with the specific thrust of Heidegger's own radicality. Mulhall, it seems to me, correctly identifies the distinctive features that I have argued are due to the Van Gogh encounter's being staged as the unexpected undergoing of a displacement. However, Mulhall's interpretation, operating without an account of artistic experience *as* displacement, takes this displacement to be a false start – a refusal on the artwork's part to be mistreated – rather than, as I propose, *the very way* in which artworks work.

Thus, I agree with Mulhall that Heidegger's initial approach to the painting, treated as a mere representational means to an end, is an inadequate mode of engagement. And I agree with his perceptive insight that such approach is, in a sense, rejected by the painting. But the refusal at issue does not take the form of a malfunction on the painting's part. Rather, the painting refuses the inadequate approach precisely by *truly* functioning as a painting. The ingenuity of Heidegger in the episode, I suggest, lies precisely in the fact that what he stages is not a failure as a result of an inadequate engagement, but rather a success *in spite of* such inadequacy. The point for Heidegger is not that a misguided approach will lead to a corresponding distortion on the work's part. Rather, it is that the work has the capacity to work on us in ways over which we have no control. It is precisely in this way that he is able to construe artistic experience as a site of potential subversion of prevailing ordinariness, thereby breaking the vicious circle within which our epochally determined understanding initially confines us. Crucial to this is that the work be able to work its displacement on us even against our intentions and expectations.

Mulhall is thus right that Heidegger approaches the painting as a mere representational (i.e., in my terminology, presentational) device. But the relevant contrast is between the presentation (*Darstellung*) of a pair of shoes that Heidegger purports to seek from the painting, and the placing-forth (*Erstellung*) of the shoes' being that the painting actually effects. That Heidegger regards the Van Gogh encounter as involving a genuine ontological manifestation of equipment-being as reliability seems unquestionable. I have argued substantially for this claim both in this section and in previous ones. A further way of appreciating the point, which has the merit of not being open to the charge of begging the question against Mulhall's reading, may be the following. Mulhall champions Meyer's poem 'Roman Fountain' as a model for how a work properly functions in OWA, *as opposed to* Van Gogh's painting. But note that later in OWA Heidegger explicitly brings the two works together precisely as functioning in the *same* way, i.e. as letting unconcealment happen (see GA5:43), which in turn is precisely the way in which the Van Gogh episode had shown the painting to function (see GA5:21). What Mulhall diagnoses as a rejection on the painting's part, which motivates his own rejection of the Van Gogh encounter as a genuine artistic experience, is thus, properly construed, the very way – I contend – in which artistic experience takes place on Heidegger's account.

Finally, Mulhall may be justified, and is by no means not alone, in judging negatively the literary quality of Heidegger's description of the Van Gogh encounter. But this should be no reason to reject the encounter as a *bona fide* artistic experience. Rather, it may be seen as a failure, not of the encounter itself, but of Heidegger's attempt to articulate it. As suggested in fn. 113 above, it is perfectly possible both to maintain the genuineness of the attempt at articulation and to regard it as ultimately unsuccessful. To do so implies a judgment on Heidegger's literary adequacy rather than on the adequacy of the encounter he seeks to evoke. On the whole, then, we may see Mulhall's reading as latching onto genuine features of its construction, while at the same time rejecting the revisionist consequences he draws from them.

As I have argued, then, the peculiarities of the Van Gogh episode do not stem from its instancing a failure of artistic experience. Rather, Heidegger's construal of artistic experience is itself more peculiar than the scholarly literature has hitherto acknowledged. The peculiarities of the episode, then, match the peculiarity of such construal. By appreciating the displacement from the ordinary inherent in this dynamic, ultimately rooted in the affective retunement that the artwork effects, we are able to account for the Van Gogh episode in such a way that Heidegger's construction of it, whether successful or not, can be seen as not only justified in principle, but also fitting, given his underlying conception of the artwork's mode of being and working.

## Concluding Remarks: The Work of Art and the History of Being

In this thesis, I have advanced the key interpretive claim that artworks are construed by Heidegger as vehicles for projecting – i.e. articulating and sheltering – openings of sense that are fundamentally affective in nature. This has involved developing corresponding accounts of artistic creation as a projection of attunement and of artistic experience as a retuning displacement. My overall approach to Heidegger’s philosophy of art, as it had come to fruition by and around the time OWA’s final version was delivered in late 1936, has been to embed it within the broader framework of Heidegger’s coeval account of the affective grounds of intelligibility, within which, I have argued, it constitutively belongs. In doing so, my aim has been to restore an exegetical context unduly neglected in the scholarly literature on OWA, and thereby to offer a reading of the text that I believe more accurately reflects the philosophical sense and significance of the core theses OWA advances. This has included highlighting aspects of Heidegger’s mid-1930s thinking that mark a rupture with his better-known late-1920s approach, as documented in texts (such as *Contributions*) that have hitherto been somewhat on the fringes of Heidegger scholarship, as well as in materials only recently published and whose textual form makes their reception less straightforward (including Heidegger’s notes to SZ and to OWA itself).

Importantly, however, as noted in the Introduction, the framework in which I have embedded OWA is itself part of an even broader philosophical programme Heidegger develops in the relevant period. This is Heidegger’s being-historical project of a comprehensive account of the origins, presuppositions, and internal development of Western metaphysics and the development of ways of thinking capable of possibly overcoming it. An account of this broader project lay beyond the scope of the present study, whose primary concern was with Heidegger’s doctrine of art *per se*. In isolating this doctrine and its theoretical underpinnings from such broader context, I have taken care to carve the picture at its joints, so that Heidegger’s conception of art could be presented as a sufficiently self-contained account of

that *sui generis* domain of distinctive philosophical significance and interest that falls under the label of the artistic. Nevertheless, a full appreciation of Heidegger's views on art in the context of Heidegger's thinking, both in the mid-1930s and beyond, would require that they be reintegrated into the Heideggerian being-historical project to which they ultimately belong. Here are the outlines of what such reintegration, which I plan to pursue in further work, would involve.

### 5.1 Art, Being-Historically Modulated

Within the confines of this study, I have treated the picture of intelligibility as fundamentally affective as a given, and as a basis upon which to develop the more regionally delimited account of art in its nature and function. Within Heidegger's broader being-historical project of the mid-1930s, however, such a picture itself is not a given, but a central part of what is at stake in Heidegger's theorising. Thus, Heidegger construes the history of being to date partly but crucially in terms of a foundational, and fateful, lack of an account (hence a forgetting) of the fundamentally affective dimension of human understanding.<sup>114</sup> Heidegger refers to the historical origin of the way of thinking that has shaped our whole ontological history as the first inception (*erster Anfang*). The point now is that the thinking originating from such inception is unaware of itself as dependent on what I have called an affective opening, hence unaware of itself as creatively projecting an opening within which thinking is ultimately thrown: 'from ancient times we have been moving within a project of being, without its ever being able to be experienced as a project' (GA65:449, original emphases). In the broadest terms, Heidegger's own programme is the development of a thinking capable of experiencing itself as a project, *contra* the thinking of the first inception. Such novel thinking would thereby embody its own ultimate dependence on an underlying affective, hence abyssal, foundation: 'a projecting which, in its very opening up, comes to know the abyss that bears it' (GA65:369). But this would involve a radical change in the most fundamental presuppositions on which our very ways of understanding things, each other, and ourselves, derived as they are from the

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<sup>114</sup> Talk of a 'lack' is vague, but the right term is hard to nail down while avoiding the implication of an omission or otherwise blameworthy failure on the early Greeks' part, an implication against which Heidegger insistently guards us. There *is* an omission in the first inception, but on Heidegger's view, it is a necessary and non-culpable one.

first inception, are ultimately based. This radical break would involve an ontological projection fundamentally other than that of the first inception. As such, it would mark the onset of an *other* inception (*anderer Anfang*), on which a future way of human understanding and existing – what Heidegger would later call dwelling (*Wohnen*) – would be grounded.

Even stated at this prohibitively high level of abstraction, this has several implications for the picture of art I have reconstructed. A crucial one is that the theoretical underpinnings on which the picture rests amount to the very affective grounds of intelligibility that Heidegger seeks to retrieve from (what he sees as) their being-historical forgottenness. This means that the picture of art itself is dependent on, and indeed part of, such a process of retrieval. In this sense, Heidegger characterises the ‘knowing [*Wissen*] of art’ that he develops as ‘thoughtful’ (*denkerisch*), i.e. one ‘in harmony with and at the service of the question of being [and] the grounding of Da-sein’ (GA82:497, emphases omitted). In Heidegger’s intention, however, this does not amount to a harnessing of artistic theorising for purposes extraneous to the theory of art proper. The ‘thoughtful’ account of art is at the same time, and precisely thereby, a ‘transformed’ kind of account, geared towards an ‘immediate preparation of the path for art’ (GA82:497, emphasis omitted), i.e. aimed at enabling us to recover an experience of artworks along the lines the account itself sketches.

The two dimensions go hand in hand insofar as our historical situatedness, as seen, is so configured as to prevent our immediate access to artworks and their proper working, in the same way and for the same reasons as it more generally prevents our encounter with the extraordinary, unfamiliar grounds of our ordinary, familiar being-in-the-world. Thus, a renewed experience of art would then itself feed back into the broader project of which the theory of art is a part, inasmuch as this experience is precisely such as to ‘un-settle[] us from the ordinariness of the everyday’ (GA82:526, emphasis omitted) – the very ordinariness that blocks access to artworks in the first place. There is a characteristic circularity to Heidegger’s programme here. The theorisation of art, informed by a non-ordinary access to art, is a way of guiding us towards a non-ordinary access to art, so that such access may help to disengage us from ordinariness, in a self-reinforcing loop. Thus, a ‘liberation’ (*Befreiung*) of art from the grip of its aestheticisation through a ‘genuine recollection’ of it (GA82:496, emphasis omitted) is at the same time, thanks to an experience of the liberated work, a way of ‘liberat[ing] [*befreien*] the

care [*Sorge*] of resoluteness for the 'There', by 'destroy[ing]' (merely ordinary) 'concern [*Besorgen*]' (*ibid.*:513).

Even more strongly, a renewed experience of art is a *privileged* way of achieving this, precisely because the displacement that artworks effect is one whereby strife is unveiled. Such unveiling allows for a direct experience of the contentious grounds of our historical existence in a way not as directly available via other modes of sense-making. Heidegger thus speaks, rather emphatically, of the need for an '[e]xplosion [*Sprengung*] of the hitherto prevailing state of affairs [*Bisherigen und Zuständlichen*]' to be pursued 'through the simply effective work and its disconcerting character [*Befremdlichkeit*]' (GA73.1:562, emphasis omitted). It is through this lens, I submit, that we should ultimately grasp the being-historical import of encounters such as that with Van Gogh's painting that Heidegger dramatises in OWA and that I have reconstructed in Chapter 4. The defamiliarising experience of the shoes in their reliability, thus grasped, is *not* a standalone achievement whereby we gain an insight into reliability as a mode of being previously unknown to us, thereby adding a piece to our body of knowledge. In fact, what we are gaining insight into is first and foremost a *lack* in our ways of sense-making. Insofar, that is, as (i) reliability has faded away, and thus, as I argued, is *not* the way in which we grasp and comport towards equipment; and yet, through the experience of the work, we are able to see that (ii) equipment *is* in its fullness only as reliable, we become aware of a lack in our present way of grasping and comporting towards equipment. But such lack is not removed by our learning 'that' equipment is reliable, as though we could now simply revise our attitudes on the basis of such knowledge and regain what was lost. Rather, the lack remains, and the point lies precisely in our becoming aware of it, i.e. in the fact that the lack reveals itself to us *as* a lack. Such awareness, properly understood, introduces a disruption into the ordinary texture of meaning that, prior to such experience, we simply took for granted. Thus,

[t]he signs of [our] thrownness into Da-sein [...] first beckon in the estrangement [*Befremdung*] that lies over what is most familiar, closest, most usual, and unshroud its held-up certainty as the pursuit of a forgetting of being.  
(GA66:252)

Experiences such as that of the shoes in their reliability, which artworks are eminently suited to afford, foster such estrangement and thereby contribute to our developing an ever-finer sensitivity to what is missing in our epochally determined context of sense-making.

On Heidegger's construal, such sensitivity is ultimately affective in character. Its development is a progressive *retuning* away from our ordinariness. The attunement to which we are thereby retuned Heidegger calls shock (*Erschrecken*). What does it amount to? In ordinary contexts, we understand shock as a strong emotional reaction to the sudden occurrence of a negative event that has significant consequences for our lives. Consider, for example, my shock at discovering that a long-time friend is not the person I thought they were. I discover a side of them which I was unaware of and that seems incompatible with the person I believed I knew. Suddenly, all our shared history, and the image of my friend that underpinned it, is overshadowed by a dark cloud. What was familiar is now strange to me. The shocking, then, is something unforeseen, whose appearance imposes a need for significant reorientation towards what had previously been taken for granted. The structure of a shocking experience is thus twofold. First, I suddenly become aware of something unexpected concerning something familiar to me. Secondly, and as a consequence, the familiar becomes strange. In his analysis of shock, Heidegger translates this dynamic into an ontological register. On such a register, the two moments concern the relationship between being and entities. 'Ontological' shock involves, first, a sudden encounter with entities in what compellingly strikes us as their being, and yet is utterly unfamiliar to us. Secondly, it involves the concomitant realisation that our ordinary ways of making sense of things do not encompass, and are utterly inadequate to grasp, being as we have thus experienced it. Shock, then, denotes an experience in which we are confronted with the elusiveness of being, when measured by the yardstick that prevails in our ordinary context of sense-making – a context from which we simultaneously, and on that account, become estranged. As Heidegger writes:

Shock is the retraction from the fluidity of comportment in the familiar, back into the openness of the onslaught of the self-concealing, in which openness the hitherto familiar proves to be both alienating and fettering.  
(GA65:15)

Artistic encounters thus have the capacity, by displacing us from ordinariness into the extraordinary, to estrange us from ordinariness precisely because of its inhospitality to the extraordinary. By bringing the being of entities to shine in an epoch in which being is forgotten, they shake us with a sudden, otherwise unavailable intimation of such forgottenness. It is in this sense that Heidegger claims that to be struck by the being of entities, for us late moderns,

is not wondrous, as it was for the early Greeks, but shocking (see GA45:195ff.). Whereas the Greek temple held its recipients enraptured in an opening of sense from within which entities could be experienced in their wonderful emergence, Van Gogh's painting attunes us to the shocking fact that we unthinkingly deal with equipment but have forgotten its being. The two main artworks OWA discusses thus tacitly mirror each other across opposite being-historical endpoints: the wonderful manifestation, at the first inception of Western history, of the being of entities, on the one hand; the shocking manifestation, at the end of the historical trajectory of such inception, of the forgottenness of being, on the other.

Here we can clearly discern both the relative self-containment of Heidegger's account of art, as I have reconstructed it, and its simultaneous embedding within Heidegger's broader being-historical project – to which it is suited precisely because of the characteristics which, in my reconstruction, I have ascribed to it. Thus, as seen, artworks work by displacing (retuning) their experiencer into the affective opening which they project, within which being comes to shine in accordance with such projection. Now, we see that such working, being-historically contextualised, in turn performs a crucial being-historical function. Works work to 'awaken[] [*Er-weckung*] attunement in the 'There' (GA82:77). By retuning us to shock, hence estranging us from our epochal situatedness, experiences such as that of reliability through Van Gogh's painting enable, and thereby compel, us to take a stand on that very situatedness – just as wonder, by turning the being of entities into utmost non-ordinariness, enabled and thereby compelled the early Greeks to take a stand on *their own* situatedness. Shock *enables* us to take a stand – because prior to our retuning we have no access to what our new attunement opens up for us. Shock thereby *compels* us – because becoming aware of the forgottenness of being presents us with an either/or decision as to what to do about it. Such a decision, if it arises at all, by its very nature requires a response. Faced with it, *either* we, 'despite the dawning of the belonging of being to entities', ignore such experience and continue in our mere pursuit of entities, *or* we let our 'shock gain[] power and space' and refrain from 'forget[ting] the belonging of being to entities', so that 'all mere pursuit of entities [is made] questionable' (GA45:207).

To truly preserve a work like Van Gogh's painting would thus be not only to preserve the experience of equipment as reliable – as my account of Heidegger's theory of art, taken *per se*, implied; but also, and precisely thereby – as the being-historical embedding of the account

now implies – to cultivate the ‘shock before this closest and most obtrusive [thing], [i.e. the fact] that entities are’ (GA45:2, emphasis omitted). The latter kind of preservation follows from the former insofar as, for Heidegger, such a shock is what our very experience, *in our being-historical situation*, of equipment as reliable would retune us to. That is, to experience equipment as reliable is for us today also to catch a glimpse of the shocking fact that equipment *is* and yet we have forgotten its being. Cultivating an attunement of shock is the precondition for adequately *questioning* what shock reveals to us, i.e. philosophically inquiring into the sources and grounds of our forgetfulness of being, by asking just what being must be such that it may be thus forgotten. This is the philosophical task Heidegger takes upon himself in preparation for his projected other inception of ontological history – a task of which his very theorising about art, hence the very theory which allows us to grasp artworks as performing a being-historical function ‘in harmony with’ such task, is, in a hermeneutical circle, an integral part.

Moreover, the being-historical function to be performed by artworks, as Heidegger envisages it, is not exhausted by their retuning us to shock. Such retuning is itself to be a prelude to a further step. Thus, Heidegger distinguishes between a preliminary phase of being-historical transition (*Übergang*) and a phase of foundation of the other inception proper. ‘Transition’ is Heidegger’s term for a kind of being-historical interstitial space between the first and the other inception. The peculiarity of the transition is its having acquired a sense for the impending closure of the first-inceptive historical trajectory (i.e. metaphysics’ being at an end), while lacking the capacity yet to inaugurate an other-inceptive trajectory. The latter must first be prepared, and in this sense, Heidegger’s own philosophical task, self-consciously conceived as serving such preparation, is eminently transitional. To retune us to shock, i.e. to attune us to the forgottenness of being, is accordingly the being-historically *transitional* function of artworks. By so retuning us, they reposition us vis-à-vis our historical situatedness, so that we may come to grasp our epoch as fundamentally defined by such forgottenness.

Once so repositioned, however – in a move as crucial for Heidegger’s whole project as it is difficult to pin down – we are then to proceed in such a way that the forgottenness of being may come to be reframed and affirmed by us. We are to be able to grasp such forgottenness, not ‘negatively’ as a mere absence, but ‘positively’ as the very way in which being *is* (‘essences’, *wesst*), i.e. as *concealing itself*. Being is to be seen as *given* to us *as* self-concealing

(*sichverbergend*). Thomson (2011) aptly captures this dynamic in terms of an ontological ‘gestalt switch’ whereby, much as we switch from perceiving a duck to perceiving a rabbit in the ambiguous image Wittgenstein made philosophically famous, ‘[r]ather than experience being as nothing, we [...] instead experience this noth-ing as the way being shows itself to us’ (208). In one of Heidegger’s tentative formulations of the point in the period of our interest, this means that ‘the withdrawal’ of being, rather than ‘appear[ing] superficially as a mere nullity [*Nichtiges*], is to ‘prevail as a gift [*Schenkung*]’ (GA65:293). The gestalt switch is the ‘instant’ at which, in being-historical terms, we would move *from* the transition *to* (a first opening up of the possibility of) the other inception.

For mid-1930s Heidegger, such a gestalt switch is to take place in and as a further affective retunement. Such retunement would begin with the experience of shock, which transitional artworks are to awaken, and transform it tonally into another attunement of which shock is a constituent moment, akin to a constituent note in a chord. In the OWA period, the resulting attunement is referred to by Heidegger predominantly as restraint (*Verhaltenheit*).<sup>115</sup> We have seen how what is intimated in shock is a lack, in entities as we encounter them, of what shines for us as their genuine being (the shoes *are*, in their fullness, only as reliable, but are not and cannot be reliable for us). The idea now is that the absence of being from entities as we encounter them could come to be experienced by us as ultimately rooted in the very self-concealing essence of being itself. Restraint is the attunement in which the shocking is embraced in a kind of resolute acceptance, whereby being’s self-concealing is taken up by us as what we must think, so that ‘the task arises [...] to think being in such a way that forgottenness belongs to it essentially’ (GA14:37). Such thinking would have to be able to grasp entities anew precisely in the light of being’s constitutive self-concealing (see GA65:14ff.). Schematically, then, prior to our being retuned to shock, being was simply forgotten, which means that this very forgottenness was concealed from us, hence not part of our ordinary grasp of and comportment towards entities at all. In shock, the ordinary forgottenness of being becomes unconcealed, i.e. we become aware of forgottenness as such.

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<sup>115</sup> This is to be distinguished from the homonymous attitude discussed in the previous chapter. As noted, in our period of interest, Heidegger oscillates between using the term for that attitude and for the attunement here at issue. See fn. 87 above.

Now, in restraint, we grasp such forgottenness as an inherent consequence of the way being itself gives itself, i.e. as self-concealing.

In moving from the transition to the other inception, the idea is that such a new experience, enabled by our retuning to restraint and the attendant ontological gestalt switch, is to function as the basis for a novel grounding of all the modalities of our grasp of and comportment towards entities. Such grounding will constitutively embody a restrained sense for being's inherent self-concealing, which was first opened to us in shock under the guise of being's forgottenness. Where the task of the first inception was, at bottom, to creatively project wonder, the task of the other inception is thus to creatively project restraint. Restraint would have to be worked into our practices of sense-making, so as to articulate on this basis (what in Chapter 1 I called) a context of sense-making. Heidegger refers to this project as that of grounding a clearing 'of' or 'for' (i.e. one that accords with and is hospitable to) being's self-concealing. Here is a typical statement:

In the other inception [...], entities are such that they simultaneously sustain the clearing within which they stand, which clearing essences as a clearing of self-concealing[.]

(GA65:230)

Here lies the core of art's other-inceptive function. By its essence, art is the projection of an affective opening. In the other inception, however, this means: projecting an attunement of restraint to being's self-concealing. This would at the same time be a projection that, in contrast to the first inception, *is* aware of itself *as* a projection, and this also means: of itself as necessarily dependent on an ontological source that it cannot grasp and yet experiences, and projects, as a gift.

How can this be achieved? This is a tricky question whose full exploration must be reserved for further work. What can be noted here is that art's distinctive ability to preserve the inherent elusiveness of sense, which we have discussed at length, once again positions it as an eminently suitable vehicle for the sought achievement. Indeed, from the 1930s onwards, Heidegger becomes convinced that a projection of the relevant kind was foreshadowed in Hölderlin's poetry, especially in his late hymns. To see this, first a terminological note: Heidegger's name for a phenomenon that manifests itself as essentially self-concealing is 'mystery' (*Geheimnis*). A mystery is what it is only by being encountered as inherently

inaccessible (see e.g. GA39:119). To access this inaccessible would be to undo the mystery as a mystery. Insofar as, in the other inception, being is to be grasped *as* self-concealing, it is to be experienced as something that shows itself precisely *as* inherently inaccessible, hence as a mystery. Now, Heidegger's readings of some of Hölderlin's hymns are designed to interpret them precisely as poetic sayings of the mystery. On his view, such saying is achieved through a complex interaction between what is explicitly said in the poems, especially through the use of imagery, and what such intuitive content hints at without saying. What *is* said must be said for the sake of intimating what *cannot* be said *as* something that cannot be said:

The interpretation of the poem is thus confronted with very peculiar [*eigene*] tasks: on the one hand, the context of happenings which the images indicate must be grasped in itself, in its own intuitive content, but then this whole [must be grasped] as a renunciation and a moving-away [*Verleugnung und Wegrücken*] of what is properly to be said. (GA39:120)

The renunciation the poem enacts is presumably to be seen as a creative embodiment of the attunement of restraint that it projects.<sup>116</sup> Accordingly, the poem's retuning us to restraint would be achieved by simultaneously letting us forebode, through its saying, the unsayable as unsayable. Notice how here we go beyond the way in which early Greek artworks preserved the earthly dimension of emergence. There it was a matter of allowing entities to appear in their ultimate irreducibility to – their self-closing vis-à-vis – apprehension. Hölderlin's poems, on the other hand, rather than explicitly *showing* the self-closing of entities into the open, would *intimate* self-concealment in its inability to be shown. The mystery at issue in them, then, involves a deeper kind of concealment than that at play in the Greek inception – a concealment pertaining not to entities, but to being itself – and thus one whose projection requires new, different creative strategies.

This is, of course, only the barest indication of the complex problems that an adequate conception of Heidegger's vision for an other-inceptive art poses for us. It does, however, have the limited but relevant merit of allowing us to appreciate how the account of art reconstructed in this study holds up to the test of Heidegger's being-historical project. As this survey suggests, one virtue of the approach I have advocated is that, once being-historically

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<sup>116</sup> The Hölderlin lecture course I am drawing on here slightly pre-dates our period of interest. Heidegger's name for the relevant attunement there is foreboding (*Abnung*): 'Foreboding is that [...] attunement in which the mystery opens up as such' (GA39:257).

embedded, the approach has the theoretical resources to vindicate the different being-historical functions that Heidegger ascribes to artworks, while maintaining an essential unity in their working *qua* works. Such unity is ultimately grounded in the workly essence of artworks as projections of attunements. Overall, then, we have a picture whereby the theory of art gives an account of the essence of artworks, and such essence in turn is called upon to perform different functions across the history of being, and is modulated accordingly. Another way of putting it might be: the essential function of artworks remains transhistorically the same, namely to project attunements. But what this entails changes at different historical junctures. Thus, schematically, for the early Greeks, it entailed projecting wonder at the unconcealment of entities; in the transition, it entails projecting shock as the forgottenness of being; in the other inception, it will entail projecting restraint at being's self-concealing. Thus, in line with Heidegger's vision, we have it that the work's 'necessity [is] different in each case according to the [respective] emergency, i.e. according to history' (GA82:508). The neatness of the nesting of this account of Heidegger's conception of art within his broader being-historical project suggests that the account offered carves the conception at its joints. These indications thereby provide, I submit, further evidence for the account's adequacy as a reconstruction of Heidegger's views on art in the mid-1930s, while at the same time delineating the contours of the limits of the present project and setting a main direction for future work.

## 5.2 Overcoming Aesthetics

Above, I introduced Heidegger's philosophical quest for another inception in its relation to what went unthought and forgotten in the first. I characterised the kind of thinking that emerged from the first inception as unaware of itself as a projection of its affective thrownness, and hence as dependent upon it as its irreducible basis. This point has a further consequence of relevance for us. In Chapter 3, we traced in some detail the basic features of the early Greek projection of being. In being-historical terms, what we were thereby tracing was effectively a crucial part of Heidegger's account of the happening of the first inception. At its core, the first inception just *is* the early Greek projection of being as a projection of wonder. Now, however, this means that such projection is unaware of itself *as* a projection of wonder. This implies that

to construe it as such a projection, as I have done following Heidegger, is in a sense to look at it from without. Heidegger's construal of the Greek inception is a hermeneutic 'retroprojection' (*Rückentwurf*) (GA45:171) of it from the vantage point of the being-historical transition. The transitional standpoint is precisely one that achieves a self-reflective disengagement from the first inception, and is thus able to view it as though from the outside, while still remaining within (indeed, at the endpoint of) its historical trajectory. To understand the first inception as a projection that does not understand itself as such is thereby to position the other inception as one that will have to do so. The task Heidegger sets for thinking is, roughly put, to work out how this is to be done.

From the standpoint of the transition, then, we can see that while a work such as the Greek temple, which we discussed at length, *is* a creative projection of wonder, the temple does *not* project wonder in such a way as to incorporate in such projection an awareness of its being a projection of wonder. A detailed interpretation of Heidegger's diagnosis of the grounds for such lack of incorporation remains an open question in the scholarship and one that would require a study of its own.<sup>117</sup> The point for us is that this implies that art's inherent capacity to project affective openings, while effectively at work in the first inception, was not grasped as such within the ontological understanding that resulted from the first inception. Such capacity thus ended up being forgotten within the ensuing history of being. As a result, art's powers are distorted, eventually leading to what in Chapter 4 I called the aestheticisation of art. This means that aestheticisation traces its roots back to the early Greek origins of our ontological history. It is in this sense that Heidegger can claim that while 'the name "aesthetics" for the reflection on art and beauty is young and dates back to the 18<sup>th</sup> century', 'the thing that the name very aptly describes' is in fact 'as old as the reflection on art and beauty within Western thought' (GA43:92).

In considering the being-historical dimension of the aestheticisation of art, we bring out the other main line of research that the results of the present study point to as a corollary. Concomitant with his positive, constructive theorising of art, which has been my focus here, mid-1930s Heidegger develops a negative, 'destructive' programme directed at the history of

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<sup>117</sup> A key point here is that the very attunement of wonder is such that the projection which it compels is incapable of understanding itself as a projection. This is part of why the other inception requires another attunement as its affective ground, as we saw above in relation to restraint.

aesthetic understandings of art within the first-inceptive being-historical trajectory. His label for this programme is that of an ‘overcoming’ (*Überwindung*) of aesthetics. Thus, as he writes, ‘[t]he question concerning the origin of the work of art [...] stands in the innermost connection with the task of overcoming aesthetics’ (GA65:503). Concretely, he pursues this primarily through a critical interpretive dialogue with three key thinkers in the tradition of modern German aesthetics, namely, Kant, Schiller, and Nietzsche. As such, the programme belongs to the extended series of historical ‘confrontations’ (*Auseinandersetzungen*) that Heidegger undertakes as an integral part of his original ontological inquiry. Until recently, our reception of this strand of Heidegger’s work has been limited by the available textual material’s being largely confined to Heidegger’s reading of Nietzsche. However, the publication of the latest instalment of Heidegger’s complete works (GA84.2, issued in 2023) has remedied this situation.

The task of exegetically reconstructing Heidegger’s engagement with the aesthetic theories of Kant, Schiller, and Nietzsche provides a further testing ground, to be examined in future work, for the conception of art as projection of affect developed in this study. What my account implies, and thus predicts, is that such conception also best makes sense of the theoretical foundations on which Heidegger pursues his confrontation with the tradition of philosophical aesthetics. On this line of reading, the core of Heidegger’s critique would lie in the objection that, by presupposing a subject-object conception of the human-world relationship whereby affect is reduced to mere lived experience, the tradition unwittingly deprives itself of the resources adequately to capture the working of artworks. In a framework in which attunement is reduced to feeling, artworks cannot be grasped as projective of affective openings, but must rather be grasped as expressive of the artist’s inner sentimental life; they cannot be grasped as letting being shine, but must rather be grasped as renderings of their objects, as coloured by such inner sentiment; and artistic experience cannot be grasped as displacing the experiencer, but must rather be grasped as causing an inner sentiment in the recipient. An aesthetic understanding of art would thus be the necessary consequence of an inadequate, eventually subjectivistic understanding of attunement, in the context and as a reflection of the first-inceptive, then metaphysical, framework of Western thought.

On Heidegger's account, however, the very fact that modern aesthetics positions human affect, albeit subjectivistically grasped, at the centre of its theorising makes its distortion of the artistic domain uniquely revealing. Kant, Schiller, and Nietzsche are read by Heidegger as each, in different ways, responsive to something essential about art. On the strength of such insight, he argues, they construe the relationship between feeling and its supposed object, the beautiful in its pure appearance, in ways that, properly understood, are ultimately irreducible to traditional subject-object models. Thus, on Heidegger's interpretation, each of his three interlocutors evinces a receptivity to the phenomenon of art that exceeds what their underlying theoretical framework could capture. In this sense, Heidegger remarks, as a matter of 'historical fact', '[e]very aesthetic that is great in terms of thought, [...] explodes itself [*sich selbst sprengt*]' (GA43:161; see also GA82:535). Far from being merely destructive, his aim in engaging his historical interlocutors is to elicit the way their aesthetic theories push against the limits of the metaphysical framework that underlies them, hinting at its ultimate insufficiency. Accordingly, Heidegger is able to cast his positive project of artistic theorising as one which, in overcoming aesthetics, amounts to a 'liberation of what is wanted in' aesthetics itself (GA82:496). And the ultimate ground of aesthetics' inherent tendency to transcend, to 'explode', itself, I submit, is precisely the fact that it revolves around the human affective sphere as the core of its domain of theorising, and that affect, *qua* attunement, is essentially irreducible to a subject-object framework. By placing affect at the heart of the human experience of aesthetic meaningfulness, modern aesthetics would thus be the point at which the philosophical tradition comes closest to recognising (what Heidegger argues to be) the inadequacies of its own foundations. An account of art based on an adequate conception of affect, such as – I have argued – Heidegger seeks to develop, would thus realise the potential that modern aesthetics harbours without being able to fulfil. In this way, my approach to Heidegger on art promises to provide a unified picture not only of Heidegger's conceptions of art itself and of its being-historical function, but also of the grounds for his critical appraisal of how art has traditionally been understood.

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