Heidegger's Concept of World Disclosure:

A Reassessment

Fifi Wong

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Abstract

Heidegger's concept of world disclosure offers an enlightening account of how we can experience the world as a meaningful and coherent whole that correlates to our embodied ways of being. Yet, while trying to overcome some of the misleading assumptions of the philosophical tradition – such as Cartesian subjectivism and representationalism – world disclosure embraces equally unsatisfactory philosophical commitments. In particular, Heidegger considers world disclosure to be a primordial form of truth, to which he opposes propositional truth. But, is this a coherent conception of truth? Apparent problems with the reduction of meaning and intelligibility to the disclosure of the truth of being have been extensively discussed in contemporary debates. However, Heidegger's supporters and critics disagree about what exactly Heidegger's position is, attributing to him a myriad of positions, such as linguistic idealism and cultural relativism.

In this research project, I aim to offer a more balanced interpretation of world disclosure by reassessing it in relation to some of Heidegger's key concerns. These include the question of what grounds our capacity to experience things in the world, to understand what things mean, to communicate with others about a shared world, and to make knowledge claims about the world. Using this approach, I examine criticisms of Heidegger's treatment of our traditional conception of truth (e.g., propositional truth) as secondary to the 'truth' of disclosedness. I argue that the vital part of these criticisms, which is often overlooked in the debate, is the question of how humans can have a self-reflexive and critical awareness of the pre-disclosed significances of the world such that they can potentially transform them. I will defend Heidegger against the criticism that he collapses propositional truth into the truth of disclosure and disregards epistemological concerns. I show how my reassessment of world disclosure can address both the normative and existential concerns of reflexivity, critique, and potential transformation of what is always already disclosed to us.

For my parents

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Table of Contents

Abbreviations

As per convention, I use in-text referencing and abbreviations for frequented cited works by Heidegger. A similar style will also be used for texts by Husserl and Kant. References to *Being and Time* follow the standard practice of listing the pagination of the original edition after the translated edition.

Martin Heidegger

LQT   *Logic: The Question of Truth* (2010b)

BPP   *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology* (1988)

HCT   *The History of the Concept of Time* (1985)

MFL   *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic* (1978)

OWA   *Origin of the Work of Art* (1977)

BT   *Being and Time* (1962)

Emmanuel Kant

CPR   *Critique of Pure Reason* (A-edition: 1781, B-edition: 1887)

Edmund Husserl

EJ   *Experience and Judgement: Investigations in a Genealogy of Logic* (1973)

LI II   *Logical Investigations* Vol.2 (1970)

Introduction

The concept of world disclosure plays a central role in Heidegger's analysis of Dasein, commonly understood as the human being. It describes how humans are able to go about the world in a meaningful and coherent way, and how we have an intuitive grasp of the world and what it means to us because the world and its significances are pre-given. The way in which the idea of world disclosure gives prominence to the embodied nature of human existence has been significant in the development of many philosophical discussions, from phenomenology and linguistics to political and critical theory, and a cause for many debates and disagreements amongst his supporters and his critics alike. The cause for these disputes, broadly speaking, may be attributed to three aspects of Heidegger's treatment of world disclosure: (i) his presentation of it as ontological and primordial, (ii) its ambivalent status as being concurrently an existential state of Dasein as well as of language, and (iii) its relationship to truth.

In the field of research on Heidegger's concept of world disclosure, Ernst Tugendhat's 1964 essay "Heidegger's idea of truth" is oft cited. In this essay, Tugendhat points out a troubling internal conflict within Heidegger's account: if disclosure is the primordial truth-happening, which is the condition for propositional truth, then Heidegger has nothing else at his disposal to claim that disclosedness is truth. A number of Heidegger's critics have picked up on Tugendhat's challenge as a starting point for exposing the formal contradictions and normative consequences of Heidegger's account. Contemporary literature identifies Cristina Lafont as the main critic of Heidegger influenced by the Tugendhat essay. In her argument, Heidegger is charged with absolutising the world-disclosing function of language (Lafont 2000). She believes that Heidegger endorses the thesis that 'meaning determines reference', i.e., that we can only refer to things in our world insofar as those entities happen to fit our descriptions of them. Heidegger scholars such as Mark Wrathall (2002) and Taylor Carman (2002) have since defended Heidegger against these accusations. They maintain that Tugendhat and Lafont presuppose Heidegger's definition of truth as propositional truth, when in fact what Heidegger meant by truth was only disclosedness. On the other hand, William H. Smith (2007) argues that Tugendhat's challenge has still not been met. Defending Heidegger on the basis of the claim that he has two conceptions of truth – one ontic, and one

ontological – entails that we will never be able to get at the question of how ontological truth can have the normative resources for it to deserve the title of truth.

However, I believe that the problems with the concept of world disclosure (as well as its possible merits) extend beyond the problem of how truth as disclosure is related to the traditional conception of truth in language use and perceptual experience. It is not enough to close the door against these questions by appeal to the necessity of the hermeneutical circle (i.e., the interdependence of the ontic and the ontological) in Heidegger's methodology. I argue that Tugendhat's critique is a catalyst for another fundamental question, one that applies to both analytical and pragmatic philosophical concerns – the question of how humans can critically reflect upon, question, and potentially transform the horizon of meaning that is always already disclosed to us.

In the present research, I identify two of Heidegger's classic opponents who address this further issue: Karl-Otto Apel and Jürgen Habermas. Apel (1998) argues that in Heidegger's ontological transformation of Kantian transcendentalism, he transforms the temporal-historical disclosure of meaning horizons in the lifeworld into the precondition for all forms of human cognition. As such, disclosures of meaning horizons are historically contingent. World and meaning constitution are attributed to the 'mission' of being and is empirically inaccessible. Habermas (1987) finds issue with how Heidegger calls disclosure a primordial 'happening' brought about by the 'destining' of being, arguing that the meaning horizons disclosed cannot be deciphered and critiqued by everyday communicative practices due to Heidegger's neglect of discursive communication in his philosophy. These critiques have also had considerable influence on Lafont's interpretation of Heidegger. Asides from her work on Heidegger's conception of truth, Lafont also examines how the historical contingency of world disclosures makes it impossible for different communities of Dasein to communicate and agree about the same subject matter.

It can be seen that Apel, Habermas and Lafont all share similar, if not the same, concerns with Heidegger's idea of world-disclosure. Thus far, neither side of the debate has recognised and attempted to draw out these links, and discussions remain focused on the topic of propositional truth vs. truth as disclosure. The present research seeks to address this gap by tracking the arguments against world disclosure in Tugendhat, Apel, Habermas, and Lafont's works. I will closely examine what these critics understand by world disclosure,

especially in the context of their interpretation of Heidegger's project in *Being and Time* and his later essays.

It may well be that Heidegger deserves some of these criticisms. But, acknowledging shortcomings in Heidegger's account is not incompatible with the hypothesis that there are resources within Heidegger's own work that can address these shortcomings. The need is to identify what these resources are and to employ them in a way that does not contradict the main theses in Heidegger's philosophy.

Chapter 1 provides the groundwork for this task by tracking the concept of world disclosure in relation to some of Heidegger's chief philosophical concerns in *Being and Time* and some of his later works. Chapters 2 and 3 discuss the critics' case against Heidegger. I aim to give a clear and nuanced account of these criticisms by paying attention to their interpretation of Heidegger's understanding of the philosophical tradition, his relationship to his contemporaries, and his reactions against the theory of knowledge. This is important since in Chapter 4 I will attempt to defend Heidegger against some of these charges by showing where the interpretations might be mistaken – for example, in Heidegger's stance on language and realism, which I argue are closely aligned with the stances taken by Kant and Husserl.

In Chapter 5, I try to cement my defense of Heidegger against Lafont's charge of linguistic idealism by analysing the relationship between language and world disclosure. This will also prepare the foundation for showing how world disclosure can accommodate challenges such as the ability to engage in intersubjective communication across different historical projections of meaning. In Chapter 6, I examine how Heidegger's supporters may have fallen short of defending Heidegger against the accusation that he neglects epistemological concerns. This is the question of how Dasein can ascertain knowledge and justify their claims within the framework of unconcealment. I propose another way of tackling the truth problem by looking at the work of scholars such as Sacha Golob (2014) and Denis McManus (2008, 2012a, 2010b), who suggest that it is the *grammar* of propositional intentionality that is derivative of hermeneutical interpretation, not the *mode* of propositional comportment and practical comportment as such. I extend this reading by comparing Heidegger's account of propositional modes of comportment with Husserl's conception of

truth and evidence, showing how the framework of unconcealment *does* account for how Dasein can justifiably hold something to be true according to evidence.

In Chapter 7, I examine the extent to which my reassessment of world disclosure can live up to epistemological demands such as the demand that truth claims be justified against standards of validity and objectivity. I argue that there is commensurability between different historical projections of meaning. I give an account of how communities of Dasein across epochs can talk about the same objective world and improve their understanding of it. In Chapter 8, I address the remaining concerns of the critics by examining scientific enquiry as a paradigmatic example of disclosure. I show how science can be compatible with my interpretation of Heidegger's concept of world disclosure by illustrating how scientific disclosures can be empirically accessed, challenged, and transformed by Dasein.

Chapter 1: Heidegger's Concept of World Disclosure

Introduction

One of Heidegger's primary goals in *Being and Time* is to provide a phenomenological account of how humans typically engage with the world and its entities. He aims to highlight the *praxis* of life and the philosophical significance of lived experience by showing how the human subject primarily experiences the world in an embodied and meaningful fashion. According to Heidegger, Dasein is always already embedded within the world and has an implicit understanding of what the world means to it. This is the most original and natural way of understanding embodied existence, and it is the *condition of possibility* for asking any questions about the link between subject, object, consciousness and world. Humans are never without a world, or without other Dasein.

Heidegger explains the concept of disclosedness with a phenomenological account of Dasein's everyday dealings with the world. First and foremost, Dasein engages with things not as entities that are divorced from their context, but as equipment, i.e., things meant for such-and-such a purpose (the hammer for hammering nails into the wall to hang a portrait or into wood panels to make my dog a house, for instance). This characteristic of Dasein's dealings with worldly things as equipment is called ready-to-handedness (*Zuhandenheit*) (BT: 98, SZ: 69). Absorbed in the task of using equipment in order to perform a certain task, Dasein does not have an explicit awareness of the equipment. It is only when equipment breaks down (and becomes present-at-hand) that Dasein notices for the first time the tool itself, the work for which the tool was used for, and everything else connected with the work.

> The context of equipment is lit up, not as something never seen before, but as a totality constantly sighted beforehand in circumspection. With this totality, however, the world announces itself… Our circumspection comes up against emptiness, and now sees for the first time *what* the missing article was ready-to-hand *with,* and *what* it was ready-to-hand *for.* The environment announces itself afresh (BT: 105, SZ: 75).

Circumspection (*Umsicht*) is a term for the everyday, practical dealings with entities that I have described above (BT: 98-9, SZ: 69). Circumspection involves dealing with entities as

equipment for a certain purpose in our work. This mode of engagement is pretheoretical and prereflective. It is also linked to the existentiale (existentiale is an essential feature of Dasein) of disclosure. The disruption of our work through the breaking down of a piece of equipment brings Dasein to an awareness of its embeddedness in the world and to the factical and normative interrelatedness of the entities within its world. What this reveals is significant: before entities could be perceived or accessed as ready-to-hand or present-at-hand (*Vorhandenheit*), they were already 'laid open' or disclosed; as in, the totality of the world was already given through disclosure. When something is 'laid open', it is not that Dasein has a detailed awareness about the specific contents of what is disclosed through inference – rather, it means that what is disclosed is now available to Dasein for a deeper, reflexive and critical analysis of the given. Thus, broadly speaking, the disclosedness of the world refers to the fact that the referential totality of the world had already been laid out, thereby making it possible for Dasein to understand what the world means to it.

Disclosure is evidently loaded with meaning. Thus, it will be useful here to provide a working definition of its various senses before delving into the specifics.

- disclose, or *erschliessen* in the German, means to open up.
- disclosedness (*Erschlossenheit*) means 'the character of having been laid open' (BT: 105, SZ: 75). Disclosedness refers to how the world is lit up and already there for Dasein. In a sense it is a synonym for Dasein insofar as Dasein is always already in the world. Disclosedness does not mean to obtain indirectly from inference.
- world disclosure refers to an 'event' that newly discloses the world as a meaningful space, for instance by challenging existing meanings. This can be accomplished through special events of interpretation such as artworks, literature, or ground-breaking scientific discovery. New worldly significances are opened up in this manner.
- disclosure, disclosedness and world disclosure cannot be seen directly, e.g., through empirical investigation, nor can they be inferred, e.g., through logical analysis, but they are phenomena that Dasein understands insofar as it is a being that is disclosed.

Now that I have roughly laid out the idea of world disclosure, I will begin to analyse this concept upon the background of the central concerns of Heidegger's philosophy. My examination of world disclosure is guided by the following themes:

i.)   the meaning of *phenomenon* and *logos*

ii.)   worldhood

iii.)   knowledge, truth and epistemology

iv.)   disclosure, essence and truth in the later Heidegger

v.)   art, poetry and the historicity of Dasein

1.1   The Meaning of *Phenomenon* and *Logos*

I am looking at the terms *phenomenon*[1] (that which appears) and *logos* (discourse) first because *phenomenon* is deeply linked to how things in the world are disclosed to Dasein, and discourse is deeply linked to how the disclosure of the world enables Dasein to *speak meaningfully* about *phenomena*. *Phenomenon* and *logos* go together because one of Heidegger's goals is to establish the conditions of possibility for 'seeing'[2] that which appears and to show how this is bound up with the human capacity to understand and talk meaningfully about the world. Against the philosophical tradition, e.g., theories of correspondence and representationalism, Heidegger argues that the condition of this possibility lies in the equiprimordial disclosedness of the world and of Dasein. Explicating the connection between *phenomenon* and *logos* is the first step to unveiling Heidegger's insights into the condition of possibility for how we can *know* about, and *speak* about, the world.

To understand what *phenomenon* and *logos* refer to, we need to use the right method. For Heidegger, the right method is phenomenology. He uses this in his inquiry into Dasein's understanding of being.[3] Broadly speaking, 'Dasein's understanding of being' refers to Dasein's understanding of what it means to be, e.g., its own possibilities and its own goals, what the world means to it, and so forth. Phenomenology is concerned with looking at the

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[1] In this chapter, phenomenon is italicised to refer specifically to the technical definition, 'that which appears'. In subsequent chapters where the term is not italicised, it is not being used in the technical sense above.

[2] I mean seeing in a broad sense; not just looking with our eyes but bodily experiencing the phenomena.

[3] Where 'being' refers to 'being as such' in distinction from the 'being of entities', I will follow Thomas Sheehan's spirit of demystifying Heidegger's jargon and refrain from capitalising the term. This is to avoid the misconception that 'being as such', or 'Big Being' as dubbed by Sheehan (2014), is something like a mystical and transcendent power that totally escapes definition or description. For referencing purposes, however, I will not make changes to any occurrences of capital B 'being' in quotations from Heidegger or his commentators' texts.

things in themselves, especially how they show themselves, or how they are self-evident. According to Heidegger, the meaning of phenomenology lies in the combination of the Greek terms, *phenomenon* (that which appears), and *logos* (discourse). However, as will become clear in subsequent sections of this chapter, Heidegger thinks that the link between *phenomenon* and *logos* has been misinterpreted by the philosophical tradition. Because of this, the tradition presents a distorted view of how the human experience of the world is informed by judgement, intellect, or whatever it is that they consider as the locus of human knowledge. The true meaning of *phenomenon* and *logos* will be key to understanding the essential structure of human experience, and therefore to why disclosure is ontologically constitutive of this experience.

In ancient Greek, *phenomenon* denotes that which shows itself, that which is manifest, or that which is brought to the light. Accordingly, *phenomena* denotes the totality of that which is brought to light or made manifest – sometimes taken by the Greeks as synonymous with 'entities'. There are two senses of *phenomenon* as discussed by Heidegger.

- *phenomenon* as that which shows itself. This is the phenomenon in the primordial sense.
- *phenomenon* as that which seems to show itself but actually is not as it shows itself. Otherwise called semblance.

These two senses of *phenomenon* are structurally interconnected. This is because something can show itself as something that it is not only if it can *pretend* to show itself as a *phenomenon*. For example, the cup of water on the table that shows itself as such is *phenomenon* as the manifest. The stick in the water that shows itself as bent when it is actually straight is *phenomenon* in the second signification as semblance.

Phenomenon is to be distinguished from appearances. There are also several different senses of appearance.

1. appearance is a not-showing-itself. It is an observable event that indicates something that does not show itself, such as symptoms of a disease. The disease bubonic plague does not show itself but announces itself through symptoms like buboes and gangrene.
   a. the appearance as that which appears, e.g., the infection, without showing itself.

9

b. the appearance, e.g., the buboes, that shows itself not in order to indicate itself, but to indicate/announce that which appears e.g., the infection.

2. mere appearance: that which announces itself and indicates something non-manifest in such a way that the non-manifest is thought of as something that can never manifest, e.g., Kant's notion of the objects of empirical intuition. According to Kant, what shows itself, i.e., the *phenomenon* in the genuine primordial sense, is also an appearance in that it emanates something that hides itself in the appearance (BT: 53-4, SZ: 30-1).

Heidegger's main objective in laying out these specific distinctions of *phenomenon* and appearance is to show how Kant's conception of experience is mistaken. Kant's notion of empirical intuition creates a dichotomy between the *phenomenon* – which is purely appearance or a product of human subjectivity – and the thing in itself – which will never be given. As a result of this divide, then, the world and the things within it will always remain a mystery to human beings, and the world that we 'know' can only ever be a realm of appearances. Heidegger explains that *phenomenon* is the showing itself in itself, and it signifies a distinctive way in which something can be encountered. In contrast, an appearance is a reference-relationship which is in an entity itself. What does the referring can only accomplish its purpose if it shows itself and is therefore originally a *phenomenon* (BT: 54, SZ: 31). In other words, any reference-relation is impossible without *phenomena* in the primordial genuine sense. Mental representations, a type of appearance, presupposes that something has first shown itself. The structural interconnectedness of these various senses of *phenomenon* and appearance demonstrates that it doesn't make sense for us to begin our analysis of human experience from mere appearances. This is significant because it reveals Heidegger's position on reality and knowledge: he believes that humans *do* experience the real world and that our knowledge of the world is about the *real* things in the world and not just mere representations of them. I will come back to this in section 4.5.

Problematically, post-Kantian notions of appearance also misdirect the project of ontology properly understood, as well as theories of knowledge (as I will soon discuss). According to Heidegger, *phenomenon* originally means a kind of self-showing, pure and simple. Yet, in traditional philosophy *phenomenon* has come to mean *mere appearance* and seeming. In order to show how phenomenology is a genuine science of *phenomena* and how it is the most appropriate method for undertaking the ontology of Dasein, this distinction

needs to be made clear. So, what is the phenomenological sense of *phenomenon*, properly understood?

i.) the formal conception of *phenomenon* is that which shows itself from itself. It does not commit itself regarding what kind of entities are considered as *phenomena*.

ii.) the ordinary conception of *phenomenon* as appearances, associated most often with those entities that show themselves through empirical intuitions, e.g., the object of our intuitions. Insofar as this is also a type of showing, it also falls under the formal conception of *phenomenon.*

If *phenomenon* ii.) is the object of our intuitions, then this designates the specific phenomenal content of our experience, and not the *phenomena* of phenomenology. While phenomenal content of experience varies across different types of experience, formally, what always necessarily accompanies all appearances will be the *forms* of the intuition. The form of the intuition is similar to what Kant deems as the transcendental *a priori* of knowledge. Since ontology as conceived by Heidegger is concerned with being as such, the *phenomenon* that must be unpacked will be the formal conception of the condition of possibility for how entities can show themselves in themselves. How entities show themselves is not always immediately clear: what always necessarily accompanies all appearance in a non-obvious unthematic way must be brought into direct thematic self-showing. Basically, this is to phenomenologically investigate Dasein's everyday experience of the world, and to make explicit those conditions of possibility of our experience that are presupposed.

As mentioned earlier, the Greek meaning of phenomenology is the link between the *phenomenon* and *logos,* which Heidegger associates with the existentiale of discourse. Let us pause to define these terms, since it will become crucial to our argument. Discourse (*Rede*) means speech, talk, rumour, or address. Discourse is an existentiale of Dasein: to be in the world with other Dasein fundamentally involves communication and talking. Talking is the articulation of intelligibility, i.e. Dasein's understanding of what the world means. If it is the case that we already have an insight into what *phenomenon* formally means and how it is used in our ordinary signification – namely, that Dasein's understanding of being enables worldly entities to show themselves as meaningful to us – then we also need to define the signification of *logos*: how we let said entities be seen *as* meaningful through discourse.

Heidegger argues that the original Greek meaning of *logos* is discourse, and that this is how the term was originally used by Aristotle and Plato. However, the term 'discourse' had undergone various translations and interpretations, such as judgement and assertion. The theory of judgement conceives of judgements as 'binding' something to something else and distorts the genuine meaning of *logos,* which is to make manifest what one is talking about in one's discourse. To make manifest is to point out something so that the speaker or the people to whom the speaker is communicating can clearly see the thing or state of affairs that the discourse is about. It makes the thing or state of affairs accessible to them. The *logos* has the structure of synthesis insofar as its function is to let something be seen by pointing it out. This is to be sharply distinguished from synthesis in terms of the binding relationship of agreement between a psychical state and an entity or state of affairs that is external. As Heidegger clarifies, "Here the *συν* [of *σύνθεση*] has a purely apophantical signification and means letting something be seen in its *togetherness* (*Beisammen*) with something – letting it be seen *as* something" (BT: 56, SZ: 33).

Neither can *logos* be true or false in the sense of truth as agreement (more on this in the next section). Truth in the original Greek sense of *aletheia* is that which is unhidden, and correspondingly, the primordial genuine meaning of *logos* is to let the entities which one is talking about be seen as something unhidden. So, *logos* can be said to be true in the strict ontological sense of lifting something out of hiddenness. Conversely, *logos* that does not lift something out of hiddenness but rather covers it up, can be said to be false in the ontological sense. From this it can be seen that the *logos* cannot be the primary site of truth. To say that truth lies in judgement is erroneous. For the ancient Greeks, *aiesthesis*, perceiving, is also 'true' – and this is even more primordial than the *logos*. Experience pure and simple discovers things in the world: "seeing always discovers colours and hearing always discovers sounds" (BT: 57, SZ: 33). The *noein* always discovers something and in this sense it can never cover up or be false. On the other hand, when something does not take the form of letting something be seen but is pointing towards something else to let something be seen as something (e.g., appearances), this then requires the structure of synthesis. This is where the possibility of covering up occurs, and only then do we have the possibility for talking about the truth of judgements. I will talk more about truth and judgement in section 4.3.

To summarize, *phenomenon* is that which shows itself, for example, an entity or a state of affairs. *Phenomenon* indicates that Dasein immediately experiences the *real thing* in the world as opposed to representations or appearances. Discourse is an existentiale of Dasein because Dasein is one who communicates and talks with other Dasein in the shared world. The function of *logos* is to let something be seen. It is to make an entity or state of affairs accessible in speech by *picking out* something about them that I want to communicate to another person. *Phenomenon* and *logos* are linked because when we are pointing something out to another person in speech, we are communicating on the basis of our experience of the *real thing* that shows itself and not representations of the thing in our minds. This challenges the notion that human understanding and knowledge about the world is primarily a matter of judging whether an assertion is true by assessing whether a psychical state corresponds to an external entity. But how is it that Dasein can talk about the real thing, let alone pick out something about it in speech? To identify the condition of possibility for 'seeing' and speech, we must analyse how Dasein understands or knows the world in general.

1.2 Worldhood

In *Being and Time,* Heidegger distinguishes four senses of world.

i.)   world in the ontic sense – a totality of entities that are present-at-hand in the world.

ii.)   world in an ontological sense – the being of the totality of entities aforementioned. There can be different types of this, such as the realm of possible objects of a carpenter.

iii.)   world in another ontic sense – the world in which Dasein factically lives. This ontic conception of world can include many significations such as the public world of a particular community or even the private world of, say, the local fantasy book club.

iv.)   world in the ontological-existential sense, i.e., worldhood[4]. Worldhood is an existentiale. As such, it does not refer to the totality of entities that Dasein is not. Instead, worldhood is characteristic of the ontological structure of Dasein.

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[4] Heidegger's concept of worldhood bears similarity to Husserl's notion of the lifeworld. Lifeworld describes the world as a horizon of lived human experience, and as the background upon which things appear as what they are and as meaningful to us. Just like Heidegger's description of Dasein as always already being in a world, for Husserl, consciousness is always already situated in a meaningful world.

As discussed earlier, Dasein is never without a world; being-in-the-world is part of its ontological structure. According to Heidegger, a phenomenological explication of our everyday dealings with familiar equipment is the right way to get at the essential structure of our relationship with entities. In the same way, to understand worldhood, we start by analysing our banal everyday engagement with entities within the world. The analysis of worldhood will show that the condition of possibility for 'seeing' entities and talking about them meaningfully is the prior disclosure of the referential totality of the world. Previously we had discovered that our experience of 'things' is never primarily a mental representation of some entity that we reach through perception, and our knowledge of things does not primarily come from the correct correspondence between mental representations and an external object. Rather our experience is a "kind of concern which manipulates things and puts them to use; and this has its own kind of 'knowledge'" (BT: 95, SZ: 67).

This kind of 'knowledge' of which Heidegger speaks refers to the referential totality of the world that is always already accessible to Dasein as one that is in the world and has a care for the world. I want to focus on this sense of knowledge in order to analyse how this referential totality enables us to meaningfully experience entities and to point things out about them in speech. So, to start, what is the ontological structure of the entities that we encounter in the environment? We are not looking at the *characteristics* of an entity that makes it what it is, e.g., that a particular arrangement of certain molecules makes this chair a chair. This would be a way of analysing entities in order to understand the world theoretically, and while this is a perfectly valid task for regional ontologies such as science, Heidegger's concern is with how entities in the way that they are encountered in our very simple everyday experience reveals the essential structure of being that all entities possess. In order to gain phenomenological access to how Dasein deals with things in the environment in a concernful manner, our procedure must consist in "thrusting aside our interpretative tendencies, which keep thrusting themselves upon us and running along with us, and which conceal not only the phenomenon of such 'concern', but even more those entities themselves *as* encountered of their own accord *in* our concern with them" (BT: 96, SZ: 67, emphasis original).

Such 'interpretative tendencies' are well demonstrated in what we generally believe entities to be. Entities are called things (res), and this identification already implicitly

determines their ontological character. Taking things (erroneously) as the starting point in our analysis of being, we will discover thinghood and reality, and further determine that the essential structure of things must consist in properties such as extension, materiality, substantiality, and so on. But in order to discover such properties, we must abstract away from the usual fashion in which we encounter entities in the environment. For instance, we might suppress our normal understanding of a kitchen sponge as a tool for cleaning the dishes in order to determine that 'sponge' designates a soft, porous and absorbent synthetic material that has a rectangular shape, etc. "When one designates Things as the entities that are 'proximally given', one goes ontologically astray, even though ontically one has something else in mind" (BT: 96, SZ: 68). Let's say that we think that an entity is a thing that bears certain properties like mass, breadth, weight, and then we assess our knowledge claims by checking whether our judgment (say, a propositional assertion) corresponds to the fact that the entity actually has those properties. According to Heidegger, this would be to misidentify the ontological character of entities as mere things that have certain properties, because to reach that interpretation of entities as things we had to first abstract away from how the thing had been *given to us in the immediate phenomenon*: as an entity that already *means* something to us in relation to the world.

To explain how we ought to understand the ontological structure of entities, Heidegger returns to the Greek understanding of the thing. According to them, things meant "that which one has to do with in one's concernful dealings" (BT: 96, SZ: 68), and this allows Heidegger to call the entities that we deal with in concern 'equipment', and the essential ontological structures of equipment 'equipmentality'. To be clear, we are not looking at *a* piece of equipment. Ontically there are different types of equipment for different purposes, but ontologically, each item of equipment has as a part of being a *totality* of equipment. "Equipment is essentially 'something in-order-to…' ('etwas um-zu…'). A totality of equipment is constituted by various ways of the 'in-order-to', such as serviceability, conduciveness, usability, manipulability" (BT: 97, SZ: 68). For example, the purpose of a thermos cup is to hold hot liquids when I'm on the go, but it is only because it also relates to a totality of equipment (a web of interconnected equipmental purposes, for instance), that I can distinguish the use of a thermos cup from the use of a ceramic mug or paper cup, that I know that a ceramic mug is appropriate for holding coffee on a lazy Sunday morning but not

appropriate for holding coffee when I'm rushing to university on the bus, that the thermos is appropriate for the rushing scenario but not as convenient or satisfying for the relaxing scenario, and so on. Through this example we can observe how the equipmentality of a certain piece of equipment is always identified in terms of its belonging to other equipment. In everyday experience, things do not primarily show up as what they are in themselves and add up into a totality of real objects. Rather, we first encounter the totality of equipment, because it is the closest and most familiar to us. As Heidegger illustrates, when we enter a study or a classroom, we don't primarily encounter it as a space closed off by four walls with certain objects with particular materiality and extensions placed in different spots, but as "equipment for residing" (BT: 98, SZ: 68). He adds, "Out of this the 'arrangement' emerges, and it is in this that any 'individual' item of equipment shows itself. *Before* it does so, a totality of equipment has already been discovered" (BT: 96, SZ: 68). From this we can see how in our immediate experience of the *phenomenon* entities show themselves to us in relation to other entities. Our capacity to *pick out* something about the entity in *speech* is only possible because we first have the understanding of the *referential totality* of equipment.

Next, we can look at how specific ways of experiencing an entity, like picking out something about them in speech, is derivative of a broader and more primordial kind of experience, circumspection (*Umsicht*). Circumspection is Dasein's everyday, practical mode of experiencing equipment. As we know, pieces of equipment show themselves in their ready-to-handedness. "Equipment can genuinely show itself only in dealings cut to measure" (BT: 98, SZ: 69), as demonstrated in the hammering and thermos examples. When we deal with entities in their ready-to-handedness, our engagement is non-thematic, athoretical, and circumspective. The engagement is practical in the sense that it is done for a particular purpose. Of course, we are not just dealing with *equipment* in their ready-to-handedness, and we are not dealing with them in an explicit way. The ready-to-handedness of a tool is demonstrated most authentically when it 'withdraws', since we are primarily absorbed in our work, not in the tool. In this way, the work that we are doing is also ready-to-hand. How is this so? Heidegger explains, work and equipment both share the characteristics of the 'in-order-to': we are growing produce in order to provide sustenance, we produce smartphones in order to communicate, we produce maps in order to navigate our way around. "But the work to be produced is not merely usable for something. The production itself is a using *of*

something for something" (BT: 99-100, SZ: 70). Growing produce requires tractors, seeds, irrigation systems and so on. We can also identify the materials of which a product is made and discover 'Nature' in its ready-to-handedness along with the equipment. Even in other Dasein, we can discover the in-order-to of production, such as a luxury tailor-made gown designed especially for a celebrity's red-carpet moment, or in our current society the mass-produced bootleg supreme t-shirts that are made for the average middle-class consumer. All this goes to show that when we encounter things in the world in everyday experience, it is never merely theoretical and detached, and our grasp of things is never primarily a judgement about their extension, materiality, and so forth. Rather, our experience of things (for example, when an entity shows itself to us in a *phenomenon*) is immediate and occur in the context of practical, meaningful work. Furthermore, the meaning of things is holistic and always already accessible for Dasein. In this way, we can identify the ontological meaning of worldhood as the referential totality of equipment and work.

The concept of equipmentality and work is the pretext for understanding how the world is disclosed. As discussed in the preliminary section, it is when equipment fails to do its job that the world announces itself. When the thermos no longer keeps my coffee warm or if it begins to leak, I might begin to think about how this thermos was meant to keep my drink warm so I can travel to university conveniently and sip it while on the bus, that I need this thermos because my bus ride is about 20 minutes, that I take the bus earlier to avoid the morning traffic jams, that I know when traffic jams occur in Auckland, that my coffee freshly grounded in a grinder donated to our student hostel by an unknown kind-hearted individual … and so on. Basically, when the equipment becomes unusable for some purpose, then the assignment or 'in-order-to' of the equipment becomes explicit to us; "we catch sight of the 'towards-this' itself, and along with it everything connected with the work – the whole 'work-shop' – as that wherein concern always dwells" (BT:105, SZ:75-76). The broken equipment lights up the referential totality of the equipment and work, i.e., worldhood. Of course, the world was always there for us when everything was working just fine; it was only that we didn't have explicit awareness of this fact. When we explicitly encounter the world in this circumstance, we discover that the meaningful referential totality of the environment has always already been 'there', and that it had already been disclosed for circumspection. Disclosure refers to this character of worldhood as always having been 'laid open' for our

direct experience. "And it [the world] has already been disclosed beforehand whenever what is ready-to-hand within-the-world is accessible for circumspective concern. The world is therefore something 'wherein' Dasein as an entity already *was,* and if in any manner it explicitly comes away from anything, it can never do more than come back to the world" (BT:106-7, SZ: 76, emphasis original). It is because the world had already been disclosed that we can experience entities as meaningful and pick out something about an entity in speech.

1.3   Knowledge, Truth, and Unconcealment

Our capacity to have experience of entities and to talk meaningfully about them is based on the prior disclosure of the world. We mentioned that one of Dasein's essential characteristics is being-in-the-world: Dasein is never without a world. In this section we will see how the condition of possibility for experience lies upon the disclosedness of the referential totality of the world *as well as* the disclosedness of Dasein. We will see how this radically challenges the philosophical tradition's theories about what it means for us to have knowledge about the world. The question of how the knowing subject can come out of its inner sphere in order to have knowledge about something external, or, how we can know about anything at all, is a familiar problem. Knowing is set up as a relationship between subject and object, and thereby between subject and world. Underlying these problems is an assumption about what it means to be a subject who knows: "the question of the kind of being which belongs to this knowing subject is left entirely unasked" (BT: 87, SZ: 60). According to Heidegger, knowing is fundamentally a mode of being that Dasein has as being-in-the-world. Against the constructivist standpoint Heidegger emphasises that knowing is always already alongside the world rather than attained via the transcendence of the subject. To demonstrate how this is the case, he outlines five aspects of what it is for Dasein to know, as observed through a phenomenological explication of Dasein's everyday experience of the world. Importantly, Heidegger maintains that these are all modes of knowing, and that the first level is the condition of possibility for all the rest.

    i.)   knowing, as grounded in being-in-the-world, is always concernful rather than detached. We have a concern for how our world works and how we operate within it; it is full of

meaning and significances. We know the world in the sense of caring about it and what it means to us.

ii.) being-in-the-world usually involves producing and manipulating things, e.g., using equipment to create something for a particular purpose. We mostly know how to deal with things in the world to achieve certain ends.

iii.) circumspective interpretation: a broad sense of interpretation where Dasein addresses itself to something as something and discusses it as such. (This can involve speech and can also involve tacit forms of communication like gesturing.) For instance, specifically addressing itself to the hammer that it needs to build the doghouse, while the hammer still remains within the referential totality of equipment.

iv.) perceiving something as present-at-hand: if something seems strange to us or a piece of equipment fails, we can hold ourselves back from manipulating or utilizing a tool in order to purely perceive something as present-at-hand.

v.) perceiving something in a way that makes something determinate, for instance, a thematic perceptual determination of the charred surface of a piece of wood.

vi.) knowing in the sense of 'retaining' and 'preserving' – through a propositional statement – what has been asserted about a thematic perceptual determination about something (BT: 88-9, SZ: 61-2).

Heidegger is quick to remind us that knowing in the fifth sense is also a way of being-in-the-world: "it is not to be Interpreted as a 'procedure' by which a subject provides itself with representations (*Vorstellungen*) of something which remain stored up 'inside' as having been thus appropriated, and with regard to which the question of how they 'agree' with actuality can occasionally arise" (BT: 89, SZ: 62). It is not the case that we have to leap out of our 'inner' consciousness to the 'outer' world to grasp something about it using perceptual experience and retrieve this information to our consciousness to finally arrive at knowledge about something. As Heidegger illustrates, "the perceiving of what is known is not a process of returning with one's booty to the 'cabinet' of consciousness after one has gone out and grasped it" (BT: 89, SZ: 62). We are always already 'outside' along with the world, and if we look at the ontological structure of Dasein's everyday experience, the evidence for this seems quite clear. Concernful knowing is ontologically prior to cognitivist interpretations of knowing. Concernful knowing is immediate, and it is always the case that we know. Even

forgetting, making errors, and hallucinations, are modifications of Dasein's primordial state of being-in-the-world and knowing about the world.

There are several terms in these senses of knowing that require definition, since they will be important in subsequent arguments. First, all these senses of knowing make up the existentiale of 'understanding' (*Verstand*) which also carries the meaning of sympathy, insight, grip, appreciation, sense, and reason. The existentiale of understanding is to grasp the meaning of worldly significances. This is not an exclusively cognitive occurence. Rather, understanding what the world means and how one is situated in the world, even implicitly, is intrinsic to human existence. Then we have 'interpretation', which was mentioned in knowing in the 4th sense. Interpretation (*Auslegen*) is to lay out, display, interpret, and design. It refers to the fact that in everyday being-in-the-world Dasein's engagement with entities and worldly circumstances always already involves making use of the holistic meanings that underlie our understanding of the world and of what it means to be in the world. We can see that understanding and interpretation are two sides of the same coin: interpretation is making explicit the meanings that are understood. This is important because it indicates that the world has already been disclosed to Dasein as meaningful, and that these meanings can be made explicit through interpretation.

For example, when Dasein picks something out about an entity in speech, this involves making something about the entity explicit to the person with whom Dasein speaks. If my friend tells me that the coffee is burnt, his assertion is making some aspect of the entity or state of affairs explicit to me so that I can encounter the entity in a certain way – in this case, the coffee being burnt. As mentioned in the first section, what makes his assertion true is not the correspondence between his judgement and the external thing, but the fact that it uncovers how the entity is in itself – namely, that it is burnt. To explain this, let us turn to section 44 of *Being and Time*. The section begins with the claim that the philosophical tradition, particularly traditional epistemology, has always associated truth with being. The term 'traditional epistemology' refers to a philosophical framework that primarily depicts human beings as knowers with a body of beliefs that are either true or false, beliefs that can be justified in a relation between thought and thing. Heidegger argues that this is present in Parmenides as well as Aristotle's thinking. Philosophy is a 'science of the truth' and seeks to investigate entities with regard to their being (BT: 256, SZ: 213). He emphasizes that the

word 'truth' in the 'science of truth' signifies something very different from the word 'truth' as used in the theory of knowledge. In the latter case, truth is about correctness, or the correspondence between thought and thing. In the former case, truth "signifies the same as 'thing' ('*Sache*'), 'something that shows itself'" (BT: 256, SZ: 213). Since truth is bound up with being, working out the meaning of truth should also be conducted through the fundamental ontology of Dasein. According to Heidegger, getting at the meaning of being begins from the analytic of Dasein, since Dasein has an understanding of being. If we investigate how and why Dasein has an understanding of being, then this will help us get at how being and truth are related. We will start from the traditional conception of truth (i.e., in theories of knowledge) and work out the ontological foundation that makes this conception of truth possible, in order to attain the primordial *phenomenon* of truth. The traditional conception of truth, according to Heidegger, is as follows.

1. truth primarily lies in assertion, or judgement.
2. the essence of truth is found in the agreement or correspondence between judgment and the object.
3. Aristotle is responsible for setting judgement as the primordial locus of truth, and for defining truth as agreement. (BT: 257, SZ: 214).

Assuming that that truth lies in the adequation between thought and thing, the question about the ontological character of this relational totality remains. Heidegger unpacks the relational totality of the *adequatio intellectus et rei*. When traditional epistemology uses the term agreement, it refers to the agreement of something to something, and formally, it has the character of a relation of something to something. However, it is immediately clear that 'agreement' as such is not at the crux of each and every relation. A '60' speed sign indicates that we are to drive at 60, but it does not make sense to say that the speed sign is agreeing with the indicated speed. The baby's crying indicates that she is hungry, but it does not make sense to say that her crying is agreeing with the indicated physical state. Secondly, it is easy enough to claim that the essence of truth is in the agreement of something with something, but it seems that what is actually involved in this relationship of agreement is not fixed. In mathematics it could be said that 6 'agrees' with 2+4 because the two things are equal *with regards to* the question of how much. Or, it could be said that the current rainy weather

'agrees' with the weather forecast because the two things match up with regards to our observations. Apparently, there is more to the relational character of agreement than just X agreeing with Y. There is also the *how* X agrees with Y: the agreeing 'with regard to x' is also essential to the structure of the agreement. If truth is the agreement between the intellect and the 'object' of knowledge, what is the 'with regard to x' that enables the agreement? If knowledge consists in giving something just as it is in itself, and if agreement has the relational character of the 'just as', then it appears that the presupposition of the relational totality of agreement doesn't tell us much about the essential structure of truth: "we must go back and inquire into the context of Being which provides the support for this totality as such" (BT: 259, SZ: 216).

Recall that Dasein's capacity for knowing about the world is based on its ontological structure of being always already *alongside* the world rather than external to it. When we are enquiring into the essential structure of truth and of being, we must also avoid the temptation to search for truth within the immanent consciousness of the subject. In the tradition of epistemology, we distinguish between the psychical process of judging, which is said to be real, and then the content of the judgement, which is said to be ideal. The content of the judgement is either true or false. The psychical process of judgement is either present-at-hand or not. The ideal content of the judgement is in a relation of agreement with the real thing (the actual present-at-hand object or state of affairs) that is being judged about. But there is another relationship of agreement: this is between the ideal content of the judgment and the real act of judgement. The ontological structure of this three-way relationship of agreement is yet to be questioned. What is the ontological foundation of judgement or knowledge as such, that it is possible to separate the real from the ideal? "Does not the actuality of knowing and judging get broken asunder into two ways of Being – two 'levels' which can never be pieced together in such a manner as to reach the kind of Being that belongs to knowing?" (BT: 259, SZ: 217). The essence of truth cannot be grasped in the relational totality of agreement. It can only be grasped by clarifying the ontological characteristics of knowledge as such, which can be achieved by scrutinizing how truth becomes phenomenally explicit in knowledge. This happens when "knowing demonstrates itself *as true*. By demonstrating itself it is assured of its truth. Thus in the phenomenal context of demonstration, the relationship of agreement must become visible" (BT: 260, SZ: 217, emphasis original).

Heidegger unpacks the phenomenal context of the demonstration of knowing by explicating what it means when someone is making an assertion about something. He uses the example of a man who is standing with his back to the wall. On that wall is a picture that is hanging askew. The man asserts that "the picture is hanging askew on the wall", and we can see that this is a true statement when the man turns around to perceive that the state of affairs indeed matches up with his assertion. So how is knowing demonstrating itself as being true in this instance? What is being demonstrated? Heidegger maps this situation onto the threefold 'determination-predicate-object' structure of 'knowing' as used in traditional epistemology.

1. *the real: the determination, or judging.* This will be the psychical process of the man's representation, the statement, "the picture is hanging askew on the wall."
2. *the ideal: the predicate, the content of the judgement.* This will be the content of the man's statement, that the picture is hanging askew on the wall.
3. *the real thing: the object or state of affairs.* This will be the actual state of the picture hanging askew on the wall (BT: 260, SZ: 217-8).

When the man makes the statement with his back turned, it cannot be the case that his judgement is in a relationship of agreement with the representation, because the representation is just the psychical process of representing something. Otherwise, we are saying that his representation is agreeing with his representation. Rather, his judgement is related to the real thing which is on the wall. "What one has in mind is the Real picture, and nothing else. Any Interpretation in which something else is here slipped in as what one supposedly has in mind in an assertion that merely represents, belies the phenomenal facts of the case as to that about which the assertion gets made" (BT: 260, SZ: 217-8). In other words, the traditional epistemologist's claim that the man's statement is related to a representation that is separated from the real thing is totally unsupported by the phenomenological observations that we can make about the actual state of affairs.

Knowing is a mode of being of Dasein, and assertion (*Aussage*) is one type of knowing involving giving evidence, predication, and declaration, that directly points out the thing that we are talking about. At bottom, assertions are not about mental representations and how they match up with an ultimately inaccessible entity in the world. As we recall from the

section on *phenomenon*, mental representations (appearances) are grounded on *phenomenon* in the genuine primordial sense of something showing itself. There can be no doubt that the cup or picture frame that we are talking about is showing itself in the sense of *phenomenon* #1. So when we are asserting that the cup is on the table or that the picture frame is wonky, we are very simply expressing that the cup on the table is showing itself as being on the table, and that the wonky picture frame is showing itself as being wonky. So, what kind of thing are we trying to confirm? What is the relationship of agreement? We are simply confirming that the assertion is uncovering the entity toward which it is; that the entity is just as it is said to be. Our phenomenological observations show that there is no relationship of agreement between representations and the real thing. Assertions do not demonstrate that the knowing is agreeing with the object, nor that the content of our consciousness is agreeing with independent, external Real Things. Generally speaking, it only makes sense for us to assert that XYZ is the case if we already *know* in a broad sense that XYZ is really the case.[5] "What is to be demonstrated is solely the Being-uncovered (*Entdeckt-sein*) of the entity itself – *that entity* in the 'how' of its uncoveredness. This uncoveredness is confirmed when that which is put forward in the assertion (namely the entity itself) shows itself *as that very same thing. 'Confirmation' signifies the entity's showing itself in its selfsameness*" (BT: 261, SZ: 218, emphasis original).

The fact that assertions can confirm something or other is predicated on the entity first showing itself in its selfsameness. If my cup doesn't show itself as actually being filled with coffee, my assertion that the cup doesn't yet need a refill of coffee cannot confirm that it is really the case. Thus, in our assertions we are directly addressing real things in the same way that we are directly using equipment for particular purposes. Heidegger uses the terms uncovering and uncoveredness in the quote above. To uncover (*Entdecken*) is to discover, discern, or light upon. Uncoveredness (*Aufdecken*) accordingly refers to how entities are lit

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[5] Heidegger's idea that propositional truth is derivative of our immediate experience of truth is very much indebted to Husserl's concept of truth. Husserl believed that the essence of truth wasn't in the proposition, but in the act of identification, which happens in our lived experience. An act of identification is where we perceive the identity of the object-meant and the object-perceived. When the two happen to coincide, then we have an 'experience of truth', where we have a second-order intuition *that* the object-meant coincides with the object-perceived. We have the intuition that there is an agreement between the two intentional acts: between the object of empty intending and the object of the fulfilling intention. Thus, when we are judging or asserting that the thought really corresponds to the thing and is thereby true, we are only demonstrating what we have already identified. Matheson Russell, *Husserl: A Guide for the Perplexed,* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2006): 88-112. I will come back to this in Chapter 5.

up by a mode of interpretation such as circumspection or assertion. I will use the terms uncover/unconceal and uncoveredness/unconcealment, and their respective opposites, interchangeably. I have previously discussed that on the first tier of knowing, Dasein always has a concern and fascination for the world. On the second tier of knowing, Dasein engages with its environment in a concernful way; things have particular equipmental purposes, and one piece of equipment cannot make sense to us without understanding the purpose of other equipment. To deal with entities in a concernful way is to uncover them; working in a kitchen to cook Shepard's pie is to uncover how a bunch of kitchen utensils work and how particular ingredients are combined to form a familiar recipe, or, working in an artists' studio is to uncover old and new ways of using brushes and palette knives to manipulate paint to create an artwork. Thus, broadly speaking, uncovering is simply a way in which Dasein are relating to entities as beings that are in the world, this *phenomenon* of uncovering is always occurring.

Let us refer back to different senses of knowing to break this down a little more, and to explain the important difference between uncovering in the sense of engaging with equipment and uncovering in the sense of asserting something about the equipment. When we are addressing ourselves to specific tools (e.g. taking the palette knife *as* a tool for spreading paint in a way that emphasises its texture), we are uncovering the entity through our circumspective interpretation. When we interpret the palette knife *as* a tool for spreading paint, we already have the understanding of how this 'as' is connected to art-making and the like. Heidegger calls this understanding the existential-hermeneutical 'as'*,* in which our specific understanding of a thing is bound up with our broad understanding of our environment or world (BT: 201, SZ: 158). By hermeneutic-as, we define this as the primordial mode of interpretation where our understanding of the meaning of an entity is grounded in its relational context of equipmentality and worldhood. In contrast, when we are uncovering something through an assertion, the as-structure of our circumspective interpretation is modified. When the assistant asserts to the painter that the palette knife is bent, the referential totality of the palette knife is pushed back so that the painter can explicitly see the palette knife as the present-at-hand, and in the definite way of being bent. Heidegger calls this understanding the apophantical 'as'. The crucial thing here is that the apophantical 'as' is derivative of the circumspective 'as'. The assertion *points out* how the

entity has been circumspectively interpreted, i.e. how it has been uncovered, so that we can see how the entity has been uncovered in a definite way. Thus, we define the apophantical 'as' as a derivative mode of interpretation where a specific aspect of the entity's relational context is narrowed down and made explicit for the sake of thematic consideration.

This allows us to address the question of the ontological meaning of a true assertion. "To say that an assertion '*is true*' signifies that it uncovers the entity as it is in itself. Such an assertion asserts, points out, 'lets' the entity 'be seen' in its uncoveredness" (BT: 261, SZ: 218). The ontological meaning of an assertion being true is uncovering. Since we can see how uncovering is involved in all of our concernful dealings with our world, it means that uncovering also has its ontological foundations in being-in-the-world. If Dasein does not have a fascination or concern for the world (for the way in which it is dwelling in the world), then Dasein will have no need to uncover things about the world. If uncovering is ontologically possible only because of Dasein's essential status of being-in-the-world, then the primordial *phenomenon* of truth must also be located in Dasein's being-in-the-world.

Having now identified the ontological meaning of truth as uncovering, why should we be convinced that uncovering is a more primordial notion of truth? As Heidegger anticipates the criticism, "But is not this a highly arbitrary way to define 'truth'?" (BT: 262, SZ: 219). Heidegger believes that it might seem arbitrary, but it is actually well founded if we really understood the notion of truth as used in ancient Greek philosophy. It is a misinterpretation of Aristotle to identify *logos* with pure reason that belongs to immanent cognition, and therefore to say that the essence of truth is in the correspondence between cognitive judgment and object. Heidegger argues that for Aristotle, *aletheia* (truth) meant taking entities out of their hiddenness in order for them to be seen in their unhiddenness. Aristotle's *aletheia* is concerned with what shows itself, thus, *how* entities show themselves in their uncoveredness. According to Heidegger, this conception of *aletheia* is also in Heraclitus, who identifies *logos* with the unity of experience: *logos* always is, and is always true, and those who understand and speaks *logos* are in the truth, while in contrast those who do not understand, the truth is forgotten and sinks back into hiddenness. "To translate this word [*aletheia*] as 'truth', and above all, to define this expression conceptually in theoretical ways, is to cover up the meaning of what the Greeks made 'self-evidently' basic for the terminological use of *aletheia* as a pre-philosophical way of understanding it" (BT: 262, SZ: 219). This sets

Heidegger up to demonstrate how the three aspects of truth according the traditional model of truth (that truth belongs to assertions, that the essence of truth is in the agreement between judgement and the object, and that these ideas were all founded in Aristotle) are ontologically misleading.

I must add that it is significant that Heidegger uses the verb 'cover up' and the description 'self-evident' here. 'Cover up' signifies that the cognitivist/correspondence theory of truth is not to be abandoned entirely in favour of a new 'unconcealment' theory of truth, since we could not have arrived at the latter without appropriating the former in order to work out what it had *hidden* within it, i.e., what primordial meaning of truth it had *presupposed.* Secondly, 'self-evident' harkens back to the notion of *phenomenon* in its genuine primordial signification, as that which shows itself and is immediately manifest. Thus, truth as unconcealment is essentially linked to this primordial genuine signification of *phenomenon*: that which shows itself. By extension, Dasein's experience is always 'true' in this primordial sense (recall that all appearances presuppose *phenomenon* #1). I have mentioned before that Dasein's circumspective dealings with entities is a way of uncovering them. When we use pieces of equipment in our daily work, we uncover their meaning. When we make assertions about how things are, the primordial meaning of the *logos* that underlies the way in which we address entities is to point out how the entity has been uncovered, i.e., to let these entities be perceived in this or that way. *That* entities are always uncovered in some way by Dasein's experience and assertions is the basic meaning of truth as unconcealment. This notion of truth is very much bound up with Heidegger's conception of the original meaning of *phenomenon*.

I now want to link truth as unconcealment to disclosure. In previous sections I have discussed how Dasein's understanding of things is very much holistic. We never just encounter one 'thing' and then try to construct an understanding of world by putting together our understanding of multiple things. Rather, we understand a thing in relation to its meaning and uses in connection with many other things. The uncoveredness of entities in the world (e.g. that a thermos can be uncovered as having the use of holding hot drinks on the go) is grounded in the disclosedness of the world (e.g. the fact that what it means to be on the go, where and when we are usually on the go, the distinctive use of a thermos in contrast to that

of a mug, etc., are also uncovered) All of this is predicated on Dasein's existential character of being-in-the-world and caring about the world.

> Disclosedness is constituted by state-of-mind,[6] understanding, and discourse, and pertains equiprimordially to the world, to Being-in, and to the Self. In its very structure, care is *ahead of itself* – Being already in a world – as Being alongside entities within-the-world; and in this structure of disclosedness Dasein lies hidden. *With* and *through* it is uncoveredness; hence only with Dasein's *disclosedness* is the *most primordial phenomenon* of truth attained (BT: 263, SZ: 220-221, emphasis original).

I have analysed the basic ontological structure of Dasein's existence in terms of how it lives in the world, perceives entities, engages with entities, and talks about entities. In all of these modes of existence Dasein has an implicit understanding of what it means to be in the world. Heidegger uses the phenomenological method to draw out this implicit understanding. As a result of this, he can identify the condition of possibility of our meaningful experience of the world as the equiprimordial disclosedness of the world and of Dasein. Against the philosophical tradition, Heidegger argues that the primordial site of truth is disclosedness. When Dasein 'sees' an entity, its experience is true because the immediate *phenomenon* is an appearing of the *real thing* as opposed to representations. When Dasein talks about an entity, speech points out something about the entity and is true because it uncovers how the real entity is in itself. Our capacity to ascertain truth and to have knowledge, therefore, is founded upon world disclosure.

1.4   Disclosure, Essence, and Truth in the Later Heidegger

In *Being and Time,* Heidegger re-envisions truth as the unconcealment of entities and argues that Dasein's disclosedness is the most primordial *phenomenon* of truth. He argues that truth as the correspondence between thought and thing is derivative of our interpretive,

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[6] State-of-mind (Befindlichkeit) means mood (*Stimmung*) or attunement (*Gestimmtheit*). It refers to the fact that Dasein is an affective being that is disposed to finding itself in one kind of mood or another. For instance, if Dasein is in a mood of elation, the world might be disclosed to Dasein as being cheerful and full of opportunities. In contrast, a mood of distress might mean that the world is disclosed as being threatening and alienating. State-of-mind shows that affectivity is an essential component of what makes us human beings. See §29 of *Being and Time.*

circumspective understanding of the entity as a piece of equipment in a relational whole. In Heidegger's later works, he focuses on elucidating how traditional theories of truth *distort* the being of entities, how we *relate to* entities and ourselves, and thereby how we relate to the disclosure of the world. The later Heidegger also makes some contentious claims about specific forms of disclosure, specifically art and poetry, and how world disclosure establishes the horizons of meaning for a historical community of Dasein. In these two sections I will closely examine these later claims since they are essential to some of the criticisms of world disclosure.

In "The Origin of the Work of Art"*,* Heidegger argues that the Latin 'translation' of the original Greek terms for being is responsible for the contemporary, accepted definition of the thingness of things (the being of beings) in the Western philosophical tradition. Heidegger emphasises that being in the Greek was thought of as *presence*: "something that was already there… that which has always turned up already along with the given core and occurs along with it" (OWA: 149). The original meaning of the *phenomenon* as immediate presence was concealed by such a translation, leading to the common understanding of our relationship to things as a subject-predicate structure, thus, things as 'bearers of traits'. How we understand things in the world and talk about them, and how we judge the statements to be correct representations of things in their actuality, lies in the relationship between the thing and the statement; as Heidegger elucidates, between "thing-structure and sentence structure".

Clearly, thing-structure is ontologically very different from sentence-structure; it seems strange that we would hope to glean anything philosophically useful from trying to understand how things really are purely through the lens of what our propositional statement formally expresses about them. Heidegger thereby asks, "what could be more obvious than that man transposes his propositional way of understanding things into the structure of the thing itself?" (OWA: 150). Another thing that becomes clear is that it wouldn't have been possible for us to judge whether propositional statements about things really do reveal what that thing is like in itself if the thing hadn't already been available for us to refer to in the first place. However, this does not mean that the thing-structure comes before the sentence-structure and should be the standard for understanding in general. Rather it means that both structures, which are mutually dependent, come from "a common and more original source (OWA: 150) – i.e., being, the unity across all of the different modes of understanding or

being-structures that makes our understanding in general possible. The subject-predicate understanding of things, which determines what a thing is by judging whether or not a propositional statement matches up with the thing in itself, cannot actually help us get at the essence of a thing. It is also unable to distinguish between being and the being of beings. Heidegger also calls this type of pure thought-based understanding an 'assault' on things; it does not 'let beings be' in their independent character. At the same time, this mode of understanding requires us to set aside our natural, attentive mode of dwelling in the world and of dealing with entities, and to adopt a 'removed' mode of thinking about things. This mode of abstracted thinking is then treated as the primary mode of thought in the philosophical tradition.

To recover the original mode of understanding is to uncover the ontological structure of how we normally encounter things in our banal everyday experience. It requires no mediation – "the situation always prevails" (OWA: 150), as Heidegger expresses. The richness and immediacy of our phenomenological experience has real philosophical significance; what we perceive is not first and foremost a plethora of mixed sensations that we then synthesise into an understanding of what a thing is. Rather, "we hear the storm whistling in the chimney, we hear the three-motored plane, we hear the Mercedes in immediate distinction from the Volkswagen," (OWA: 150). In perceiving things as mere sensations, we are abstracting things from how they really are in order to see it as *matter* (e.g., weight, sound, mass). In different modes of abstraction, we are concerned with the *form* of the thing, but while this is phenomenologically significant it still cannot get us towards determining the essence of a thing insofar as we are assigning what we perceive in the senses as its thingly feature. Or perhaps form and matter should be considered together, for what makes it possible to see a thing consistently as that thing is the synthesis of matter and form. We can see how this synthesis of form and matter underlies our everyday engagement with entities as equipment: the form, e.g., a jug, determines the way in which the matter will be selected, e.g. impermeable, and the process is overall guided by the purposes of that thing, e.g., a jug is meant for holding and pouring liquids. However, this too, is insufficient according to Heidegger. If we think of the essence of a thing as the synthesis of matter and form as equipment, the danger is to apply this understanding to all other kinds of beings, even the non-equipmental ones. And if we strip back its equipmental character, it is questionable

whether we can make anything out about its ontological structure. To be sure, Heidegger does not deny that these three modes of thinking about things – things as 'bearers of traits', as 'unity of sensations', and as 'synthesis of matter and form – can correctly describe some property about a mere thing. But to get at the *essence* of a thing, he argues, we must set aside all of these preconceptions about understanding things, and just "leave the thing to rest upon itself in its very own essence" (OWA: 157). Heidegger thinks that to do this, we have to investigate our most immediate experience of things, and since we are most familiar with dealing with equipmental things in our everyday existence, this might be a useful starting point. Thus, we will look at the equipmental character of equipment, and see what this reveals about the essence of a thing.

Heidegger picks the example of the peasant woman's shoes in a painting by Van Gogh. When we encounter this pair of shoes, we can point out that it is made in a certain way, that it uses specific materials, and it has been made for a particular purpose. These statements about the shoes are probably correct, but there is something more that can be picked out about the shoes' usefulness. We have to conceive of the equipmental character of equipment along with its actual use; as we recall, the character of equipment is most truly revealed when we are so caught up in our work that we are not actually aware of the tool. Thus the equipmental character of the pair of shoes will only come forward if we conceive of the peasant woman wearing her shoes, toiling at the soil. Yet, the painting does not depict anything else other than the shoes. Heidegger claims that even so, we can still grasp the true equipmental being of the pair of shoes. By looking at the wear and tear of these pair of shoes, we can see the hard life of the peasant woman.

> In the stiffly rugged heaviness of the shoes there is the accumulated tenacity of her slow trudge through the far-spreading and ever-uniform furrows of the field swept by raw wind… This equipment is pervaded by uncomplaining worry as to the certainty of bread, the wordless joy of having once more withstood want, the trembling before the impending childbed and shivering at the surrounding menace of death (OWA: 159).

Heidegger further claims that this pair of shoes resides in the peasant woman's world and is thereby protected within it; and in this way, the shoes rest upon themselves in their own essence. For the peasant woman, the shoes are simply a pair of shoes that she puts on in the

morning and takes off after a tiring day. However, the peasant woman can be sure of her world because of the reliability of the equipment; i.e., the regularity of her everyday life and her relationship to the world depends on the reliability of the things she uses to help her get about the world. If her shoes break, for instance, then her world becomes alien or even menacing, since her livelihood is threatened if she cannot tend to the fields. A piece of equipment can certainly be used up. It then becomes a mere thing that is no longer reliable. But this, too, gives evidence to the essence of equipmental being. We do not see a mere object that makes no sense to us. Rather we see a piece of equipment that has been completely worn out. We can even see the world that that used-up equipment once belonged to; for example, antiques are appreciated not just because they look pretty or quirky, but also because they are richly imbued with a 'world' before our time.

The equipmental being of the equipment, or its essence, is therefore its character of belonging to a world. Heidegger claims that this is revealed to us by the artwork; by standing before Van Gogh's painting of the peasant woman's shoes. While we might be tempted to say that it is our subjective interpretation of the artwork that makes the equipment show itself to be in a world, or that we have projected such a meaning into the work, this would be false. Instead, "The artwork lets us know what shoes are in truth… the equipmentality of equipment first expressly comes to the fore through the work and only in the work… Van Gogh's painting is the disclosure of what the equipment, the pair of peasant shoes, *is* in truth" (OWA: 161, emphasis original). The artwork discloses a piece of equipment in its essence, that is, its belonging to the world. To disclose something in such a way is the most primordial truth in the sense of unveiling what and how something is in its full situatedness in the world.

To sum up this section, Heidegger believes that the subject-predicate lens distorts our understanding of what things really are. Analysing essences and truth by means of propositional correctness ultimately confines us to circular definitions. To understand the essence of a thing we have to put aside the model of form and matter, and just let the thing show itself as itself. Once we do this, we realise that the essence of a thing is how it shows itself to belong to the world in its equipmental reliability. Finally, it is in the artwork that this essence of things is most immediately and faithfully revealed; the artwork is genuinely world-disclosive.

1.5   Art, Poetry, and the Historicity of Dasein

How exactly does the artwork uncover the essence of a thing and disclose the world? In Heidegger's later works such as "Holderlin and the Essence of Poetry" and "The Origin of the Work of Art", he describes world disclosure as an ontological illumination or unconcealment that occurs as an 'event' in a historical epoch. Heidegger sees aesthetic experience in the form of poetry and art as the prime model for the disclosure of meaning horizons. Poetry and artwork opens up and sets up a world. When a work is created, the materials used (colours, tones, words, etc.) are not reduced to instrumentality, but they are brought forth into the world in their rich facticity. We can experience the worldliness of the stone or paint used in a sculpture or painting by experiencing the stone in its heaviness and massiveness or the paint in its texture and colour, but once these materials are put under scientific scrutiny we will obstruct the work from bringing forth the world. "The artwork opens up in its own way the Being of beings. This opening up, i.e., this revealing, i.e., the truth of beings, happens in the work" (OWA: 165). The world that the artwork reveals is no longer meant to be seen as the ready-to-hand or present-at-hand. The world-disclosive function of art encapsulates the concept that "The world is not the mere collection of the countable or uncountable, familiar and unfamiliar things that are at hand… [nor] a merely imagined framework added by our representation to the sum of such given things (OWA: 170). Instead, the world is at once a dwelling place for Dasein and all the interlinked significances of the entities around it, and a sort of disclosive event that allows everything to be meaningfully discovered. In this way, art brings forth truth; truth understood here as the "clearing and concealing of beings" (OWA: 197).

All art is in essence poetry, and Heidegger considers linguistic poetry as the most important art form. In *Being and Time,* Heidegger prioritizes the existentiale of discourse (speaking), whilst language (which Dasein uses to speak) appears to occupy a secondary role (BT §34).[7] In the later Heidegger, language is described a 'projective saying' that discloses

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[7] Whether BT Heidegger views language as instrumental (as a tool or system of signs) or constitutive (as something with disclosive force that uncovers the world as meaningful), and how these two competing views of language are related, remains a highly contentious issue amongst commentators. Guigon (1983) opts for the constitutive view. Dreyfus (1991) and Blattner (1999) holds the derivative view that language is derivative of a more basic being-in-the-world. Lafont (2000) holds the transitional view that language is at once instrumental and constitutive, but also argues that this view ultimately collapses into instrumentalism. We will return to this issue in subsequent chapters.

for Dasein its world. This 'projective saying' is to be understood ontologically. It is a 'happening' that brings entities into the world in their uncoveredness, or into the open. What this means, essentially, is that the expression of poetic language has some degree of ontological independence from (or even *priority over*) Dasein as language-user; while the expression of poetic language certainly elucidates or illuminates something that Dasein knows about the world, it also reveals some richer significances about the world that Dasein was not explicitly aware of. Language as 'projective saying' is therefore ontologically prior to the conception of language as an aural or written communication tool. He writes, "language is not only and not primarily an audible and written expression of what is to be communicated… language alone brings beings as beings into the open for the first time… Where there is no language… there is also no openness of beings" (OWA: 198). In the performance of projective saying, language discloses to Dasein the fact that it belongs to a particular historical world.

The truth-happening, or the world-disclosing function of art, is what he calls a *founding*. Founding has the character of *bestowing, grounding, and beginning/origin* (OWA: 202). When an artwork discloses the world, it unveils worldly meanings that have never been seen before. Such meanings are so new that they cannot be compared in any way to previous meanings that we have become accustomed to. In fact, what the artwork unveils 'refutes' what has come before it, and it reveals *more* than what our available tools for analysis and communication can properly explain. This is what Heidegger means by founding and its characteristic of being an 'overflow'. Second, the projection of truth in the artwork is an endowment: "in the work, truth is thrown toward the coming preservers, that is, toward a historical group of human beings. What is thus cast forth is, however, never an arbitrary demand. Truly poetic projection is the opening up of that into which human being as historical is already cast" (OWA: 200). What historical Dasein is already cast into is the 'earth'. Heidegger draws a clearer distinction between 'earth' and 'world' in "The Question Concerning Technology" (1977a) and "The Age of the World Picture" (1977b). In these essays he criticises modern subjectivity and technology for trying to 'rule over the earth', not only by treating everything that the 'earth' has to offer as energy resources, but also by letting this mode of our relationship to the earth transform the very way we understand entities in the world (e.g., primarily understanding the sun's warmth as a source of solar

power). Thus, the 'world' is how we interpret the 'earth' according to a particular historical interpretation of our understanding of being, e.g., the modern understanding of being as the technological instrumentalization of reason. Regardless of how historical Dasein interprets or misinterprets the disclosure of its world, Dasein's understanding of its world nevertheless comes from and rests upon the 'earth'; i.e., Dasein is never without its world. In this sense, the disclosure of truth in the artwork is a 'grounding'.

Third, the disclosure of a historical world in an artwork has the characteristic of an ecstatic beginning. This beginning is 'unmediated', is a 'grounding leap' and a 'head start'; it contains within itself the future and the possibility for unveiling more than what came before it (OWA: 201). What does it mean for a beginning to 'leap' ahead of itself, and to "already contains [contain] the end latent within itself" (OWA: 201)? It 'leaps' ahead in the sense that the beginning of one historical world already involves overtaking another historical world that came before it. It contains the end in the sense that once it begins it is already directed toward the future, namely, another disclosure. "A beginning… always contains the undisclosed abundance of the awesome, which means that it also contains strife with the familiar and ordinary" (OWA: 201). When art discloses a new historical world, it always challenges or even overthrows the meanings of the previous historical world that Dasein was familiar with, and it sets down new foundations of understandings. To illustrate the successive disclosures of historical worlds, Heidegger identifies what he sees as the three major epochs in the history of being – Greek antiquity, Christianity, and the modern age. These epochs are instantiations of historical Dasein's different understandings of being, i.e., the founding of the idea of being, its transformation into the idea that divine creation is the source of all beings, and finally the instrumentalization of beings. In each of these epochs, a new understanding of the world was 'founded' by art.

While Dasein is always thrown into a historical world, it also has a *responsibility* for the disclosure of its world. This is the duty to uphold and to properly interpret the essence of the historical world that is disclosed to it. "History is the transporting of a people into its appointed task as entry into that people's endowment" (OWA: 202). How Dasein can take up its appointed task depends on its ability to recognise and interpret the disclosive power of art. According to Heidegger, the essence of art is its unique status of being an origin of truth – truth understood here as the founding of a historical world. The essence of art is always

questioned by Dasein, since we want to know whether or not art can explain the origin of our historical existence, and *how* it is the origin. For example, we study medieval religious art to understand that the common people related to God primarily through paintings of biblical scenes since the Bible was not available to them and they couldn't read. This might in turn reveal important things about the condition of the medieval community of Dasein where an elite group strictly enforced ways of everyday living upon the weak and the poor. While this sort of inquiry cannot make the truth-happening of art reveal itself, "this reflective knowledge is the preliminary and therefore indispensable preparation for the becoming of art. Only such knowledge prepares its space for art, their way for the creators, their location for the preservers" (OWA: 202). The way in which we come to have reflective knowledge about the becoming of art is a slow and gradual process. In a way, we can see this in our fascination with antiquities like ancient Egyptian artifacts and the elaborate wall murals of Pompeii. Additionally, we can see this in our indifference and confusion in the face of contemporary art which discloses our present human condition using a mish-mash of found footage and pop-culture references. These artworks continually disclose worldly significances to us and cause us to reflect on our origins. The crucial task for human Dasein is then to decide between two paths: whether we conceive of art as an origin and look *ahead* toward its capacities for disclosing new and unfamiliar historical worlds; or whether we conceive of art as a 'routine cultural *phenomenon*' that we continue to use as an 'appendix' to the past (OWA: 203).

In this chapter, I analysed the concept of world disclosure in relation to some of the key themes in *Being and Time.* Disclosure is the condition of possibility for Dasein's meaningful experience of the world. It explains our capacity to 'see' entities as what they are and to communicate about the world by making specific aspects of entities or state of affairs explicit in speech. Disclosure exposes and challenges some of the assumptions of the philosophical tradition, such as the idea that knowledge of the world is gained by leaping out of immanent consciousness to an external object, that knowledge consists in the correct correspondence between thought and thing, and so forth. Later on, Heidegger also makes some provocative claims about the primordial meaning of truth, how disclosure is a 'happening' of truth, and how disclosures project horizons of meaning for a historical group of Dasein. Now that I

have explicated the concept of world disclosure from Heidegger's point of view, I will proceed to the next stage of investigating the criticisms.

Chapter 2: Criticisms of Heidegger from Tugendhat to Habermas

Introduction

In the essay "Heidegger's idea of truth", Tugendhat argues that Heidegger's account of world disclosure is flawed. Heidegger claims that propositional truth is grounded on the primordial truth of disclosure, but he fails to *justify* how disclosure is meant to be a primordial sense of truth. Cristina Lafont picks up the concerns expressed in Tugendhat's essay. In Lafont's assessment, Heidegger absolutizes the world-disclosing function of language. She argues that Heidegger supports the thesis that 'meaning determines reference', i.e., that we can only refer to things in our world insofar as those entities happen to fit our descriptions of them. Her work has had momentous influence upon subsequent scholarship on world disclosure. Her account of world disclosure and language has sparked animated debates with Heidegger's supporters, notably Hubert Dreyfus, Daniel Dahlstrom, Taylor Carman, Mark Okrent, and Mark Wrathall.

As I will argue in Chapter 3, these commentaries generally identify the core problem with world disclosure as the *reduction of meaning and intelligibility to the disclosure of the truth of being*. However, the disagreement about truth and disclosedness obfuscates an equally important question, namely, how humans can have a *self-reflective* and *critical* awareness of the pre-disclosed significances of the world such that they can potentially transform them.

Two of Heidegger's opponents in the 1960s and 70s addressed this issue: Karl-Otto Apel and Jürgen Habermas. Apel argues that in Heidegger's ontological transformation of Kantian transcendentalism, he reifies the historically contingent disclosure of meaning horizons in the lifeworld as the precondition for all forms of human cognition. Yet, world and meaning constitution are attributed to the 'happening' of the truth of being and are empirically inaccessible. Similarly, Habermas takes issue with how Heidegger calls disclosure a primordial 'happening' brought about by the 'destining' of being. He argues that the meaning horizons disclosed cannot be deciphered and critiqued by everyday communicative practices due to Heidegger's neglect of discursive communication in his philosophy. I will now examine the arguments of each of these critics, beginning with Tugendhat.

2.1 Tugendhat

Tugendhat (1992: 80) describes Heidegger's position as 'meta-transcendental': Heidegger is questioning behind the self-givenness of transcendental subjectivity, and he shows how this self-givenness is mediated by Dasein's ecstatic temporality. The condition of possibility for this self-givenness of the transcendental ego is the disclosure of Dasein's finitude, and the space of disclosure itself. It is disclosure that makes the conclusive truthfulness of transcendental subjectivity possible. Thus, it is wrong to think that truth lies primarily in the agreement of knowledge with its object, or in the correspondence between intellect and things. Rather, the most originary form of truth is disclosure.

The theories of adequation or correspondence primarily regard truth as propositional. In response, writes Tugendhat (1992: 80), Heidegger shows how propositional truth must be understood as unconcealing or uncovering. Heidegger further shows how this reconfigured conception of truth extends to anything that can be uncovered, and to any disclosure. Heidegger's argument begins with the thesis that the truth of an assertion lies in its disclosedness. That is, a statement points out a state of affairs, i.e., how something is in the world. What makes the statement true is whether the state of affairs in itself actually shows itself just as it was pointed out by the assertion. As Tugendhat (1992: 83, emphasis original) writes, "what the truth of the assertion brought out seemed not to be the fact that the entity should be uncovered by it but rather *how* it is uncovered by it, namely, 'just as it is in itself'".

This conception of truth is not too different from Husserl's phenomenological theory of truth. Husserl's account of intentional experience gives us a convincing explanation for how an assertion can be directed at the same entity across different modes of givenness (e.g., looking at a building while we walk around it, we can report that it looks good from the front, but from the back the walls are actually cracked and mouldy in some places). Thus, what corresponds to the propositional statement is clearly not an object or state of affairs that is entirely transcendent to our experience. Rather, it is the 'being itself' of the state of affairs as it manifests itself to us. In other words, the truth relation lies in the correspondence between two distinct modes of givenness of a thing.

As for Heidegger's theory of disclosure, writes Tugendhat, we would assume that a statement is true if the state of affairs as disclosed by it corresponds to the state of affairs as it is in itself. However, Heidegger overturns this assumption with his next formulation of the

argument, in which he explicitly distances himself from Husserl by getting rid of the 'in itself' altogether. He argues that the truth of the assertion lies in Being-uncovering, i.e. in "pointing out something as something" (Tugendhat 1992: 84). If an assertion consists in pointing out something or an uncovering, it follows that the statement is true if it really does point out an entity in its uncoveredness, and false if it doesn't uncover an entity but conceals or covers it. With regards to the theory of ideas, this means that "the truth of the assertion as adequation is [now] grounded in the truth of the entity as unconcealment" (Tugendhat 1992: 85). The truth of the assertion then no longer requires the supplement 'as it is itself'.

Tugendhat finds Heidegger's ambiguous use of the term 'uncover' problematic. Heidegger does not make a clear distinction between the uncovering of a true assertion and the covering over of a false one. To complicate the issue, Heidegger maintains that false assertions are *also* uncovering in a certain sense: "Entities look as if… That is, they have, in a certain way, been uncovered already, and yet they are still disguised" (BT: 265, SZ: 222). This amounts to saying that the entities pointed out by false assertions are covered up in such a way that it is also uncovered in another way, viz., not in the way that it is in itself. Thus, there is no way of distinguishing between the normative dimension of truth that pertains to the mere uncovering of entities and the broader dimension of truth that pertains to the showing of entities as they are in themselves.

Heidegger's notion of truth is unhelpfully vague when compared to our normal understanding of the term. In our normal usage of the word 'truth', when a speaker is making a true assertion about an entity, we think that the true assertion is directed toward something within the entity that amounts to 'the truth'. An inquiry into the truth is not an inquiry into the *correctness* of the *statement* but a question about *the entity as it is itself*. However, Heidegger's framework of truth as unconcealment does not give us the resource to explain the difference between the immediate *phenomenon* that is uncovered by the assertion and how the thing is in itself independent of how the assertion uncovers it, because *both* true and false assertions are directed towards an entity that shows itself. Thus Tugendhat argues,

> [a] true assertion is precisely not directed toward the entity as it manifests itself immediately but toward the entity as it is itself. This difference within the self-showing, between an immediate and, as it were, obstrusive givenness and the thing itself is never taken into

consideration by Heidegger… the difference between givenness in general and self-givenness escapes him. (Tugendhat 1992: 86)

Finally, Heidegger argues that the uncoveredness of all worldly entities is made possible by the disclosure of the world (the 'clearing'), and in the disclosedness of Dasein. This is the most original form of truth. The 'clearing' is the foundation for all self-manifestations of entities, not just the true. But, Tugendhat asks, if disclosure of the world as such is the event of truth, how are we to understand this sense of truth in relation to the specific sense of truth as determining whether or not an assertion correctly points out an entity in its self-givenness? It might be the case that we can determine this specific sense of truth on the basis of the horizon of meaning that has been disclosed to Dasein. But, insofar as the horizon of meaning is given in specific historical epochs, it seems that true assertions about entities will become relative to the horizon of meaning that has been disclosed to a particular historical group of Dasein.

This is a troubling consequence. When we talk about truth, we want to have a reliable standard for verifying whether an assertion about something is actually an accurate description of that thing. We also need a reliable standard for clarifying whether the meaning behind an assertion is an accurate interpretation. Heidegger's notion of truth as disclosure makes the specific sense of truth as evidence and certainty unattainable. Worse still, disclosure is closed off from any kind of critical questioning, which is an essential dimension of truth. "If truth means un-concealment, in the Heideggerian sense, then it follows that an understanding of world in general is opened up but not that it is put to the test… it made possible… an explicit truth-relation which no longer made any claim to certainty and so could not be disturbed by uncertainty either" (Tugendhat 1992: 90).

According to Heidegger, what is most originally given is not the world as such (i.e. the meaning and significances that are contained in the world), but the clearing of the open field of play. Therefore, Tugendhat suggests, disclosure *as such* is not truth, but disclosure is essentially *directed* towards the truth. If we want to pose a question about truth, then, we are asking about the truth of beings and the truth about the horizon. This might be a way of recovering the critical dimension of truth: recognising that it is not bound by an ultimate ground of absolute certainty, the self-conscious subject can radically question the historical

horizon of meaning in which it is situated. However, Tugendhat is worried that the subject can just as easily rely on what it takes to be true and "give it [the horizon] up for a new immediacy" (Tugendhat 1992: 91), since there isn't a deeper dimension of truth as certainty and critical reflection to guide its choices. If we want a truly reflexive critical subjectivity (for example, authentic selfhood), then Heidegger's account of disclosure needs to account for the specific dimension of truth as certainty.

2.2 Apel

Apel sees Heidegger's project in *Being and Time* as motivated by the need to overcome transcendental philosophy, especially the question about the conditions of the possibility for meaning constitution in the world. What Heidegger shows with his phenomenological explication of Dasein's engagement with entities is that "the subject-object relation of scientific knowledge is always already embedded in the contextual structure of being-in-the-world as understanding the coherent significance of the world" (Apel 1998: 105). As discussed above, it is through the concepts of the ready-to-hand that Heidegger demonstrates how we primarily understand entities in the world as meaningful equipment and not just existing, present-at-hand objects. This is a reaction against the conception of world in Kant's philosophy and in natural science, according to which the world is merely an aggregate of present entities and is only a coherent whole insofar as they measure up to a certain set of laws. Heidegger's concept of the world exposes philosophical issues like scepticism and the existence of the external world as pseudo problems caused by reflecting on beings only in terms of their objectivity. In Heideggerian terms they are attributable to deficient modes of Dasein's being-in-the-world, namely, conceiving of objects as context-less entities and ourselves as solipsistic beings who are only certain of their capacity for reason. In Apel's opinion, Heidegger's phenomenological and existential-hermeneutical methodology bears similarities to Wittgenstein's approach, especially with regards to the interconnectedness of language games and the centrality of the activity of world interpretation in existence. Both Heidegger and Wittgenstein's analyses are pragmatically oriented and highlight the interconnection of language with the *praxis* of life; all of which are presupposed by logic, science, and transcendental philosophy. In the late Heidegger, in particular his conception of the history of being, the transcendental-phenomenological problem of meaning constitution

is detranscendentalised and historicized. According to Apel, this is a consequence of Heidegger's interpretation of truth as *aletheia.* This began in *Being and Time* with his existential-hermeneutical analysis of disclosedness as, in Apel's words, the 'pre-structure' of all world-understanding, and later on in his illustration of disclosure as the clearing of the meaning of being.

Apel identifies two dimensions to Heidegger's 'pre-structure' of existential world-understanding and self-understanding, and believes that "this pre-structure of what is 'always already pre-understood' has a quasi-transcendental function in *Being and Time*" (Apel 1998, 105). The quasi-transcendental, temporal aspects of the phrase 'always already' (*immer schon or je schon*) carries considerable significance. One way of understanding this is to conceive of the pre-structure of the lifeworld as a necessary precondition of knowledge in the sense of Kant's transcendental logic, or of a radicalisation of the transcendental problem about meaning constitution in terms of the constitution of Kantian 'objectivity'. However, there is another aspect to the 'always already': the dimension of existential temporality.

> In fact the world- and self-understanding of human *Dasein* according to Heidegger is dependent on its 'pre-structure' not only in an abstractive transcendental-logical sense but also in the temporal sense of being 'always already ahead of itself' (*sich vorweg*). The *Dasein* cannot pull up, so to speak, its 'thrownness' into a historically conditioned situation-world (and its having always already become addicted to this world in a specific way). (Apel 1998: 107)

According to Apel, the necessary consequence of this configuration of temporality is that all cognition, be it everyday or scientific, is temporally and historically pre-determined; Dasein's understanding of meaning is conditioned upon its historicity. Dasein's everyday communication inescapably involves a linguistic articulation of this pre-understanding of the world.

Apel argues that Heidegger's project of fundamental ontology is a radicalisation of Kant's project of transcendental philosophy. He specifically calls it a 'fundamental-ontological transformation' of Kantian transcendentalism (Apel 1998: 109). In bringing to light the aspects of temporality and historicity in the constitution of meaning in the lifeworld, Heidegger is seeking to reconstruct and transform transcendental philosophy, especially that of Kant. The evidence for this, Apel argues, is present in Heidegger's earlier work where he

"established an internal relationship between his analysis of the pre-structure of the disclosedness of being-in-the-world and the problematic of transcendental philosophy" (Apel 1998: 108).

Fundamental ontology places the question about the meaning of being at the forefront, as even prior to the question of traditional ontology. His method is to clarify the 'understanding of being' that human Dasein already has, but not from the orientation of the pre-Kantian conception of cognition as the relationship between a knowing subject and the object of its mental representation. Against figures such as Scheler and Hartmann, Heidegger argues that all cognition already implies a 'relationship of being' that Dasein has, and that this calls for a radical revision of ontology.

> The 'relation of being' that is at stake here cannot, on Heidegger's account, be regarded as a relation between two beings in the world but has to be thought of as 'transcendental' in so far as, along with *Dasein's* understanding of being, the horizon of a world, which transcends every possible object as well as every possible subject, is projected and, so to speak, extended in a primordial way. (Apel 1998: 109)

According to Apel, Heidegger conceives of the relationship between Dasein and of being as having a primordial and transcendental character. Dasein's understanding of being and the meaning horizon of a world is also transcendental insofar as they have been projected by a 'happening' of being in a historical epoch. In *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics,* Apel adds, Heidegger tries to address a crucial question with regards to the connection between his project of fundamental ontology and Kant's transcendental philosophy: "the question regarding the relation of 'pure reason' to human *Dasein,* which precisely in (or in the ground of) its temporality and historicity is presupposed as condition of the possibility of the understanding of being" (Apel 1998: 108). To solve this problem, Heidegger interprets Kant's 'pure reason' as 'finite reason'. He seeks to reveal how Kant's transcendental synthesis of apperception, which lies in the transcendental faculty of imagination (*Einbildungskraft*), is conditioned upon the understanding of being, which occurs in the original temporality of the ecstatic projection of the world. Heidegger sees *Einbildungskraft* as "the capacity for 'pure synthesis' and thereby of projecting by which the finite reason of human beings must display the horizon of all understanding of being in advance of all

possible affect by beings" (Apel 1998, 110). According to Kant's conception of intuition, space and time are not entities, and they do not exist independently from our intuition. Neither are they properties of entities or relations between entities. Instead, space and time are merely the forms of our sensible intuition of entities. The condition of possibility for the givenness of object representations is the 'schema-image' (*Schemabild*) of the horizon of time, which is generated by the faculty of imagination.

The horizon of time simultaneously generates the ecstatic dimensions of present, past and future, creating a horizon upon which we are able to coherently and meaningfully experience the world and its entities as a succession of nows. Heidegger adopts this Kantian framework of ecstatic temporality in *Being and Time,* where it serves as the essence of understanding, and of theoretical and practical reason (Apel 1998: 110). Ecstatic temporality is 'original' time, whereas our average understanding of time as a succession of nows upon a horizonal background of past, present and future is 'vulgar'. Heidegger tries to draw a parallel between his 'original' and 'vulgar' conception of time with Kant's distinction between the transcendental faculty of imagination and the empirical experience of time as a succession of moments. Heidegger describes the generating of original time as a kind of happening of transcendence. But, asks Apel, is there any way of talking about such a 'happening' in a meaningful way if the traditional concepts of time are no longer concepts available to Heidegger in a detranscendentalised project? In Apel's view, this is impossible. It might be true to say that the Kantian faculties of imagination, namely the apprehensive, reproductive and recognitive, are always already presupposed when we speak of the 'now'. However, one must acknowledge that to be able to speak of a 'happening', one must also have presupposed a notion of the factual succession of events or of the empirical intratemporality present in Kant. "If one abstracts completely from 'intratemporality' – as Heidegger seems to suggest in *Being and Time* and still in his first book on Kant – that is if one tries to conceive of an 'original time' only in the sense of the simultaneous originating of the three 'ecstasies', then one can no longer understand the moving of the time" (Apel 1998: 112). The model of temporality that Heidegger provides does not give us any way of empirically distinguishing between the simultaneity and the succession of two events. If so, then the 'happening' of world disclosures is not only historically contingent, but it is empirically inaccessible.

The second related problem is that of truth and validity. Heidegger's description of world disclosure as a 'happening', a 'clearing', and a 'concealing of being', shows that he doesn't think of temporalization as something that just occurs within an already constituted world. Rather, he thinks of it as a primordial constitution of meaning horizons of a lifeworld. In other words, the social, cultural and historical significances of our lifeworld, which are the factual conditions of our understanding, are only possible because of the prior 'happening' of world disclosure. As Apel (1998: 112) sees it, Heidegger had transformed the quasi-transcendental concept of temporalization *qua* Dasein's project of meaning constitution into the concept of world and meaning constitution by the mission of being. In other words, Dasein's capacity to make the world meaningful is ultimately founded upon the prior projection of meaning by the 'happening' of being. At the same time, Heidegger thinks that the understanding of being is epochal and historical – as in, they are happenings that come after each other. Indeed, we have seen that Heidegger illustrates these epochs in terms of the development of the history of philosophy from the founding of metaphysics by the Greeks, to its transformation by Christianity, and finally to the enframing in the modern age of technology. The 'happenings' of world disclosure, and thereby of the 'happening' of meaning and truth, are therefore *intratemporal* and *intrahistorical*.

However, what enables meaning constitution must also act as the condition of possibility of true and false judgments. It becomes Heidegger's task to challenge Kant's idea that the constitution of a universally valid, singular world lies in the faculties of reason and understanding in the transcendental subject. Heidegger attempts to show that the traditional philosophical preoccupation with *logos* misses the point that reason with regards to validity claims is but a 'finite result' of a happening of being in a historical epoch (Apel 1998: 113) – and, that the universal validity of truth is possible only because meaning is always already disclosed to Dasein (BT: 272, SZ: 229). If this is what Heidegger understands by truth, then what is the actual relationship between the truth and falsity of empirical judgement and the prior happening of the projection of meaning? Is there not a reducing of all validity to the meaning constitution by the history of being (Apel 1998: 117)? Heidegger himself acknowledges this conflict, offering the 'hermeneutic circle' as a possible solution: factical experience and learning, and its precondition of the disclosure of meaning, are interdependent. However, Apel argues that Heidegger's exposition of the pre-theoretical

relational-world is strangely deficient with regards to an account of the constitution of objectivity, and by extension the intersubjective criteria of validity required for scientific experimentation and argumentative discourse. Further, he does not recognise that scientific understanding, which the above notion of objectivity and validity facilitates, does *not* directly entail technological enframing, viz., the reductive instrumentalization of the world (Apel 1998: 135). Heidegger is left with positing truth and validity in the disclosure of meaning to temporal-historical Dasein, but even *this* is relative to a particular epoch. This leaves Heidegger in an awkward spot: the historical-ontological relativization of the universal validity of truth *itself* needs to be true. One cannot examine why this relativisation is *necessary* if this relativisation is not a universally valid formal concept. But, as Apel sees it, Heidegger does not have the resources available to him in his detranscendentalised project to resolve this issue.

2.3 Habermas

Apel was worried about Heidegger's purported disregard for intersubjectivity, argumentative discourse and scientific understanding in his account of world disclosure. This worry is shared by Habermas, who thinks that Heidegger's prioritization of the 'happening' of being thwarts the world-transformative capacities of human reason. Again, Habermas recognises that Heidegger sought to detranscendentalize the knowing subject; his task was to work out how the finite subject could be situated in the world without losing its world-constitutive capacities. Habermas poses the challenge thus:

> If cooperating subjects intelligently cope with what they encounter in the world, do their learning processes empower them to make rationally motivated revisions in their pre-understanding of the world as a whole? Is reason simply at the mercy of the 'world-disclosive' happening of language, or is it also a 'world transforming' power? (Habermas 2008: 25-6)

According to Habermas, Heidegger's project of fundamental ontology entirely suspends the distinction between reason (*Vernunft*) and understanding (*Verstand*), levelling the former to the latter. This move is prompted by Heidegger's dissatisfaction with modern subjectivism represented by the universalistic tendencies of humanism and the Enlightenment on one end

of the spectrum, and by the particularistic typologies of nationalism on the other. Under the framework of the modern understanding of being, then, these tendencies can all be refracted as (distorted) normative orientations of subjectivity (Habermas 1987: 133-4).

Heidegger's second move is to uncover the origin and end of metaphysics, borrowing from Hölderlin the idea of the absent God to create the idea of metaphysics as an ecstatic completion and a new beginning. Wanting to return to the pre-Socratic origins of metaphysics, he uses the concept of the ontological difference to bridge the gap between Dionysian happening and the fundamental metaphysical question about the being of beings. Being, distinct from the being of entities, takes over the role of Dionysus and achieves a more or less autonomous status by becoming the historical horizon within which entities make their appearance. Like God, being withdraws from the world of entities and from Dasein, and in the modern attitude, humans have utterly forgotten being so that its absence is not even felt. "This explains the central significance of an anamnesis of the history of Being which now discloses itself as the destruction of the self-forgetfulness of metaphysics" (Habermas 1987: 135-6). However, so long as the Heideggerian mode of thinking is guided by the ontological difference, it remains a mode of self-reflection; and since the self-reflection involved in this methodology is still situated in the epoch of modern subjectivity, the overcoming of metaphysics cannot be the final act of disclosure. Therefore, Heidegger needs to move away from self-reflection as the essence of thinking. He needs to claim a privileged access to truth via 'essential thinking', which is the 'truth of being'.

As discussed above, Heidegger believes disclosure to be a primordial 'happening' brought about by the 'mission' or 'destining' of being. The problem is that the 'destining' of being cannot be deciphered by everyday communicative practices. This is because Dasein only has a defective, vulgar understanding of being, and any attempts to articulate the truth of being will degenerate into 'idle talk', an explaining away of what being really discloses to us. Heidegger deprives the ethical lifeworld of any essential interest insofar as it is based on the forgetfulness of being, and his apparent disregard for everyday communicative practices impairs the positive possibilities of discursive thought. In Heidegger's Nietzsche lectures, he posits the possibility for intersubjectively achieved agreement on the prior ontological character of Dasein-hood: that of existential mutual understanding, or being-with (*Mitsein*) (Heidegger 1987, as cited in Habermas 1987: 136). The conditions of social life, too, are

posited in this mutual understanding. According to Habermas, however, Heidegger is only interested in intersubjectivity and mutual understanding insofar as it can serve as an explanation for how the background of the shared lifeworld can be kept present. Through Heidegger's phenomenological account of intersubjective language use, he demonstrates how Dasein is thrown into ways of being that are always ontologically oriented towards mutual understanding. However, this lifeworld is not constituted by Dasein's efforts; it is "suspended, as it were, in the structures of linguistic intersubjectivity and is maintained in the same medium in which subjects capable of speech and action come to a mutual understanding about something in the world" (Habermas 1987: 149).

In Habermas' eyes, Heidegger occludes a theory of communication from his philosophy because "from the start he degrades the background structures of the lifeworld that reach beyond the isolated Dasein as structures of an everyday existence, that is, of inauthentic Dasein" (Habermas 1987: 149). Even if *Mitsein* has ontological priority as a structure of being-in-the-world, Heidegger's conceptual framework does not adequately explain how subjects can be simultaneously individuated and socialised. Heidegger's neglect of discursive communication means that all disclosures of meaning will be closed off to any empirical and normative questioning. Knowledge gained through scientific experimentation, methodical research and argumentation pertain to the defective, existentiell understanding of being, and have no essential value according to the Heidegger's ontological, detranscendentalised framework. As such, 'destining's' of being can only be 'meditatively experienced' and 'narrated'; since disclosures of being resist explanation through everyday discourse, it will remain undiscoverable, and be propositionally contentless. Further, since Dasein is thrown into a lifeworld that has always already been disclosed, Dasein has no power to potentially transform the world: "The *productivity* of the creation of meaning that is disclosive of world passes over to *Being* itself" (Habermas 1987: 152, emphasis original). Whatever meaning to the lifeworld that the event of being discloses, Dasein has to resign itself to it, and it must "rids [rid] itself of any will to self-affirmation that is suspect of subjectivity" (Habermas 1987: 153). Heidegger thereby gives being "pseudo-sacral powers" (Habermas 1987: 140) – in that the projection of meaning via disclosure is a giving over of the entirety of the world to which Dasein must humbly accept as its fate.

I began this chapter by examining Tugendhat's influential critique of unconcealment and world disclosure. Acccording to Tugendhat, Heidegger gives a convincing argument for why the philosophical tradition is mistaken in locating the primary site of truth in the correspondence between a judgment and an external object. However, Heidegger's alternative theory of truth is equally problematic. He argues that propositional truth is derivative of truth as unconcealment, but he fails to give a clear description of the difference between true assertions and false assertions since both kinds of assertions are ways of uncovering an entity. This is highly troubling, because a theory of truth cannot occlude an account of how one can ascertain and justify their truth claims according to evidence. As such, Tugendhat believes that Heidegger is not justified in labelling unconcealment with the term 'truth'. Apel and Habermas share similar concerns. They expand on Tugendhat's criticism by discussing the normative consequences of Heidegger's account of truth as unconcealment. Apel argues that Heidegger attempts to overcome Kant's transcendental idealism by showing how the condition of possibility of human experience are grounded on our historically conditioned situation rather than on transcendental logic and pure reason. However, if our capacity to know about the world is merely founded upon historically contingent horizons of meaning, then each historical disclosure of meaning may become a hermetically sealed 'bubble' – all meaning has been pre-determined for a historical community and it is impossible to tell the difference between successive disclosures of being. Habermas argues that Heidegger prioritizes the 'happening' of the disclosure of being and neglects the world-transformative capacities of human reason. Heidegger grants the disclosure of worldly intelligibility absolute power and strips Dasein of any power to empirically access, discuss, and challenge the meanings that are pre-disclosed. He ignores the importance of intersubjective communication and argumentative discourse in understanding and transforming the world.

In the next chapter, I examine how Lafont expands on these arguments. She takes up Tugendhat's challenge by giving a detailed account of why Heidegger's theory of truth is deeply flawed. She will also articulate Apel and Habermas' worries by showing how Heidegger's account of world disclosure leads to dire consequences such as linguistic idealism, cultural relativism, and incommensurability between different disclosures of meaning.

Chapter 3: Lafont's Criticism of Heidegger

Introduction

As I mentioned in Chapter 1, one of Heidegger's main concerns in his account of world disclosure is to restore the true relationship between the immediate *phenomenon* and *logos.* For Heidegger, *logos* does not primarily mean judgment or reason, but it means discourse – *Sprache,* to speak or talk. I also mentioned that the meaning of the term discourse and how it connects with disclosure is a highly contentious issue: how does discourse, *speaking*, relate to language? Is language derivative of discourse? Does Heidegger hold a constitutive or instrumentalist view of language? These questions are very much central to Lafont's interpretation of Heidegger, and her answers to these questions come with significant normative consequences for the Heideggarian picture of existence, understanding, and world.

Lafont's famous charge against Heidegger is that he implicitly assumes that 'meaning determines reference' (MDR) and thereby supports a strong form of linguistic idealism. That is, according to Lafont, Heidegger conceives of our understanding of the world as symbolically mediated or linguistically constituted. As such, linguistic categories are at bottom responsible for determining how each entity is constituted as what it is. Moreover, said linguistic constitution of understanding the world is relative to the historically specific disclosure of being. The disclosure of the truth of being as the *a priori* is empirically inaccessible and unrevisable. Lafont argues that this also indicates that Heidegger supports a strong incommensurability thesis, according to which scientific developments and other empirical means of testing and revising knowledge are merely by-products of the positing of the history of being. Ultimately, argues Lafont, this is detrimental to the processes of learning, scientific progress, and the objectivity of universal truth.

Let me briefly go over this argument. According to Lafont's reading, Heidegger implicitly supports the meaning determines reference thesis and linguistic idealism due to his inherited views from the German linguistic turn, and due to his strong commitment to the ontological difference (the difference between entities and the being of entities, and the difference between Dasein as an entity that understands being and other entities which do not have such an understanding). He follows the German linguistic tradition in criticising the philosophy of consciousness for how it misrepresents experience as a relationship between

the knowing subject and the external object, and in emphasising the world-disclosive dimension of language. Heidegger radicalises the relationship of agreement and correspondence between the knowing subject and the external object by showing how correspondence presupposes that the statement contains a meaningful interpretation of an entity *as* something; an interpretation that is inherent to our experience of entities. Dasein's experience of entities inherently involves interpretation because Dasein always already has an understanding of its world. However, according to Lafont, Dasein's understanding ultimately depends on Heidegger's notion of language as both ontic-empirical (instrumental) and ontological-transcendental (world disclosive). Secondly, given Heidegger's prioritisation of the ontological over the ontic in the ontological difference, the transcendental, world-disclosive function of language has absolute priority as the condition of possibility for its instrumental function.

As a result, so Lafont argues, the correspondence theory of experience as a relation between the knowing subject and the external object is transformed by Heidegger into a conception of experience that is entirely immanent in language: namely, our experience of entities consists purely in the semantic relationship between the meaning of our interpretations and what our interpretations actually refer to in the world. In the ontological difference, the world-disclosive function of language (the pre-given meaning gifted by the history of being), has 'constitutive powers' over the referents, i.e., our access to entities. If understanding is prior to knowing in terms of our fundamental relationship to the world, it follows that our experience, and the objectivity of said experience, comes about from prior understanding rather than through fulfilling conditions of knowledge. And if Dasein can only understand because language had already disclosed the significances of the world, it follows that "the limits of our language become the limits of our world" (Lafont 2000: 8). In this chapter, I will explain the various steps taken by Lafont in this trenchant critique of Heidegger – starting with her interpretation of Heidegger's relationship to the German linguistic turn.

3.1 The Shortfalls of the German Linguistic Turn

According to Lafont and Habermas, Heidegger's concept of world disclosure is a continuation of the legacy of the so-called German linguistic turn. As such, many of their

criticisms of Heidegger stem from deeper concerns with how the German tradition conceives of the world-disclosive function of language. The linguistic turn in German philosophy was led by Johann Georg Hamann, Johann Gottfried von Herder, and Wilhelm von Humboldt. In reaction to Kant's transcendental philosophy, these figures sought the detranscendentalisation of reason through the transformation of language from a purely cognitive, fact-stating instrumental system to a conception of language as constitutive of the human being's experience of the world. Thus, the German linguistic turn set up a paradigm shift from the philosophy of consciousness (the instrumental view of language) to the philosophy of language (the world disclosive view of language). While the merits to this manner of philosophizing about language cannot be denied, there are also troubling consequences. There is a tendency in the German linguistic turn to privilege the *a priori* of meaning over the representation of facts (Habermas 1999: 414). This privileging was, moreover, often done at the expense of devaluing the cognitive dimension of language and the requirement of universal validity for knowledge claims (Lafont 2000: xi–xii, xvi).

According to the philosophical tradition prior to the linguistic turn, language is an instrumental system used to articulate the cognitive representations of the objective world. As a part of this conception of human experience, language is demoted to an instrumental system and logic is prioritized over grammar. Language has no part in the *a priori* of pure reason. In reaction, the German linguistic turn sought to detranscendentalise reason by showing that thinking and experience are impossible without language. The argument is that language is empirical *and* transcendental because it is constitutive of our relationship with the world. In short: language has a world-disclosive function. Humboldt, for example, identified three functions of language: cognitive (representing facts), expressive (manifesting emotions), and communicative (enabling agreement and objection between speakers). He further utilised two methods of analysing language, combining the semantic analysis of the organisation of linguistic content with the pragmatic analysis of how speakers communicate with one another. This move was an attempt to emphasise the world-disclosive function of language while accommodating for its fact-stating, communicative function (Lafont 1999: 17-8).

To successfully incorporate both elements – the empirical-transcendental function of language on the one hand and the semantic-pragmatic analysis of language on the other – a

categorical distinction had to be made. Namely, the distinction between what linguistic signs *mean* and what linguistic signs *factually refer* to. This distinction was famously identified by Frege, whose theory of sense and reference would go on to influence both the Anglo-American analytic approach and the German hermeneutic approach to language. Frege explained the sense/reference distinction by showing how language enables us to refer to the same things in different ways. Reference is what is designated by the sign, e.g., the signs 'evening star' and 'morning star' have the same reference; while sense is the thought that the sign expresses, e.g. the signs 'evening star' and 'morning star' do not have the same sense or meaning. Thus, the linguistic signs 'evening star' and 'morning star' have different meanings but factually refer to the same thing. This theoretical distinction allows us to explain how the same linguistic sign can express different aspects of the same referent. While Frege used this distinction to pursue an analysis of language that was still guided by the Leibnizian ideal of a perfect artificial language, Humboldt made a similar distinction to pursue an analysis of natural language – language that is a result of contingent historical processes. But beneath these diverging approaches, which initiated the Anglo-American and German-hermeneutic lines of thought with regards to language, is the implicit acceptance of a theory of *indirect reference*, according to which the *meaning* (sense) of a linguistic sign enables it to *refer* to something in the world.

According to Lafont, we cannot understand reference solely in this fashion without giving rise to a problem of the following kind. She argues that for Frege and Humboldt, the distinction between meaning and reference is applied to all linguistic signs, even proper names. While this concept of meaning and reference is harmless if it is conceived in purely semantic terms, it is destined for trouble when it is applied to epistemology, i.e. the theory about the ascertainment of knowledge. This was unavoidable for the linguistic turn (and also for Heidegger), so Lafont argues, because "the linguistic turn as such seems to *require* such a burdening [of epistemological tasks], given that language is no longer simply regarded as one object of study among others, but as the general paradigm for the solution of philosophical problems" (Lafont 1999: xii, emphasis original).

The transcendentalisation of language means that language is constitutive of how we can meaningfully refer to things in the world. Thus, linguistic expressions with their different meanings determine our epistemic access to referents, and insofar as linguistically constituted

words are historically specific, different linguistic communities will be unable to refer to the same thing. In turn, this poses a problem for how it is possible for us to share an objective world and to meaningfully communicate with each other about such a world. Lafont (1999: xiii) asks: "If 'what there can be' in the world diverges completely for speakers of different languages, if they cannot talk about the same reality, how can they ever communicate? Worse yet, how can these speakers achieve any knowledge about reality?"

As Habermas remarks, the tension between the historical specificity of language's world-disclosing function and the universalism of fact-stating discourse is a common problem in the hermeneutic tradition. Humboldt, for instance, holds that language structures the totality of fundamental concepts and ways of understanding the world, and also articulates a pre-knowledge of everything that might be encountered in the world by a linguistic community, thus granting language a transcendental status of spontaneous world-constitution. As a result, it seems that the horizon of meaning projected *a priori* by language is essentially the bounds and limits of the world. Humboldt tries to resolve the incompatibilities between a transcendental conception of language and language theory by means of the 'I-Thou' relation in speech acts, and by claiming that the possibility of grasping the knowledge of truth can be progressively recovered. He analyses the cognitive function of language using a combined approach of semantics and formal pragmatics. While semantic reveals that language is bound up with reality as the totality of possible descriptions, pragmatics reveals that the 'living use of speech' can counteract the particularism of linguistic worldviews, since speakers aim to understand one another and to reach mutual understanding about something (Humboldt 1836: 81, as cited in Habermas 1999: 418). In this process of reaching mutual understanding, so Humboldt argues, the I-Thou relation intrinsic to the speech act always involves the double components of address and response, and thereby enables intersubjective communication. In this manner, Humboldt tries to unite the cognitive and expressive function of language, as well as the cognitive and communicative function of language. Humboldt's solution seems attractive, but as both Lafont and Habermas argue, it still leaves a lot unexplained.

But the fact that different interpretive perspectives come closer to one another horizontally, as it were, does not yet explain how we can grasp facts in the vertical dimension of reference to

the objective world, and how controversy about statements of fact can yield knowledge. The absence of a convincing analysis of the representational function of language, that is, of the conditions of reference and propositional truth, continues to be the Archilles' heel of the entire hermeneutic tradition. (Habermas 1999: 61)

This is relevant for us in that Heidegger carries on this German hermeneutic tradition of analysing the world-disclosive function of language with a radicalised adaptation of the sense/reference distinction and a radicalised theory of what such a distinction entails for our human experience of the world. Heidegger's theory of unconcealment and discourse, as we have seen, is motivated by criticisms of the neo-Kantian tradition, which reinforced the priority of pure cognition over embodied experience by presenting the world as an external, objective totality of objects against which we measure our truth claims. He starts in a similar way as Humboldt by emphasising the world-disclosive function of language, but according to Lafont he then proceeds in a similar fashion to Frege by focusing on the semantic analysis of basic conceptual and semantic structures within the form of language. Lafont explains this move thus: Humboldt tried to explain how intersubjectivity (a worldview shared by all speakers) is always already produced as a process that results from the articulation of a historical language on the one hand, and the intersubjective process of communication between speakers on the other. In contrast, "what Heidegger does is simply carry out a shift of emphasis *within* this view of language" (Lafont 1999: 58). Namely, Heidegger is emphatic that the understanding of being is the condition of possibility for communication, and he focuses almost exclusively on the semantic analysis of language (namely, the apophantic-as) in order to get at the *a priori* (namely, the hermeneutic-as) of the disclosure of meaning horizons accomplished by language. According to Habermas's similar analysis, in this way, Heidegger neglects the formal pragmatics of communication, just as Frege had done. Ultimately, Heidegger tries to resolve the tension between the world-disclosive function of language and the universalism of fact-stating discourse by arguing that the disclosure of the world, accomplished through language, determines *a priori* the standards for true and false statements. Habermas (1999: 53) thus deems this as a 'one-sided', and ultimately untenable, approach to the problem faced by the hermeneutic tradition, and Lafont and Apel are essentially in agreement with this criticism.

As far as Heidegger's critics are concerned, if we want to acknowledge the world-disclosive function of language, which is indeed valuable, some other philosophical questions must be answered. The first among them is to give an account of the referential function of language that is consistent with an account of its predicative function. As Lafont writes, "the challenge is to give an account of the *realist* intuitions highlighted by the linguistic function of designation (on which the epistemic intuitions regarding the objectivity of knowledge fallibilism, etc., seem to depend), without denying the world-disclosing function of language" (Lafont 1999: xv-xvi, emphasis original).

3.2 Heidegger's Adaptation of the Fregeian/Humbdoltian Conception of Sense and Reference

According to Lafont, Heidegger follows the tradition of the German linguistic turn by marking the designative function of language as derivative of, or even reducible to, its attributive function. Furthermore, he carries the linguistic idealism implicit in the German linguistic turn to the extreme by emphasising the absolutizing function of the positing of the disclosure of being. Lafont summarises the two divergent models of language as follows:

> In both strategies, one of the two *aspects* of the sign-relation is reified as the paradigmatic achievement of language. For the first model, it is the aspect of the sign's *standing for* something, the designative function of language. In the Heideggerian version of the linguistic turn, it is the aspect of the *interpretability* of the sign with the help of other signs (i.e., the world-disclosing function of language). (Lafont 2000: 184)

Since the distinction between meaning and reference is applied to all linguistic signs, then it follows that even names are general concepts – that is, even names attribute some sort of concept to entities. This is also called an *indirect theory of reference*, where predicates are related to their referents through the mediation of meanings or concepts; in other words, "names are related only indirectly to things by way of meanings or concepts" (Lafton 2000: 35). Lafont (1999: 35; 2000 :191) attributes this theory of indirect reference to Humboldt's theory of language and also to Heidegger who adopts Humboldt's conception of sense and reference.

Working from the German tradition, Heidegger "continues to employ the term 'language' in its usual sense as a tool or system of signs, as an 'intraworldly entity'[8] and has recourse to Humboldt's distinction between language as a system ('ergon') and as a process or discourse ('energeia')" (Lafont 2000: 67). Where Heidegger diverges from Humboldt is in his intention to establish a *founding* relationship between these two aspects of language by differentiating between language and discourse, and to identify the latter as the existential-ontological foundation for the former. Furthermore, he seeks to ascribe discourse (as an articulation of significance) to the existential constitution of Dasein. Let us look at this in detail.

The two aspects of language marked out by Lafont's Heidegger are the ontic character of being an instrumental system and the ontological character of discourse. Just as Dasein always has an understanding of what things mean, Dasein's discourse contains the overall intelligibility of the world as a referential whole. Thus, discourse as an articulation of the intelligibility of the world is disclosive, in that it reveals the symbolically structured character of the world as a referential whole.

When we are making assertions about an object or state of affairs, our assertions are performances that articulate specific interpretations of an object or state of affairs. What underlies those specific interpretations is the existentiale of discourse, which can be thought of existentially as the process of articulating our overall understanding of the intelligibility of the world. For example, my utterance "the rabbit in my backyard is destroying our flourishing communal garden" is a specific interpretation of rabbits, gardens, how it's eating etc., and existentially this utterance is an articulation of the understanding about common pesky animals in spring, what they tend to do and eat, etc. – an understanding that is shared by a community of Dasein. Thus, what is being articulated in an assertion is existentially the totality of significations, the referential whole that is the world, or 'meaning' in a broad sense. This demonstrates that significations or meanings are not *assigned* with particular words. Rather, specific meanings are already implicitly known and only *articulated* through words.

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[8] Intraworldly (*innerweltlich*) is an adjective for how entities show themselves in their equipmental relationality in Dasein's involvement with them for a particular purpose (BT: 33, SZ: 13 ftn.).

As mentioned in Chapter 1, Heidegger believes that propositional truth and falsity is not the primary locus of truth; rather, it is founded upon a more primordial notion of truth, which is unconcealment. Recall that Tugendhat criticised Heidegger for positing truth solely in the pre-predicative act of uncovering, which cannot itself be measured by any criterion of correctness and validation. Lafont would agree with the latter point, but not the former. She thinks that Tugendhat implicitly equates the pre-predicative with the pre-linguistic, but this is not actually supported by Heidegger's understanding of the pre-predicative. Against Tugendhat, she argues that Heidegger's theory of the derivative nature of propositional statements is not meant to highlight Dasein's pre-linguistic experience.

When we analyse an assertion, what lies behind the statement is not something pre-linguistic. It is rather the ontological basis of language as discourse. Meaning cannot be articulated and have specific worldly applications without the instrumental system of language. Language cannot work as an instrumental system without the totality of significations that is already intelligible and available to Dasein. This goes to show that while the instrumental use of language in expressing propositional statements is indeed derivative of interpretation, the ontological character of interpretation is not just expressed through the interrelated web of the meaningfulness of equipment-use, but also through the linguistic practices that are interlinked with how we identify, describe, and use equipment.

So, according to Lafont's reading, pre-predicative experience is not equivalent to pre-linguistic experience. Rather, the pre-predicative already includes the so-as structure of interpreting an entity or state of affair *as* something. This view of Heidegger's view of language also indicates a point of difference from Husserl's theory of phenomenological experience, since Heidegger is showing that pre-predicative seeing is in itself something that always understands and interprets – that there is never primarily a mere seeing. This is well and good, but Lafont argues that once we get to Dasein's predicative experience and its linguistic articulation of said experience, his theory becomes quite problematic. Discourse involves both identification (of that which the discourse is about) and predication (what is said about the entity that the discourse is about). This means that identification is always interpretation insofar as it also contains predication. Consequently, Heidegger must also commit to the view that the relation of designation between name and object is an implicit attribution (Lafont 2000: 53).

For instance, according to Heidegger's framework, the relation of designation between the name 'pen' and the object pen also involves the attribution of properties such as 'writing instrument, used with paper' to the object. We cannot designate something without meaning thus; just by naming something we can ascribe such and such property to the object that is named. In this fashion, Heidegger implicitly reduces names to predicates. However, preserving the distinction between name (designation) and sense (attribution) is important for theorising about what counts as knowledge and how we revise knowledge. Where Frege determines the two semantic functions of names as *an expression of its sense* and as *a designation of its reference*, Heidegger assimilates the two functions into a definition of sense as the 'way of being of what is designated'. Sense is employed by Heidegger as way of response to the epistemological question of the transcendental constitution of everything that can be experienced by Dasein. Both meaning and reference are situated in the totality of significances that is made possible by disclosedness. As such, reference as a relation becomes completely *immanent in language*.

There are two problems here: if reference as a sign relation is completely *immanent* in language in Heidegger's explanation of how language is constitutive of our experience, then the *transcendental* argument that instrumental language is founded on the disclosure of meaning would seem to fail. The second problem, to be addressed later, is that by making meaning and reference completely immanent in language Heidegger neglects the pragmatic-normative aspects of language and commits himself to a strong form of linguistic idealism.

Let me expand on the first problem that Lafont identifies – that Heidegger's assimilation of reference into significations threatens his transcendental argument. She explains,

> insofar as Heidegger's argumentation situates both moments [of identification and interpretation] in discourse, it operates within the framework of the distinction between meaning and reference. Under the tacit presupposition that meaning determines reference, Heidegger can subsequently contend that a previous disclosure already belongs to the mere identification of the referent (or the 'about-which of the statement'). (Lafont 2000: 53)

When Dasein makes an assertion about entity X, Dasein is expressing an interpretation about entity X. That interpretation carries the identification – that the assertion is *about* entity X –

and it also carries the predication – what the assertion picks out and describes with regards to entity X. The identification of entity X as, say, a hammer, depends on Dasein having an understanding of the name 'hammer' and the significations attributed to 'hammer'. In other words, Dasein must understand the meaning of 'hammer'. The meaning of 'hammer' is founded in none other than language as discourse, i.e., as the totality of significations. Thus, the pre-disclosed meaning of 'hammer' is the condition of possibility for Dasein's reference to 'hammer' as, among other things, 'a tool for building sheds'. Even the mere identification of the referent already includes within its ontological structure a previous disclosure of its meaning. Finally, the previous disclosure of meaning through the referential totality of language is accomplished by a particular historical community of Dasein.

For Lafont, this is a clear contradiction. Interpretation is based on discourse, which is in turn based on language, which leads back to Dasein's disclosedness. But Dasein's disclosedness is bound up with its facticity, of already being informed by a historically determined totality of significations without needing Dasein's explicit awareness. This contradiction leads Lafont to argue that if Heidegger's goal is to establish a founding relationship between instrumental language and discourse, he needs to mark out the categorical difference between the two. The existential articulation of meaning must be categorically distinct from the ontic use of language as a system of signs (words). However, Heidegger only succeeds in marking out their difference methodologically.

> Naturally, this does not mean that a purely methodological distinction between discourse (as articulation) and language (as a system of signs) is unjustified. Rather, the problem clearly consists in the fact that with such a distinction (which applies only to perspectives on the analysis of language), we are in principle still quite far from any separation between meaning and word that might offer a basis for the founding relation that Heidegger claims. (Lafont 2000: 73)

Why is it problematic for Heidegger if the founding relation is unjustified? According to Lafont, this comes back to the weight that Heidegger puts on the ontological difference: more specifically, the fact that Dasein has a distinctive status in Heidegger's project of fundamental ontology. Dasein has a distinctive status because it moves about with an understanding of how it relates to its own being, and as such it can also make the distinction

between being and beings. Preserving the distinctive ontological-ontical status of Dasein is methodologically indispensable to Heidegger given that his project of working out the conditions of possibility for how we can meaningfully experience the world relies on interpreting Dasein's everyday experience and understanding to bring out its ontological foundations. In other words, his project of identifying the conditions of transcendental experience depends on Dasein's unique ontic-ontological status. But the issue is that Heidegger fails to identify the true source of Dasein's privileged status. It is simply assumed, and soon after it is threatened by the equally distinctive status of language.

> Just as the phenomenon of language was indispensable in the Introduction to *Being and Time* (for without it, it would not have been possible for Heidegger to introduce the ontological difference as a plausible characterization of Dasein), something different from Dasein becomes equally crucial at the heart of the analysis of being-in-the-world. It is the sign-structure, which enters into competition with Heidegger's characterization of Dasein insofar as it, too, *can be determined only on the basis of its ontico-ontological character.* (Lafont 2000: 22, emphasis original)

It is clear to Lafont that Heidegger himself comes to recognise this as a problem. Allegedly the proof is in his later texts where he calls language the 'house of being' and grants it the exclusive privilege of positing all worldly intelligibility. However, in *Being and Time* Heidegger does not explicitly posit the ontic-ontological difference in language as well. This is because, so she argues, "he has fallen prey to one of the consequences of retaining the subject-object schema, a consequence already foreshadowed in the program of an existential analytic of Dasein" (Lafont 2000: 35). She holds that Heidegger's commitment to the difference between Dasein and non-Dasein means that in *Being and Time* he must see language as none other than an intraworldly entity, and as an instrument by which Dasein articulates his or her understanding of pre-disclosed significances.

The second reason is that by admitting the ontological difference into language, Heidegger would threaten the distinctive status of Dasein, and therefore the methodological tenability of his project of fundamental ontology. According to Lafont, Heidegger tries to avoid admitting the ontological difference into language by means of dividing the sign from its referring: "[he] tries, in a Husserlian manner, to separate the inseparable. He divides the

sign from its referring, the very characteristic that he himself has shown to constitute the sign as such" (Lafont 2000: 36). Lafont quotes the following passage from *Being and Time* to support her argument that Heidegger divides the sign from its referring: "Thus, the reference itself cannot be conceived as a *sign* if it is to serve *ontologically* as the foundation upon which signs are based. Reference is not an ontic characteristic of something ready-to-hand, when it is rather than by which readiness-to-hand itself is constituted" (BT: 114, SZ: 83, as quoted in Lafont 2000: 36, emphasis Lafont's).

Her argument is this: having shown that reference constitutes the sign, Heidegger then grants reference a quasi-transcendental status by arguing that the relational character of reference is called *signifying* (broadly, that all of Dasein's experience of the world always already involves understanding and interpretation), and that the relational totality of signifying is *significance* (the structure of worldhood, which is always already meaningful to Dasein). Thus, even though Heidegger must start from the sense/reference framework in order to determine the ontological basis of Dasein's instrumental use of language as signifying, Heidegger then in effect kicks away the ladder which he ascended by arguing that reference (or ontologically, signifying) *as such* is the condition of possibility for Dasein's discovery of entities in the world as what they are.

To make things worse, Heidegger claims that 'significance' is an existential determination of Dasein without further support. The primary issue here is that 'significance' is meant to serve as the 'foundation' for language: that is, significance as the overall meaningfulness of the world, which is posited by the disclosure of being and implicitly understood by Dasein (again, we note that Dasein's implicit understanding of being is unjustified as far as Lafont is concerned), is meant to be the ontological basis for the pragmatic-normative aspect of language, or of the instrumental use of language for determining knowledge.

This leads us onto the second problem with Heidegger's alleged presupposition that meaning determines reference: the issue of how his notion of language entails unfavourable normative commitments such as linguistic idealism. To that end, I will analyse how Lafont uses Heidegger's unconcealment thesis to expose the categorical conflation of meaning and word, and the conflation of the ontological and epistemological questions about the conditions of knowledge, in his conception of language.

3.3 The Conflation of Meaning and Word in Unconcealment

As I have discussed above, Lafont emphasises that in Heidegger's theory of language, identification and predication are both situated in discourse. This is directly linked to the problem in Heidegger's unconcealment theory, that is, its failure to give any criterion of correctness and validity for propositional statements. First, I want to clarify Lafont's take on how Heidegger conceives of unconcealment as prior to propositional truth. She explains that for Heidegger, the unconcealment theory serves as a radicalization of the traditional conception of truth as correctness. As such, he believes that unconcealment "contains or clarifies this traditional view, as a sort of limit case" (Lafont 2000: 118), and he wants to recover the original sense of the word 'truth'.

> This signifies, in turn, that the question concerning the adequacy of Heidegger's reconstruction of the (traditional) view of truth as correctness is decisive for the inner coherence of his argument. For Heidegger can hardly arrive at a more original phenomenon by radicalizing a given standpoint regarding truth, or by working out and analyzing its conditions of possibility, if on the level of clarifying this standpoint he has already lost sight of the specific properties of truth as correctness. (Lafont 2000: 118)

Therefore, it must be emphasised from the start that unconcealment is not just a technical term: Heidegger is concerned with actual linguistic usage, and he actually wants to show that anything sought under the name 'truth' – be it in everyday or metaphysical usage – has its condition of possibility in unconcealment. Heidegger arrives at his conception of truth as correctness by means of the normative traits that it carries. "These normative aspects thus belong to the definition of truth (i.e., to an answer for the question of what 'truth' means)" (Lafont 2000: 118). The issue is whether these normative traits can still be found in Heidegger's radicalization of the traditional conception of truth.

Unconcealment, as the originary concept of truth, is meant to provide the condition of possibility of truth as correctness. Truth as correctness is normative. Heidegger identifies this normative sense of truth with a specific form of propositional truth: the agreement of a judgement with its object. Lafont explains that this move is an attempt to unify all the normative elements of propositional truth under the common denominator, which is the

formal structure of the 'so-as'. Heidegger's second move is to take this definition of truth as agreement between judgement and object as a criterion of truth. "As a result, Heidegger's argumentation is pushed ever further away from the initial question concerning a definition of truth (or the meaning of truth) and is pushed toward the question concerning the *ascertainment* of truth (i.e., how to determine whether or not a statement is true)" (Lafont 2000: 120, emphasis original).

Whereas the first question is ontological, the second one is epistemological. Heidegger is geared towards the epistemological question because, like Husserl, he wanted to show why the traditional theory of truth as adequation or correspondence was mistaken. More precisely, he wanted to show that the correspondence theory cannot adequately explain the agreement between judgment and object purely by means of the intraworldly relation between present-at-hand entities. At the same time, Heidegger challenges Husserl's theory of truth as evidence as the final authority for the verification of judgments, by showing how it presupposes the uncoveredness of intraworldly entities.

This finally leads him to the claim that the meaning of propositional truth is founded upon the 'being-uncovering' of assertions, assertions here understood existential-ontologically as the articulation of meaning. However, evidence and truth are not the same thing. Where Husserl makes a clear distinction between the definition of truth and correctness and evidence as the condition for the ascertainment of truth, Heidegger oscillates between the two categories. Husserl recognises correctly that 'evident' is terminologically opposite to 'absurd', and not opposite to 'false', whereas Heidegger's thematization of the originary notion of truth bears more similarity to the opposites of 'evident/absurd', or 'meaningful/meaningless', rather than 'true/false'. Lafont argues,

> From his success in asking about the conditions of possibility of a determinate criterion of truth (i.e., of evidence as a criterion for ascertaining whether or not there is 'correspondence') and the resulting 'sublation' of such a criterion (by pointing to the fact of the disclosedness of Dasein), Heidegger assumes that along his path he can sublate the *very meaning of truth as correctness* that motivates the search for such a criterion. (Lafont 2000: 121)

If Heidegger bases his argument for his theory of truth on the epistemological question of ascertaining truth, then it is absolutely necessary that unconcealment carries the normative

traits of a concept of truth, such as propositional truth. Heidegger does meet this requirement with his first formulation of the 'so-as', which Lafont (2000: 135) describes as "a normative moment of comparison" of how an entity shows itself. In Heidegger's next step, he transfers the 'so-as' over to the 'in itself''; namely, "the entity that is intended shows itself in *such* a way *as* it is in itself" (Lafont 2000: 85). Finally, the thing itself is none other than the entity in the 'how' of its uncoveredness. And as we know, a false statement doesn't uncover the entity in the how of its uncoveredness, but it covers over the entity. This formulation still bears normative traits.

But at this point, Lafont argues, Heidegger's argument becomes inconsistent. In defining the condition of possibility for propositional statements as being-uncovering, Heidegger needs to retain the normative differentiation between true/false through the differentiation between uncovering/covering-over. "From this it would result *ex negativo* that in order for 'uncoveredness' to be synonymous with 'truth', it would have to be the necessary and sufficient condition of only the true statements (and not of the false ones)" (Lafont 2000: 136). However, since his argument is geared towards the epistemological question about the *criteria* for truth rather than the *meaning* of truth, "Heidegger has shown that we have no other access to the real than by way of interpretation" (Lafont 2000: 136). And as a result, there is nothing in the uncovered 'in itself' that can satisfactorily demonstrate how it can meet the necessary and sufficient conditions for true statements. So, it seems that we are unable to sufficiently draw normative traits from Heidegger's reformulation of truth as unconcealment. Disclosure only tells us that correctness as the ascertainment of truth is derivative upon the immediate givenness of the *phenomenon*, and of what we immediately grasp in our experience. But insofar as it fails to meet the necessary and sufficient conditions for the ascertainment of truth, which is a standard requirement in any theory of language for assessing statements, it doesn't actually explain what it means to ascertain correctness, nor identify the criterion for determining correctness.

There is ample evidence in Heidegger's description of the ontological basis for making false statements that unconcealment does not bear the normative traits required for truth. Lafont cites *Logic: The Question of Truth*, in which Heidegger discusses the condition of possibility for making false statements using the example of the walk in the forest: in the forest I could possibly mistake a deer for a pine tree, but it wouldn't make sense for me to

mistake it as the Shah of Persia or the root of 69 coming toward me in the forest. (Heidegger, 2010b: 159, as cited in Lafont 2000: 138). From this passage, it can be seen, again, that the terminological opposites 'uncovered/covering-over' carries more similarities to 'meaningful/absurd' rather than 'true/false'. Lafont explains: "In order to be true or false, a statement must first of all be meaningful… the possibilities excluded by uncoveredness do not render the statement at issue false. Instead, they render it absurd-meaningless. (For precisely this reason they can be excluded *a priori*.)" (Lafont 2000: 138).

Lafont concedes that Heidegger's intuition that the projection of meaning comes before the ascertainment of facts is generally correct; however, she emphasises that the two questions – the ontological question about our prior understanding and the epistemological question about the ascertainment of true statements – are *not reducible* to one another. It can be seen that Heidegger conflates these two questions, because even though he is confident in his argument that apophantic truth (propositional truth or falsity) is derivative of the uncovering that is accomplished by the statement (as the articulation of meaning), he is exceedingly vague when it comes to how uncovering/covering-over explains the criteria for distinguishing between truth and falsity. "On the basis of the justified distinctions between the two levels, and the relative indifference of the latter with respect to the former (the level on which the differentiation between true or false takes place), Heidegger needs to find a distinction within uncoveredness itself that might be able to account for this circumstance" (Lafont 2000: 139).

Let me demonstrate this point through the forest example. Here, the uncoveredness of the environment of the forest is the condition of possibility for whether my statement "a deer is coming towards me" can *meaningfully* point out a deer (or man, or bush) as opposed to absurdly pointing out the Shah of Persia and the root of 69. Given my pre-understanding of the significance of the forest environment within the broader web of meanings of my world, the possibility of mistaking the bush as the Shah of Persia and the root of 69 must be excluded *a priori* insofar as they would be absurd and meaningless. Uncoveredness and disclosedness can perfectly explain these conditions. However, the uncoveredness of the environment of the forest, the deer, and the bush, fails to tell us whether my statement indeed shows the deer or the bush *as it is,* i.e., it fails to point out the normative criteria for determining whether my meaningful statement correctly points out the referent. Through this

example, we can see why Lafont claims that "it immediately follows that uncoveredness by no means represents the condition of possibility for a statement's showing the entity as it *is…* Rather, it is, at most, the condition of possibility for a statement's showing the entity as it *can be*" (Lafont 2000: 139).

If the uncoveredness of entities is possible only *with* and *through* disclosedness, as Heidegger claims, then entities can be meaningfully uncovered only because the world is already disclosed to Dasein through understanding and discourse. Thus, truth in its most originary form lies in the disclosedness of Dasein and the world. The issue then is how originary truth is meant to inform and ground our ascertainment of knowledge. Truth, as we normally understand it, has the normative aspect of being a universal standard of measure. But, as Lafont argues, "through the equating of truth with the *factual* standard of uncoveredness, which is uncoupled from all normative traits, the *decentralization* already accomplished concerning the projection of meaning is *expanded to include truth itself.* But in this way, the concept loses its *counterfactual* character without losing its character of an absolute standard of measure" (Lafont 2000: 143, emphasis original).

That is, originary truth is an absolute standard of measure that determines the horizon of possibilities, of what *can* be the case within a historically determined understanding of being, but it makes it impossible for Dasein to meaningfully communicate and reason about how the world *might* be outside of how it is historically disclosed to us. Thus, if Heidegger's notion of truth is originary and absolute, then it becomes the condition of possibility of true statements but also of *all* meaningful statements in general. Further, if Heidegger grounds the projection of meaning in the facticity of the world's disclosedness, it entails that meaning will have no claim on its own validity or universalizability. This all leads to Lafont's thesis that unconcealment entails that meaning determines reference: the disclosed meaning systems determine what can be referred to in our world, but there is nothing in disclosure that can satisfactorily tell us why something is correct or incorrect, true or false. In the following section, I focus on Lafont's analysis of the later Heidegger, and how he seems to affirm that the historically specific disclosure of truth is universally binding.

3.4 The Later Heidegger's Treatment of Language, and its Normative-Pragmatic Consequences

According to Lafont, the unconcealment theory might have been redeemable if Heidegger only wanted to show that the proper definition of truth is to be found in unconcealment rather than correspondence. However, she argues that Heidegger sets his ambition much higher – he wants to *substitute* a 'happening of truth' *in the place of* the concept of truth as correctness – and that's why the theory is so problematic. In *Being and Time,* Heidegger implicitly sets up language to have the transitional, ontic-ontological status also possessed by Dasein. In his later texts, Heidegger fully grants language meaning-constitutive powers by positing the disclosure of the world in the 'happening' of truth.

The ontological-transcendental priority of language comes to the fore in the post-*kehre* Heidegger. According to Lafont, in "The Origin of the Work of Art", Heidegger extends the scope of the question of truth in two ways: it no longer concerns the question of truth ascorrectness, nor the question of truth as assertions that indicate knowledge about entities. Instead, he broadens the extension of the term 'true' "to cover all realms of culture (symbolic phenomena in general) … [and] in this way grants a subordinate rank to the knowledge that is oriented toward the ascertainment of facts (i.e., ontic knowledge, science)" (Lafont 2000: 156). Cultural phenomena – such as politics and religion – which possess world-disclosive forces are now the conditions of possibility for ontic knowledge in general. Lafont concedes that Heidegger's claim that the projection of meaning is prior to the ascertainment of facts is true to an extent, but by describing world-disclosure as an 'instituting' and 'happening' of truth he erroneously and problematically conflates meaning and validity. More specifically, his concept of truth loses its normative standard of counterfactual validity.

By granting language absolute world-constituting powers, the definition of truth now indicates the originary world-disclosure that first brings entities out into the open and allows everything to be encountered. There are three aspects to the instituting of truth, and Lafont describes them as the following:

i.   The 'granting' aspect of truth pertains to the non-intraworldly character of world-disclosure. That is, the granting of truth is not an entity like equipment that can be understood in terms of how one interprets it.

ii.   The 'grounding' aspect of truth indicates the positing of all normative standards of measure. According to Lafont, once a historical world-disclosure is 'accomplished' it makes phenomena accessible, but also sets the criteria for measuring and assessing them. This is also meant to be the condition of possibility for ascertaining facts or measuring correctness in theoretical judgments, e.g., scientific study. Secondly, this also indicates that insofar as it is a grounding, it is impossible or meaningless to pose any questions about correctness and justification to the disclosure of truth itself: "it represents a final and self-justifying authority".

iii.   The 'initiating' aspect of truth is two-fold. One, it is epochal. It is a radical and new 'starting over' that resultingly brings the previous disclosure to an abrupt end (like a 'jolt', as Heidegger describes). Two, each world disclosure is secluded and unalterable (Lafont 2000: 159-160).

The non-intrawordly character of the 'happening' of truth is best understood through the lens of the ontological difference. As mentioned before, despite his radical overturning of the philosophical tradition, Heidegger maintains the 'strict dichotomy' between the ontic and ontological. Through Heidegger's hermeneutic transformation of Kant's transcendental idealism, argues Lafont, Heidegger splits history "into two courses of events that can still be cleanly separated in accordance with their status as a priori and a posteriori" (Lafont 2000: 160). Intraworldly history, which pertains to entities, is ontic; whereas the history of being, which is factical but not intraworldly, is the ontological *a priori*. While the happening of truth only provides possibilities and is thereby not intraworldly, it circumscribes and determines *all* of the possible ways in which we could interpret the world, and as such it is factical. The ontological *a priori* that is the happening of truth is also demonstrated in MFL, where Heidegger argues that being is "that which is essentially 'earlier'… it belongs to what is prior, in the language of later ontology: a priori" (MFL: 146), and that Dasein can only understand and interpret because it is in an understanding of being, which "first secures the possibility of beings manifesting themselves as beings" (MFL: 135). All this indicates that by the 'happening' of truth, "Heidegger is referring to a non-intraworldly process, that of world-disclosure or the *projection of meaning"* (Lafont 2000: 161, emphasis original).

To look deeper into the issue of how the ontological *a priori* of world disclosure determines ontic knowledges, it is necessary to turn to the later Heidegger's views on

empirical sciences. Lafont reminds us that in *Being and Time* Heidegger already establishes a strict dichotomy between the ontological enterprise of philosophy and the ontic enterprise of empirical sciences and maintains that the sciences require a grounding in ontology properly understood. According to Lafont, Heidegger always saw an inherent limitation in sciences:

> First, they presuppose their respective subject matter (nature, language, history, society) as already constituted (for which reason they need to have a foundation). Second, the thematization that they carry out with respect to such subject matter is in the first instance to be understood as a 'working-out of the basic concepts of the guiding understanding of being' (BT, p. 414). However, such an understanding of being cannot be accounted for by the sciences, which are always caught up in their particular subject matter. (Lafont 2000: 260)

Given Heidegger's commitment to this view on science, it comes as no surprise that in "Origin of the Work of Art" he emphasises that world-disclosive powers or the happening of truth cannot be found in science. He reminds us that science is "not an original happening of truth, but always the cultivation of a domain of truth already opened, specifically by apprehending and confirming that which shows itself to be possibly and necessarily correct within that field" (OWA: 187). He adds that when science goes beyond showing what is correct to unveil entities, only then can it be considered as philosophy. That is, when science brings about a paradigm shift by disclosing essential matters of understanding such as transformations of fundamental concepts and definitions (e.g., the Copernican revolution), a 'happening' of truth has taken place within a science that has become philosophy. Lafont argues that there are two conflicting notions of science that Heidegger employs here: first is the narrow notion of science as an enterprise devoted to the determination of ontic knowledges, and second is the broad notion of science as a world-disclosive philosophy.

Why is this conflicting? Heidegger needs to show what kind of knowledge typifies a transformation of science from one paradigm to another, by appeal to the *a priori* of general concepts and to how the knowledge of essences shapes our experience of the world. For example, in *What is a Thing?* he describes mathematics as having an *a priori* character of the knowledge of essences, which metaphysically enables us to experience entities in a certain way – that is, mathematics projects the essence of things such that the Dasein of that historical epoch must experience the world in accordance to that projected paradigm.

Heidegger argues that this positing of paradigms is accomplished by means of axiomatic projections: "Insofar as all acquaintance with things and all knowledge expresses itself in principles, the knowledge taken and posited in mathematical projection is a knowledge of the kind that posits things in advance on their ground. Axioms are grounding postulates" (Heidegger 1967: 71). The problem with this method is this:

> the postulation of the axioms of a theory is determinative for all knowledge that can possibly be attained through it. To this extent, such postulation has the normative status of an absolute standard of measure, a final court of appeal (and thereby belongs conceptually to the happening of truth). But this status itself is based on nothing more than the mere circumstance of the factual (i.e., contingent) introduction of these axioms and definitions as conventions. Thus, this postulation (like that first, strong type of world-disclosure) is a 'first and final grounding' but is itself 'groundless'. (Lafont 2000: 267)

Thus, according to Heidegger's narrow view of science, science cannot yield the disclosure of truth insofar as it concerned with fact-stating empirical knowledge. According to his broad view of science as a philosophy, science can disclose truth and bring about paradigm shifts, but the only way in which we can identify such disclosures is through the analysis of historically contingent scientific axioms and definitions. There is no universal standard of measure against which to judge whether the postulation of these axioms and definitions indeed constitute happenings of truth.

Of course, Lafont would contend that the later Heidegger is less concerned with the world-disclosive powers of science as philosophy than he is with the world-disclosive powers of language. As per his famous declaration, "language is the house of being", in OWA Heidegger explicitly proclaims language as world disclosure, and moreover does so to distance it from the instrumental view of language. In this way, according to Lafont, "he takes his distance from the views of language as either an 'expression' or a 'communication' of representations given independently of language" (Lafont 2000: 92). As we know, in OWA Heidegger argues that language is responsible for bringing entities into the open for the first time. Moreover, it names the entity. "Only this naming nominates beings *to* their Being *from out of* their Being" (OWA: 198, emphasis original). Heidegger calls this process poetry, whereby it projects or creates new worlds, and argues that it occurs primarily in art.

What does it mean for language to be constitutive of the givenness of entities? Given Heidegger's view that language is constitutive of how we experience the world, argues Lafont, it is "almost a truism that only through a word's 'meaning' (as a 'way of givenness') does the referent (as 'given to us') become accessible. In other words, the acquisition of linguistic knowledge is inextricably interwoven with the 'instituting' of factual knowledge" (Lafont 2000: 94). For Lafont, this is none other than the implicit confirmation that meaning determines reference. Heidegger argues that the instrumental view of language aims at the "technicization of all languages into a merely functional interplanetary instrument of information" (Heidegger 1971: 160) and contrasts this against his world-constitutive view of language. Further, he argues that in our everyday experience "wherever and however we speak a language, it is precisely language itself that is never brought to word in this way [the instrumental way]. Language does *not* bring itself into language, but rather stays within itself" (Heidegger 1971: 161). It is due to this characteristic of language that we can spontaneously 'find the word' for an entity or state of affairs that concerns us; indeed, it is rare that we would ever fail to find the word.

Secondly, poetry as a disclosure of the world is a *phenomenon* of *linguistic creation.* Heidegger argues: "when it is an issue of bringing something to language which has hitherto never been spoken, everything depends on whether language gives or denies the appropriate word. The case of the poet is a case of this kind. A poet can even go so far as to bring to language the experience that he creates with language in an explicit way, and that means poetically" (Heidegger 1971: 161-2, emphasis original). For Lafont, this characterisation of language indicates two aspects of the meaning determines reference assumption: one, that for Heidegger "thinking is linguistically constituted"*,* and two, that "something becomes accessible *as something* only along the path of linguistic conceptualization" (Lafont 2000: 95). In this way, language is absolutely constitutive of Dasein's experience of the world. As Lafont remarks, "what is considered as constitutive *par excellence* cannot in turn be traced back to anything else" (Lafont 2000: 99). This means that Heidegger must explicitly reject any conceptions of language that traces it to something other than language. He rejects the intentionalistic standpoint since language would be grounded in the prior intentional acts of the conscious subject, the pragmatist standpoint since language would be teleologically grounded in activities, and the cognitivist standpoint since language would be grounded upon

the instrumental purpose of representing an external reality. Heidegger's solution is that 'language speaks' – it is essentially self-justifying and absolutizing.

If the 'happening' of truth through language is the condition of possibility for interpretation – that is, all the possible ways in which a historical community of Dasein can meaningfully talk about entities – then the pragmatic-normative aspect of language, i.e., its communicative and fact-stating function, must also be derivative of language as poetry. In *Being and Time,* Heidegger appeals to discourse and the articulation of significances as an existential characteristic of Dasein and thereby maintains a shaky balance between the ontic-ontological status shared by Dasein and language. In contrast, the later Heidegger abandons the priority of the former. Dasein already share a background of a world-disclosing language, and this is the condition of possibility for intersubjective communication. On the other hand, this shared language cannot be traced back to communication given the later Heidegger's reformulation of language as the absolute ground. Therefore, argues Lafont, Heidegger must resort to a conception of language as dialogue where the speaking of the language is a hearing beforehand, i.e., a historical community of Dasein can only speak the language because they have already heard that language beforehand (Heidegger 1971: 254). It must be emphasised again that, since the historical disclosure of truth loses the counterfactual aspect of truth, Dasein is barred from questioning *outside* of those possibilities, and they cannot meaningfully pose questions of validity and justification with respect to disclosed meaning horizons. Moreover, if thinking is linguistically constituted and the accessibility of entities is only possible through linguistic conceptualization, it can be seen how a historically disclosed language altogether prevents Dasein from reflexively questioning their world.

And as for Lafont's third point about the historically contingent character of linguistic world-disclosure: because Heidegger's methodology is hermeneutical, his conception of temporality transforms Kant's transcendental idealism into a linguistic idealism of sorts. "[The happening of truth is] a technical term formed in accordance with the model of revelation understood as an event" (Lafont 2000: 161-2). What this means is that Heidegger relativizes the transcendental to the historically and culturally specific linguistic disclosures of worlds. Each epoch is an event that discloses a particular understanding of the history of being, and this disclosure occurs in a revelatory or even quasi-mystical fashion. This 'happening' always precedes history and is in that sense *a priori.* It is factical in that it

determines all the possible interpretations of history and of the entities within that historical epoch. It is not intraworldly in that it only provides possibilities. This goes to show that "world-disclosures are just as transitory and contingent as are the 'epochs' they serve to ground, which arise and pass away in discontinuous succession" (Lafont 2000: 162). The contingency of historical world-disclosures means that different linguistic communities of Dasein cannot appeal to a universal standard of measure of validity to communicate about the similarities and differences of their respective worlds, and that there is no objective world shared by all linguistic communities of Dasein.

Let me summarize the normative-pragmatic consequences of Heidegger's conception of linguistic world-disclosure as presented by Lafont. The transcendental ground for what makes Dasein's meaningful experience of the world possible is relative to the particular worldview that a historical language discloses. As such, the presupposition of the objectivity of a single, shared world becomes meaningless. Reference and truth become relative to a particular worldview enabled by a particular historical language, thwarting the possibility of communicating and agreeing about the same subject matter across linguistic divides. "With this reification of the world-disclosing function of language, what things are becomes thoroughly dependent on what is contingently 'disclosed' for a historical linguistic community through a specific language" (Lafont 2000: 7). Different world disclosures are essentially closed off against one another, closed off to processes of learning, and unable to be revised or challenged by intraworldly experience. Heidegger's conception of language as world disclosing exacerbates the mistaken presupposition that meaning determines reference: the idea that we are only able to refer to whatever happens to fit our descriptions instead of what the referents actually are.

3.5 Summary of Criticisms

In closing, I want to list the main criticisms of world disclosure put forward by Tugendhat, Apel, Habermas, and Lafont.

i. Heidegger takes on the world-disclosive view of language that was discovered in the German linguistic turn. However, his account of discourse and language is conflicted. He splits language into its instrumental function of being a system of words and its constitutive

function of disclosing worldly significances/meaning. He then attempts to ground the instrumental function in the constitutive function, but according to Lafont, this results in a problematic endorsement of the claim that meaning determines reference. Because language constitutes *all* worldly significances, Heidegger also endorses a form of linguistic idealism.

ii. Heidegger's theory of unconcealment attempts to show how the traditional correspondence theory of truth is mistaken. He thinks that propositional truth and falsity is grounded upon the uncovering of assertions, but his argument focuses on the *ontological* question of establishing the meaning of truth, that is, the condition of possibility for the *meaningful experience* of entities. Heidegger sublates the epistemological question of truth into the ontological question of truth. The former concerns the ascertainment and confirmation of truth according to reliable normative standards of measurement, and the latter concerns the meaning of truth. Heidegger attempts to answer the epistemological question by using unconcealment to explain how propositional assertions can be true or false, but the lack of differentiation between true and false acts of uncovering indicates that he hasn't really answered the ontological question of the meaning of truth. This is because an account of what truth means must also account for what it means to ascertain and confirm a truth claim in our actual practices.

iii. The 'happening' of world disclosure is not intraworldly. That is, Dasein cannot understand world disclosures in the same way it can understand entities in terms of equipment. Nor can Dasein explain the event of world disclosure in their everyday use of language without distorting the essence of what is disclosed. This makes world disclosure empirically inaccessible and propositionally contentless. This is primarily Lafont and Habermas' worry, and to a lesser extent Apel's.

iv. The historical disclosure of being is called original truth, so it justifies its own validity and is barred from critical questioning. Dasein has no power to challenge or transform the meaning to the world that being discloses. This view is shared by all the critics I have discussed.

v. Heidegger attempts to detranscendentalise Kant's transcendental idealism through fundamental ontology. Kant posits the faculty of reason and understanding in the transcendental subject as the ground for the constitution of a universally valid, singular world. However, this remains a Cartesian subjectivity insofar as it asserts the primacy of the 'in me' which is supposed to serve as the 'proof' for the entities 'outside me'. Heidegger breaks this mold by arguing that there is no need for such a proof because Dasein is being-in-the-world. However, the standard for validity and objectivity is made no more than the meanings that are projected in a particular historical period. This means the standards for ascertaining truth are

relative to each historical community of Dasein. Different communities are unable to agree or disagree about the same objective world.

vi. According to Apel and Habermas, Heidegger's neglect of the epistemological question of truth results in neglecting the instrumental function of language in theoretical judgments and everyday communication. Heidegger seems to be hostile to scientific means of gaining knowledge because it often leads to the instrumentalization of the world. It seems that he does not recognise the inherent value in knowledge attained through normative, intersubjective communicative practices, such as discursive communication, scientific experimentation and argumentation.

In the next few chapters, I will address each of these criticisms. I will try to defend Heidegger against the linguistic idealism charge by examining where Lafont may have gone wrong in interpreting Heidegger's stance on language and meaning. I give an account of why some of the critics' worries – such as the idea that we cannot gain knowledge of what entities are beyond the meanings that we attribute to it – might be unfounded because they contradict some key aspects of Heidegger's stance on reality, experience, and knowledge.

Chapter 4: Responses to Criticisms of World Disclosure

Introduction

Language is evidently a central theme in the world disclosure debate. There are major disagreements about how important language is to disclosedness, whether Heidegger follows the footsteps of the German linguistic turn, whether his views of language changes in his later period, and so forth. These are complex, overlapping issues. Untangling them will be a necessary and important step in evaluating the critiques in Chapter 3. The overall argument in this chapter is that a broader picture of world disclosure is required. Contra Lafont, it cannot just be a matter of discovering worldly intelligibility through symbols and language as a system of signs. Rather, world disclosure connects with basic concepts within the entirety of Heidegger's analytic of Dasein: being-in-the-world, circumspection, care, discourse, and so on.

I will outline the steps in my argument. First, I will contest the claim that Heidegger is a linguistic idealist. Attributing this view of language to him is inconsistent with some of his core commitments, such as his clear anti-representationalism. Heidegger is absolutely committed to the fact that we can experience entities with no representational mediation, and this runs counter to the meaning determines reference thesis. I will address the claim that Heidegger's commitment to the ontological difference leads to a strict constitutive/constituted view of meaning and reference, subject and object. In Heidegger's defence, I argue that the ontological difference does not result in meaning/reference, subject/object dualisms. In the course of contesting these criticisms, I hope to pin down some key points in his nuanced but (admittedly) at times ambivalent views on language and its relevance to world disclosure. Then I will defend an account of the role that language plays in Dasein's disclosedness. One of my main concerns will be whether the hermeneutical-as (which is central to the unconcealment and truth debate) is structured before language or in addition to language. Or has language, e.g., through historicity and temporality, already shaped the understanding which grounds the hermeneutical-as? And if it is the latter, can Heidegger avoid the consequences of linguistic idealism, cultural relativism, etc., that his critics are worried about?

4.1 The Linguistic Idealism Charge

Lafont and others accuse Heidegger of endorsing a form of linguistic idealism. According to what is usually meant by linguistic idealism, this would signify that Heidegger endorses the view that the human experience of the world is mediated and determined by linguistic meanings that exist on some plane separated from the real world. Thus, even if there is a world of things in themselves, human beings cannot access it apart from the linguistic meanings that are attributed to it. According to *Being and Time*, the plane on which linguistic meanings reside would be Dasein's social relations amongst which meaning structures are constructed and maintained. Lafont's linguistic idealism accusation can be broken down thus:

- Heidegger inherits the linguistic idealism implicit in the German linguistic turn – which is the conception of the world as symbolically or linguistically structured, specifically by the world-disclosive power of language. (Lafont uses the terms symbolic and linguistic interchangeably).
- Heidegger radicalises the above inheritance by arguing that all worldly intelligibility is linguistically or symbolically constituted.
- Heidegger also inherits the Hamann-Herder-Humboldt reduction of the designative function of language to its attributive function. In contemporary terms, this is the theory of indirect reference, according to which propositions are related to their referents through the mediation of meanings or concepts.
- Following the Hamann-Herder-Humboldt tradition, Heidegger makes meaning and reference completely immanent in language and neglects the pragmatic-normative aspects of language.

While the later Heidegger pays much attention to the world-disclosing, epoch-constituting, non-instrumental aspect of language, I am not convinced by the argument that *Being and Time* already sets language up as the hidden foundation for Dasein's disclosedness. As Lafont (2000: 11) herself admits, her interpretation of Heidegger's treatment of language is based on the reading that he thinks all worldly intelligibility is linguistic. Taylor Carman (2002: 206) outrightly rejects this premise and thereby questions the legitimacy of most of her criticisms insofar as they rest on this premise. I too believe that this premise can be easily rejected. However, within the linguistic idealism charge we need to distinguish between (i)

Heidegger's alleged conflation of the epistemological question of how we ascertain knowledge and the ontological question of the meaning of truth, and (ii) his alleged belief that meaning and reference are immanent within language. These issues deserve more critical analysis.

Like Carman and Wrathall, I think that Lafont is wrong to attribute the commitment of the German linguistic turn, especially the theory that all meaning is linguistic meaning, to Heidegger. Heidegger is interested in articulating how the immediate experience of phenomena is possible in Dasein's intentional experience, because therein lies the 'proof' that the being of human existence is fundamentally bound up with the basic metaphysical question about being. Since he is committed to the immediacy of Dasein's experience of phenomena it would seem contradictory to view disclosure as a mediatory channel between immediate experience and things in themselves. In other words, it is highly doubtful that Heidegger would support anything like the notion that all worldly intelligibility is linguistically constituted. Indeed, my inclination is that Heidegger has a realist view of the world, especially given his emphasis on the primordiality of phenomena pure and simple.[9] Afterall, he is highly dismissive of skepticism, critical of Cartesian subjectivity, and suspicious of the legitimacy of the entire debate over idealism and realism. It is also noteworthy that throughout his career he remains faithful to revitalizing the ancient Greeks' conception of the immediately available phenomena. I do admit that Heidegger holds, as the German linguistic tradition does, that language has an important world-disclosive dimension. I also agree that Heidegger holds that Dasein's conception of the world is in part linguistically structured. The issue is *how* it is linguistically structured – I believe that it certainly cannot be in the manner of Fregean MDR, as Lafont claims. Indeed, I will argue that the claim that he sees all worldly intelligibility as linguistically constituted is false.

According to Lafont's reading, Heidegger thinks that all worldly intelligibility is linguistically constituted because the referential totality of the world can only be articulated through signs. This claim is dubious. Her argument is the following. Heidegger treats signs as a special kind of equipment. Unlike other kinds of equipment that tend to recede into the background of our activities, signs stand out and orients us to experience our environment in

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[9] Carman (2003: 157) suggests that Heidegger is an 'ontic realist'. Golob (2014: 168) seems to agree with this view.

a certain way (e.g., the sign 'beware of bears' in a forest orients us towards the environment in a more wary way). Thus, signs are ontically available pieces of equipment, and they can also indicate the ontological structure of referential totalities and worldhood. This dual character of signs can be said to grant it a transcendental status. Lafont takes this transcendental status to an extreme sense by arguing that sign-relations constitute the referential totality of the world, i.e. the contexts of equipment. Without this, entities cannot show themselves to us as intelligible equipment. Her position is that the sign structure is the foundation for the referential totality of equipment. The evidence she gives is Heidegger's remark that "Being-a-sign-for can itself be formalized into a *universal kind of relation*, so that the sign-structure itself provides an ontological clue for 'characterizing' any entity whatsoever" (BT: 107-8, SZ: 77, emphasis original).

Carman argues that Lafont misreads Heidegger's BT: 107-8 remark, and I think he is right. It is not the case, he argues, that Heidegger thinks that every entity can be taken as a sign or can be uncovered only on the basis of signs. In his 1925 lectures (which are precursors to *Being and Time*) Heidegger clearly says that taking the universal character of signs and symbols as a clue for interpreting the ontological structure of the totality of all entities is dangerous. It is dangerous because it can obscure the phenomena and the things in themselves at the expense of universality and generality.

> the phenomenon of expression, of symbol in the broadest sense, is taken as a clue for explaining all the phenomena of spirit and of entities in general. The universal applicability of formal clues such as 'Gestalt', 'sign,' symbol' thus easily obscures the originality or non-originality of the interpretation thus achieved… such attempts at interpretation under the guidance of such universal phenomena from which all and sundry can be made – for ultimately each and every thing can be interpreted as a sign – pose a great danger for the development of the human sciences (HCT: 203-4).

Following the BT: 107-8 quote that Lafont cites, Heidegger actually illustrates the multiple ways in which the sign-structure resists generalization. He clarifies the ontological structure of signs on the basis of how they function as equipment, not the reverse. For instance, the sign structure is clarified through its equipmental functioning as a symptom of sickness, or as an indication of rain. To counter Lafont's claim, the symbolic relation between the south

wind and the promise of rain does not constitute the context of equipment in the farmer's world, nor form the basis for how he can encounter the south wind and the rain as what they are. Rather, it is the farmer's dealings with a range of farming equipment, especially used with the knowledge passed down from his father and through processes of trial and error, that he discovers the south wind as a sign of rain. Precisely for this reason, the symbolic relation between the south wind and rain cannot be discovered (or at least discovered as meaningful) to someone who isn't a farmer.

As Heidegger states, "The foregoing [between the BT: 107-8 quote Lafont cites and his illustration of the various functions of signs] Interpretation of the sign should *merely provide phenomenal support* for our characterization of references or assignments" (BT113 H82, bracket and emphasis mine). The point here is that the phenomenological study of, say, the farmer's discovery of an ontic sign through his dealings with equipment gets us towards the ontic-ontological structure of signs as equipment and as showing. This structure is not generalizable to the kind of referential systems that can be neatly articulated through propositional statements like 'A refers to B, C refers to D and E'. Heidegger further warns: "A sign is not a Thing which stands to another Thing in the relationship of indicating" (BT: 110, SZ: 80). Similarly, the sign-relation is not an inventory of pre-determined symbolic or linguistic meaning that constitute the context of equipment.

Despite this, Lafont maintains that Heidegger has no grounds to claim that instrumental language is founded in discourse, since discourse is solely linguistic. According to Lafont, Heidegger treats language as having a dual character of being an instrumental system of signs and as world-disclosing. He divides this in a Humboldtian fashion by distinguishing language as a dynamic process or discourse (the articulation of the overall intelligibility of the world), and language as a purely cognitive, fact-stating instrumental system. Finally, he argues that the latter is founded upon the former. The problem that Lafont sees here is that the referential totality that is the world is reduced to the linguistic meanings attributed to it by Dasein. Secondly, discourse determines beforehand what Dasein can ever possibly encounter in the world through experience, since Dasein's experience is linguistically mediated. Thirdly, discourse is solely linguistic/symbolic (given the all intelligibility is linguistic/symbolic charge), or, more precisely, the articulation of intelligibility can only be accomplished through the instrumental use of language. Thus, if instrumental language is founded in

discourse, but discourse can only be articulated through language, Heidegger's argument is circular. He has nothing at his disposal to claim that discourse is the foundation for language, and this would again confirm the linguistic idealism charge given that worldly intelligibility is only accessible through language.

Heidegger would surely accept that discourse is the condition of possibility for language as an instrumental system. However there is no circularity to his argument, because what Heidegger understands by language is quite different from Lafont's interpretation. Let's unpack her argument. According to Lafont's picture, discourse is the articulation of significance: that is, the articulation of the meanings of the world as a relational whole. This articulation can only be (ontically) accomplished through instrumental language, because all worldly intelligibility is linguistic or symbolic. This means that there is no difference between language as an instrument and discourse as an articulation of (symbolic) significance, given the fact that all intelligibility is linguistic. So, to repeat, there are two claims to address here: that there is no difference between discourse and language as a dynamic process, and that instrumental language cannot therefore be shown to be derivative of discourse.

As to the first claim, Lafont interprets discourse as language as a dynamic process. Discourse (*Rede*) means talk or speech. Heidegger's further defines discourse in the following way. "The intelligibility of something has always been articulated, even before there is any appropriative interpretation of it. Discourse is the articulation of intelligibility" (BT: 203, SZ: 161); "Discoursing or talking is the way in which we articulate 'significantly the intelligibility of being-in-the-world" (BT: 204, SZ: 161). Discourse is thus a mode of being of Dasein that describes how we meaningfully communicate to one another about the shared world. Ordering, warning, being silent, gesturing, facial expressions, etc., are all ontic expressions of the existentiale of discourse. From this, we may have grounds to think that discourse is identical with language as a dynamic, world-disclosing process. Heidegger then introduces language to the picture in this manner: "The way in which discourse gets expressed is language. Language is a totality of words – a totality in which discourse has a 'worldly' Being of its own; and as an entity within-the-world, this totality thus becomes something which we may come across as ready-to-hand. Language can be broken up into word-things which are present-at-hand" (BT: 204, SZ: 161). By referring to language as a

totality of words and as ready-to-hand, it certainly seems like Heidegger is talking about the instrumental function of language. He then adds immediately after: "Discourse is existentially language, because that entity whose disclosedness it articulates according to significations has, as its kind of being, being-in-the-world – a being which has been thrown and submitted to the 'world'" (BT: 204, SZ: 161). Again, this seems to confirm Lafont's thesis that discourse is the same as language as a world-disclosive process, in distinction from instrumental language, which is derivative of the former.

However, I am not convinced that discourse is the same as language as a dynamic process. The first obvious reason being that this thesis rests on the assumption that Heidegger adopts the Humboldtian divide between these two aspects of language, and the assumption that discourse is the articulation of solely linguistic or symbolic intelligibility. But if these claims are true, the consequences that follow will be quite absurd, not to mention ill-fitting with the core motivations of Heidegger's fundamental ontology of Dasein, as I will argue below. Discourse is an existentiale, a constitution of Dasein; whereas language is a way in which discourse can 'have a worldly being of its own', 'worldly being' referring to how discourse can be factically manifested by Dasein in its everyday engagement with language. If discourse can only disclose linguistic or symbolic meanings, then language is the only way in which Dasein can experience the world. But Heidegger explicitly says that talking (discourse) can be accomplished through keeping silent, gestures, facial expressions, etc., which obviously does not involve language in the traditional sense of words and sentence forms. For example, imagine a farmer is teaching his son that the south wind indicates rain and a good harvest. He explains how he 'reads' the weather patterns, decides on the correct time to plant, and so forth. This instance of discourse is an articulation of the intelligibility of the farmer's way of being-in-the-world – for example, communicating a specialised skill also expresses something about what it means to be a farmer and how his relationship to the land shapes his identity in some way. Certainly, there could be elements to the farmer and his son's communication that involves linguistic or symbolic meaning. For instance, his assertion about the south wind involves drawing on the holistic web of meaning of the farmer's world, like the meaning of the name 'south wind' in relation to the four cardinal points, and so forth. But there are also elements of their communication that are expressed through things like gesture, demonstration, and an appropriately timed silence, which are not

necessarily linguistic or symbolic. This is not to say that those elements can't be explained through words and sentence forms; it is only that language alone does not exhaust the many ways in which meaning can be communicated. One could say that the farmer's deliberate silence and soft smile when his son asks him 'but how do I read it correctly?' carries the linguistic meaning of 'practise makes perfect' or 'you can only know by learning yourself over time', but arguably they do not capture everything there is about the subtleties of the farmer's silence and expression in his exchange with his son. That goes to show that talking is not exclusively accomplished linguistically or symbolically.

Carman also supports this view, citing the phenomenon of conscience. Remaining silent to the call of conscience – which does not assert anything let alone make use of names and predication – is evidently not linguistic or symbolic in Lafont's sense. As Carman remarks, "All language is discourse … but not all discourse is language" (Carman: 2002: 201). Another way to put this is: language is only one of many modes in which the existentiale of discourse can be concretely indicated. Another example is in BT: 204, SZ: 162: "The totality-of-significations of intelligibility is put into words. To significations, words accrue. But word-Things do not get supplied with significations." As this passage indicates, words accrue to meanings, not vice versa. Words, along with syntax, propositional form etc, are components of Lafont's sense of instrumental language. But before there can be words, the intelligibility of things must already be available, and available for articulation through discourse. For example, conventional signs can accrue to meanings, e.g., 'wind' indicates wind, or gestures can accrue to meanings, e.g. 'pointing' comes to mean 'I follow the direction of his finger to look over there', or social practices can accrue to meanings, e.g. 'his keeping silent' means 'I should think about this carefully myself'. All of these are cases of communicating; they are factical instantiations of Dasein's disposition for speaking, but not all of them involve words, nor can they be reducible to words.[10]

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[10] There is possible objection to this argument. While the examples I gave may not be 'linguistic' they are nonetheless 'symbolic', and symbols make sense within a system of symbols that are intersubjectively shared, etc. If Lafont's argument is modified to be a charge of 'symbolic idealism', does my argument have any force against it? I think it does, because our capacities to understand meanings and to interpret things do not just come down to grasping a holistic web of symbols. We also need to recognise the objectivity of a thing, which requires us to locate the object in space and time and to synthesise different aspects of the same object so that its objectivity emerges out of the multiple appearances of it. Heidegger takes these concepts from Husserl and Kant, developing them in his account of temporality and transcendence. I will talk more about this in more detail in section 4.4.

It is also deeply problematic to speak of the two 'functions' of language, one disclosive, and the derivative instrumental. For Lafont wants to say that Heidegger thinks the ontic-instrumental function is conditioned upon the ontological-disclosive function. But if language is only one possible mode of instantiating the articulation of intelligibility (discourse), then even if language does disclose there is no special status to this mode of disclosure above all of the other non-linguistic modes, and there is no real problem of only being able to access meaning through the 'instrumental' function of language. Furthermore, the instrumental/disclosive dualistic view is phenomenologically untenable. For instance, one might say that language discloses because Dasein is born into and shaped by a language, i.e., born into a world where meanings are already articulated by a shared language, and it cannot avoid navigating the course of its existence without language. But, equally, if a politician uses the 'instrument' of language to write legislation that changes the course of world history, then isn't the function of language in the legislation also a 'disclosive' one? Further, it is impossible to only 'access' the meaning of the legislation through understanding the literal words and sentence forms in the document. Even if the reader was an expert in reading legislation, his understanding is necessarily contextualized by the broader historical significances of his time and of his predecessors, and these historical significances are not solely linguistic or symbolic.

Another example: imagine an artist Dasein uses actual pieces of equipment like paintbrushes and canvas to create a work that sets off a new artistic movement. Assuming that only linguistic meanings underly the equipment, at which point does the 'instrumental' function of the equipment become 'disclosive'? For instance, how does the linguistic meaning 'broad strokes of vermillion applied with a size 6 hog brush with a lot of force indicates the majesty of the wilderness' underly a particular painting technique, which eventually becomes a part of the disclosive force of the overall artwork? It is even clearer in the case of artmaking that there is little phenomenological support for delineating these two functions of language. My point here is that Heidegger doesn't distinguish between the ontological world-disclosive aspect of language and the ontic aspect of language as an instrumental system (in Lafont's or Humboldt's sense), nor would it make sense to do so in a project of phenomenological hermeneutics. (Lafont's insistence on this dualistic view of language is due to her reading of the 'ontological difference' – I will address this point later.)

One way to fortify my argument is to compare the so called 'instrumental function' of language to the ready-to-handedness and present-at-handedness of equipment. In the earlier quote Heidegger says that language is 'ready-to-hand' and 'can be broken up into word-things'. Granted, it is difficult to disassociate the 'instrumental' view from a phrase like 'word-things', but this doesn't mean that he is referring to Lafont's sense of instrumental language. Rather he is saying that language can be ready-to-hand for communicating, just like a hammer can be ready-to-hand for making a dog house to, say, communicate my love and care for the dog. Words can literally be present-at-hand 'things' as a theoretical object for linguistics, just like the various components of a hammer can be a 'thing' for scientific analysis. However, contra Lafont, the ready-to-handedness or present-at-handedness of language does not make it a formal system or tool in distinction from its 'disclosive function', just like the ready-to-handedness of the hammer and nails does not literally make them a formal system of carpentry separate from the embodied experience of carpentry. Indeed, to say that equipment has a 'disclosive function' when it reveals the availability of worldly intelligibility in contradistinction to its 'instrumental function' when it is used as a mere tool seems to be fundamentally incompatible with Heidegger's understanding of how human beings experience the world. All of this goes to show that Heidegger cannot be a supporter of the Humboldtian view of language in which there is a strict divide between the world disclosive and instrumental functions of language.

On the other hand, this is not to say that lived experience can't be expressed through predication, names, and so forth. Heidegger is not claiming, as Lafont seems to suggest, that if Dasein uses predication, names, attribution, and other conventional linguistic structures to communicate, then those acts of communication have 'no ontological value', i.e., they can never reveal genuine understanding of worldly intelligibility. Nor is Heidegger claiming that acts of communication like gestures and demonstration are more world-laden and thus more primordial than the former. Otherwise, claims like "language is a totality of words" and "discourse is existentially language" (which appear in the same paragraph in BT: 204, SZ: 161) will seem confused or even self-contradictory. The important thing here is that none of those forms of expression can be fully cashed out by the traditional theories of language without losing something fundamental to the phenomena of how human beings communicate meaningfully in the world. In other words, Heidegger is concerned here with how language,

in the way that we actually use it in normal everyday life, is put under philosophical analysis. (I will address this point in more detail in the discussion of assertions and propositional intentionality in Chapter 6.)

Given all this, there may be grounds to also reject Lafont's claim that the Heidegger of the *Being and Time* period already sets language up for the sort of extreme linguistic idealism that he allegedly endorses in his later works. On the contrary, for the Heidegger of *Being and Time*, worldly intelligibility is constituted not just by language (e.g., symbolic relations between words in a propositional statement) but through conceptual, practical, and other modes of experience that cannot be reduced to propositional intentionality. Consequently, whatever is predetermined by an epoch-specific disclosure, it would not be a set of meanings that can be only cashed out, communicated, and revised through the linguistic and symbolic relation between words and referents in a propositional model of intentionality. Thus, the later Heidegger cannot be referring to anything like symbolic or linguistic structures of meaning when he uses the phrase 'language is the house of being'. Language must refer to a mode of intentional experience that, as discussed before, cannot be generalised to conceptual, pragmatic, propositional, or any other single mode of intentionality. In the later Heidegger, there is certainly a shift of emphasis from the world-disclosedness of Dasein to the world-disclosive element of language. But this is no abrupt change in his core beliefs, nor is he tacitly admitting that he could not prove Dasein's special ontic-ontological status without appeal to language, as Lafont claims. Rather, even in his 1920s interpretations of Kant and his engagement with Husserl he already emphasised that objects are not ontically created by the knowing subject (more on this later). The shift in emphasis also makes sense given his attitude towards the mentality of his modern age, e.g., technological enframing and the forgetfulness of being. It makes sense that in *Being and Time* the angle from which he approaches the topic is through Dasein's disclosedness, since a core concern in *Being and Time* is to revive the question of being as such through doing fundamental ontology. This is the hermeneutical interpretation of Dasein's fundamental structure as a being that understands what it means to be and has a care for what it means to be. As I will discuss in the following section, this hermeneutical method by no means grants Dasein an ontological, world-constituting 'privilege'. This is because Dasein is finite. Dasein's epistemic finitude

demands that we should not impose a certain understanding on things as if our interpretations can exhaust their meaning.

4.2 Ontological Difference

Lafont claims that the ontological difference commits Heidegger to having a strict *a priori/a posteriori* view of meaning and reference, subject and world. For Lafont, the ontological difference sharply distinguishes between Dasein (who has an understanding of being) and non-Dasein (who do not have such an understanding.) This reinforces dualisms such as subject and object, meaning (as constituted by subjects) and reference (physical objects). I believe that the ontological difference cannot be read in the dualistic *a priori/a posteriori* fashion that Lafont suggests because it is inconsistent with Heidegger's understanding of the goal of fundamental ontology. The ontological difference is first and foremost a distinction between being and entities in the context of analysing the condition of possibility for how we can experience and understand entities as what they are. That is, if we are to philosophise about the human experience of the world, we must pay attention to the unique kind of self-reflexive, world-laden being that belongs to the human subject. Heidegger's concern is with how philosophical prejudices misinform this mode of analysis which then distorts the picture of how we actually experience the world.

Evidence for this is in *Basic Problems of Phenomenology*. Here, Heidegger's illustration of the ontological difference demonstrates that it is primarily a matter of correcting the path of philosophical enquiry: "The possibility of ontology, of philosophy as a science, stands and falls with the possibility of a sufficiently clear accomplishment of this differentiation between being and beings and accordingly with the possibility of negotiating the passage from the ontical consideration of beings to the ontological thematization of being" (BPP: 227). In Chapter 3 of the same book Heidegger lays out what goes awry when the ontological difference is not observed in moving from the ontic study of beings to the ontological study of being as such: the being of the human being is determined as consciousness and the being of the world as a totality of extant objects. In turn, this leads astray the real ontological question of being, since *res cognitans* and *res extensa* are taken as the foundation for determining how we can know about God, the soul, or nature (i.e., ontic knowledge). "The motives for modern philosophy's primary orientation to the subject are not

fundamental-ontological. The motive is not to know precisely *that* and *how* being and being's structure can be clarified in terms of the Dasein itself" (BPP: 123, emphasis original).

Where Lafont emphasises the ontological difference in the distinction between Dasein and non-Dasein, one should be cautious in attributing anything like a 'privilege of constitutive powers' to the former. This is not at all what Heidegger means to do in distinguishing between Dasein and non-Dasein. If being is always the being of an entity (BT: 29, SZ: 9), and if Dasein is the only entity that has an understanding and care for what it means to be Dasein (we can all comfortably agree that other entities such as a rock would not have such understanding), then it makes sense to say that in a fundamental ontology the philosopher must prioritize the investigation of Dasein's understanding of being. As Heidegger writes in relation to Aristotle's (as he reads him) discovery of the transcendent soul that discovers entities as they are in their being, "Here the priority of 'Dasein' over all the other entities emerges, although it has not been ontologically clarified. This priority has obviously *nothing in common with a vicious subjectivizing of the totality of entities*" (BT: 34, SZ: 14, emphasis mine). In terms of the ontological difference between entities and the being of entities, it seems to me that Heidegger is trying to say that philosophical theories should never confuse the analysis of entities with the analysis of the being of entities, or we end up with the mistaken view that the human experience of the world is mediated by sense experience or representations, etc. This view is supported by Carman who argues that Lafont is wrong to attribute to Heidegger the view that the *a priori/a posteriori* or ontic/ontological distinction maps onto a strict distinction between meaning/reference and subject/object. While he agrees with Lafont that Heidegger supports a sort of ontological apriorism (e.g., that Dasein's ontological status of being-in-the-world is *a priori*, BT: 65, SZ: 40, that ontological foundations are always already there BT: 75, SZ: 50), Carman emphasises that "apriorism is not the same as Fregeanism… Not all meaning is ontological, some is ontic" (Carman 2002: 206). In other words, it is not the case that linguistic/symbolic meaning is disclosed to Dasein as *a priori* knowledge. Dasein does not assign meanings to referents out there in the world, quite independently from what those entities themselves might be beyond Dasein's finite linguistic systems.

Another component of the ontological difference problem is the issue of 'proving' Dasein's *a priori* status of disclosedness. According to Lafont, Heidegger's strict

commitment to the ontological difference means that Dasein's *a priori* status of always already having an understanding of the significance of the world – thus, Dasein's *a priori* status of disclosedness – must be truly established as *a priori* if it is to serve as a condition of possibility for Dasein's ability to engage with the world meaningfully. However, Dasein's disclosedness cannot be established as *a priori*. This is because Dasesin cannot disclose the world as meaningful without: (i) these meanings having been pre-given by the disclosure of linguistic/symbolic significances of the world through the disclosive function of language, and (ii) the disclosive function of language then being the ground for the instrumental function of language, which articulates these meanings through conventional signs, assertions, etc. If the articulation of worldly intelligibility depends on the disclosure of meaning via language, Dasein cannot be said to have an *a priori* status of disclosedness, and the question of how we as human beings can experience the world as a meaningful whole cannot be asked nor accomplished through investigating Dasein's disclosedness. In Lafont's words, because language shares the transitional ontic-ontological status that is supposedly unique to Dasein, Heidegger's efforts to conduct fundamental ontology in order to prove the source of Dasein's disclosedness is 'doomed from the start' (Lafont 2000: 62). Claim (i) fails because, as we have said before, worldly intelligibility is not solely linguistic or symbolic. Worldly intelligibility is articulated through discourse, which could not only be linguistic, but also be perceptual, conceptual, experiential, etc., all of which are not reducible to linguistic structures that can be cashed out by a standard theory of language. This also means that claim (ii) fails. Language as an ontic instrumental system is not the only available means of articulating worldly intelligibility. Thus, Dasein's *a priori* disclosedness is not threatened by Lafont's argument.

4.3 MDR and Frege

The effectiveness of Lafont's claim that entities cannot show themselves to us as intelligible equipment without the prior world-constitution of the sign structure also rests largely upon her reading of Heidegger's treatment of meaning and reference. On her reading, Heidegger applies the ontological difference to the Fregean distinction between meaning and reference. That is, 'meaning' denotes Dasein's ontological understanding of being, and 'reference' denotes beings, i.e., the entities in themselves. This is a key argumentative step in her

controversial claim that Heidegger's linguistic idealism and commitment to the ontological difference results in the thesis that meaning determines reference. But the sort of distinction outlined by Lafont is surely incompatible with Heidegger's clear anti-representationalism. That is, insofar as the Fregean distinction between meaning and reference posits a sharp distinction between what we take objects to signify in our intentional states and what those objects of our referents actually are, it leads to a mediational representationalism that Heidegger would outright reject.

Evidence for Heidegger's anti-representationalism can be found in *Logic: The Question of Truth,* where he points out the underlying prejudices of a dualistic view of object and subject, i.e., of the dominant representational view of human experience.

> Even the unbiased, when asked what it is they see, are inclined to think they have to say something learned. And since everyone seems to know that what is first given intentionally are only ideas, they say they see not the wall but a 'representation' of it. It is not only an inability to take what they directly saw as what they saw. Rather, it is a matter of not wanting to say what one has seen, an attitude that is nourished by the dominant prejudices. (LQT: 83-4)

In Chapter 3 of *Basic Problems of Phenomenology,* Heidegger tracks the development of the question into the ontological constitution of the subject through ancient philosophy, Descartes, the German Idealists, and Kant. While the question of the subject was pursued, due to the neglect of the question of being it had transformed into a dogmatic, dualistic view of the being of the subject and world. That is, the being of the conscious subject (res cognitans) against the being of nature (res extensa).

> The subject is therefore synonymous with self-consciousness. Self-consciousness constitutes the actuality, the being of this being. Hence it comes about that, in an extreme version of Kant's or Descartes' thought, German idealism (Fichte, Schelling, Hegel) saw the true actuality of the subject in self-consciousness. From there, following upon the start made by Descartes, the whole problematic of philosophy was developed (BPP: 152).

The philosophical tradition is not wrong in starting from the subject in its fundamental questioning into the nature of being. But Heidegger emphasizes that its approach to the

question has gone awry in making some untenable assumptions. Firstly, it assumes that what is first known with absolute certainty is the thinking subject. Secondly, it assumes that the knowledge of objects is secondary and moreover only accessible through the mediation of consciousness.

> it is equally necessary not to start simply from the subject alone but to ask whether and how the *being* of the subject must be determined as an entrance into the problems of philosophy. and in fact in such a way that orientation toward it is *not one-sidedly subjectivistic*. Philosophy must perhaps start from the 'subject' and return to the 'subject' in its ultimate questions. and yet for all that it may not pose its questions in a one-sidedly subjectivistic manner (BPP: 155, emphasis original).

The sort of project that Heidegger has in mind when speaking of philosophy starting from and returning to the 'subject' in its ultimate questions is obviously the project of fundamental ontology. A crucial part of this is to unpack how Dasein can have intentional experience of things in the world as they really are without abandoning his commitment to Dasein's essential character of being-in-the-world.

Lafont is obviously concerned with how Dasein's intentional experience might have this meaning-constituting' character over entities, given Dasein's unique ontological-ontical constitution and given the 'all intelligibility is linguistic' claim. That is, if the 'all intelligibility is linguistic' theory is true, then Dasein's intentional experience of entities amount to the linguistic and symbolic meanings that reside within the subject Dasein. But, contra Lafont, the Fregean framework of the subject-meaning/object-referent cannot be read into Heidegger's account of Dasein's intentional experience, either. In *Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, Heidegger explicitly rejects this reading of intentional experience. Intentional experience is said to belong to the subjective sphere. Philosophers then ask how intentional experience can reach out to a transcendent object. He argues that this is a gross misinterpretation of intentionality. "It fails because for it theory comes first, before fulfilling the requirement to open our eyes and take the phenomena as they offer themselves as against all firmly rooted theory and even despite it, that is, the requirement to align theory according to the phenomena rather than the opposite, to do violence to the phenomena by a preconceived theory" (BPP: 62). There are two important aspects to this criticism that

94

responds directly to Lafont's reading of Heidegger's characterization of Dasein. First, Heidegger does not privilege the meaning-constituting power of Dasein as a kind of hermeneutical transformation of transcendental subjectivity, because this is to fundamentally misunderstand what intentionality is all about (i.e., the mistaken question of how intentional states can 'reach' transcendental objects.) Secondly, the Fregean reading contradicts Heidegger's fundamental commitment to the motto "to the things themselves!" The Fregean framework will precisely force the phenomena into the theory. And this framework cannot even be an 'unintended consequence' of Heidegger's efforts to distinguish instrumental language from discourse, because the 'all worldly intelligibility is linguistic' claim is unconvincing.

Let me summarise what I have argued so far. Even if Heidegger agrees with the German linguistic tradition that language has an important world disclosive function, he does not take up the Fregean framework of the analysis of language as (arguably) Humboldt, Herder and Hamann did *avant le lettre*. Heidegger's illustration of the equipmental structure of signs demonstrates that sign relations can only be clarified on the basis of how they function as equipment within the context of equipment, not vice versa. The referential totality of the world is not constituted by the sign structure. Not all meaning is symbolic or linguistic meaning. Some meaning is discovered in the referentiality of equipment. This referentiality can be practical, linguistic, conceptual, a combination thereof, etc., which is not generalizable. The understanding of being does not boil down to the understanding of linguistic/symbolic structures. Thus, there is no neat divide between the meaning of things and the things themselves. The Fregean distinction between meaning and reference does not map onto the distinction between Dasein's understanding of entities and entities in themselves.

4.4 Heidegger's Realism

Heidegger's critics, especially Lafont, may remain unconvinced by the defence given against the charges of linguistic idealism and MDR. They may argue: let us accept that the Fregean distinction between meaning and reference and the ontological difference do not map onto a clean divide between the meaning of things (what they are for us) and things in themselves. However, this doesn't answer the epistemological question of how we can reliably access

things in themselves via our interpretations. After all, our interpretation and understanding ultimately depends upon the disclosure of being, which is historically and culturally contingent. As contingent, there is no ground of objectivity and validity. According to Heidegger's critics, the loss of the ground of validity – and thereby the possibility of accessing things in themselves – is an unavoidable consequence of his radicalisation of Kant. Lafont, Apel and Habermas all believe that Heidegger submits Kant's transcendental idealism to a hermeneutical transformation, as a result of which the ground of knowledge is shifted from the transcendental subject to the groundless, historically contingent disclosure of being, thus leading to the epistemological problem I outlined above. In this section I will examine Heidegger's transformation of Kant's transcendental idealism to defend him against the charge that the contingency of world disclosures replaces validity and objectivity. It is not true that objects in themselves remain out of reach in terms of being epistemologically inaccessible regardless of whether we accept that the external world exists.

Kant's transcendental idealism is, broadly speaking, the view that the human being can only know appearances, but not the things in themselves that lie behind the appearances. So how is it that we can experience objects at all if the thing in itself is empirically inaccessible? Kant's aim is to show that the *a priori* conditions for the experience of objects lies in transcendental subjectivity; more specifically, in the subject's capacity for transcendental apperception. Transcendental apperception is a judgment that can synthesise appearances according to rules or concepts so that all appearances are tied together into one experience. This enables the human being to experience objects as existing in time and space. It also allows the subject to encounter the appearance of itself as the unified self that bears those experiences. These acts of apperception are not directly experienced, but they are conditions of experience; and so they provide the *a priori* grounds for experience as well as the objects of experience. First let us examine how Lafont interprets Heidegger's radicalisation of Kant's transcendental idealism.

> Heidegger is taking for granted the transcendental idealism expressed in Kant's highest principle of synthetic judgments (namely, that the conditions of possibility of experience are at the same time the conditions of possibility of the objects of experience) … through this [hermeneutic] interpretation [of Kantian transcendental idealism], that which constitutes the objects of experience (the totality of a priori synthetic judgments) is de-transcendentalized. It

can no longer be understood as a unique synthesis of apperception, valid for all rational beings, but rather only as the plurality of linguistic world-disclosures resulting from the contingent, historical process of projecting meaning for interpreting the world. (Lafont 2000: xiv-xv)

According to Lafont, Heidegger accomplishes the detranscendentalisation of Kant through the history of being, which discloses a set of ontological meanings. These meanings constitute how the world can be experienced. However, all worldly intelligibility is linguistically constituted. Meaning can only be accessed through the ontic instrument of language. Consequently, we can only access ontic meaning, not ontological meaning. What language discloses to us linguistically is radically independent of how things in the world actually are, and the contingencies of historical projection of meanings replaces the validity of transcendental apperception as the *a priori* ground for knowledge.

Apel and Habermas seem to express similar sentiments. According to Apel, "Heidegger sees Einbildungskraft [Kant's faculty of imagination] as "the capacity for 'pure synthesis' and thereby of projecting by which the finite reason of human beings must display the horizon of all understanding of being in advance of all possible affect by beings" (Apel 1998: 110). In addition Apel remarks:

> the idea which Heidegger supported until 1964, namely the replacing of the traditional binary correctness concept of truth with the 'more original concept of *aletheia*, led Heidegger… to replace the counterfactual and, therefore, per se intersubjective validity of truth (this validity had been taken for granted by Kant) with the facticity of meaning as it becomes manifest to us in the particular historical situation. (Apel 1998: 184)

If these two claims are read together, Apel seems to believe that the Heidegger of *Being and Time* seeks to replace Kant's conception of *a priori* synthetic judgment as the ground of validity with a historically dependent disclosure or projection of meaning. Read in tandem with his claim that *aletheia* is a replacement of truth as a binary relation of correctness and incorrectness, it seems that Apel, just like Lafont, diagnoses Heidegger with an abandonment of the criteria of objectivity and validity.

Let's also see what Habermas says about this. "Like Kant's cosmological idea of reason, the conception of a presupposed world rests on the transcendental difference between

the world and the inner-worldly, which reappears in Heidegger as the ontological difference between 'Being' and 'beings'" (Habermas 2008: 31). Heidegger was determined to pass over the philosophy of consciousness, believing that "the history of philosophy and the sciences after Hegel [were] nothing but a monotonous spelling out of the ontological pre-judgments of the philosophy of the subject" (Habermas 1987: 137). However, because Heidegger held on to the procedure of Husserl's transcendental reduction, in which the phenomenological gaze remains "directed upon the world as the correlate of the knowing subject" (Habermas 1987: 138), he remained bound to transcendental subjectivity. According to Habermas, this can be seen in Heidegger's belief that the fundamental ontology of Dasein should be the ground of philosophy. This means that Heidegger's philosophy is guilty of foundationalism, as much as he criticises the philosophical tradition for having the same commitments. This dilemma pushes Heidegger to increasingly (e.g., in his later works) privilege the side of the 'granting' of being at the expense of attributing disclosive power to the discursive thought and intersubjective communication that happens at the ontic levels of factical life. The validity of truth is replaced by a historically contingent projection of meaning horizons, and we can only know of how things are as disclosed to us via meaning projections, but not how they are in themselves. This validity is also merely 'assumed' as the ground; as ground it is privileged and 'set free' from any requirements of methodical proof. As Habermas puts it, "the 'manifestation' of specific types of objects is determined by a transcendental 'event' of linguistic world disclosure, which in itself is neither true nor false, but just 'happens'" (Habermas 1999: 148).

According to Lafont's Heidegger, what constitutes the objects of experience is the relational totality of historically determined linguistic meanings. Because of the MDR thesis, the objects of Dasein's experience are no more than the meanings that we attribute to them. I said that the MDR thesis is unsupported, but I suspect that here Lafont's interpretation of Dasein's transcendence is not quite right either. Her picture risks collapsing the difference between Dasein's understanding of the being of entities and the entity in itself, because she takes Heidegger's claim that "*Being is the transcendens pure and simple*" (BT: 62 SZ: 38) to the extreme to say that Dasein, as one that has an understanding of the meaning of Being, has constitutive powers over how entities manifests themselves to us. The second worry, from Apel and Habermas, is Heidegger's abandonment of validity and objectivity in his aporetic

attempt to ground the questioning of the meaning of being as the ground for philosophy while distancing himself from the foundationalism of the philosophy of consciousness.

The first part to the critics' argument is that for Kant, the ground of validity, which is the *a priori* synthetic judgment, is simply assumed. They further claim that Heidegger takes this ground and detranscendentalizes it, replacing it with the disclosure of historically contingent disclosures of meaning. However, as detranscendentalised, Heidegger can no longer claim that it is *a priori*. There are several levels to the issue of validity which need to be distinguished. The first is metaphysical since it is concerned with finding a foundation for knowledge and reality. The second is related to the validity of the philosophical method itself since such methods are bound up with and/or limited by one's metaphysical assumptions. A third is epistemological: according to those metaphysical commitments, how can we know about reality, and how can the philosophical method account for what and how we know? Next is the issue of validity in practice. How can we achieve certainty and hold one another accountable to standards of justification in factical living? A related epistemological issue is objectivity. This is the issue of how we can epistemologically access entities with a degree of reliability and accuracy. Furthermore, how can the entity be the same entity for me as well as for others; how can the objectivity of a thing can be intersubjectively confirmed?

First, I will address the problem of validity in relation to metaphysical concerns and the philosophical method. In Heidegger's transformation of Kant, he tries to balance both realist and idealist intuitions about the conditions of possibility for experience and knowledge. This becomes such a big problem for his critics because they think that ultimately, he cannot sustain that balance in a detranscendentalised project. Trish Glazebrook (2001: 361-401) explains the dilemma well. Heidegger is both committed to the realist sentiment that the world is actual and real and the antirealist sentiment that the intelligibility of a worldly thing is dependent on Dasein's understanding. How is this sustainable?

The debate on where Heidegger's fundamental ontology sits between realism and idealism is a highly debated topic. It is worthwhile giving a brief overview of the positions. Lafont (2000), Apel (1998) and Habermas (1987) all see Heidegger as some form of transcendental idealist. Roughly, what entities are are dependent on our interpretation of them. The intelligibility of entities depends on the horizons of meaning that are disclosed for a particular historical community. John Richardson (2012) and William Blattner (2004) both

see Heidegger as an empirical realist but a transcendental idealist – the former is the position that what we know of entities in our historically situated experience are also true of the things themselves. Meanwhile, Carman (2003) and Golob (2014) see him as an ontic realist, which is the idea that the worldly entities of our factical experience are the *real things* as opposed to representations. Steven Crowell (2007) and Jeff Malpas (2007) go for a transcendental realist reading of Heidegger – what things *are* are dependent on our experience of them, and moreover our interpretations uncover *real things.* Okrent (2019), meanwhile, reads Heidegger from a transcendental pragmatist lens, namely, our understanding of entities is a matter of understanding how to do something with them in order to achieve a particular end. Okrent concedes with Lafont that the later Heidegger is a linguistic idealist of some form (2002: 196-7). What is at stake in this debate, for us, is how one can sustain a notion of the independence of the entity – while acknowledging that at the same time its intelligibility depends on Dasein's understanding – so that we can affirm that the category of objectivity and validity still has a crucial place in the account of disclosure.

I believe that what Jeff Kochan (2017: 53-6) calls the minimal realist interpretation is the most promising solution to our issue. According to the minimal realist reading, Heidegger can at once maintain that things in themselves are independent of us, while the intelligibility of things are dependent on – but not exhausted by – Dasein's understanding. We can affirm that things exist independently of Dasein, while rejecting the idea that we can determine what they are independent of Dasein. Kochan explains that this position "allows us to accept the core realist doctrine of independent existence (thatness), without also committing to the doctrine of independent essence (whatness)" (Kochan 2017: 10). which is what we require to respond to the critics. To see the strength of Kochan's view, I will proceed via a discussion of Heidegger's critique of Kant. This will allow us to challenge the critics' interpretation of Heidegger's Kant along the way. According to Kochan, Heidegger detranscendentalises Kant because he realises that Kant's metaphysical commitments beneath his assumption of transcendental subjectivity as the ground of validity is highly problematic. With the help of Kochan's interpretation, I will argue that it is not the case that positing the *a priori* in the disclosures of meaning results in the complete loss of validity, if we understand that Heidegger's take on the *a priori* is meant to correct those mistaken metaphysical assumptions

behind the Kantian *a priori*. If so, Heidegger's method cannot be called aporetic for claiming an *a priori* in a detranscendentalised project.

I begin by analysing how Kant establishes the ground of validity in transcendental apperception, and how Heidegger takes up this concept critically. For Kant, the source of knowledge is the mind, and in the first half of the *Critique of Pure Reason* he outlines two faculties or powers of the mind: sensibility and understanding. Sensibility refers to the receptivity of human beings to intuitions (which relate to the immediate, singular object of experience). Understanding refers to the spontaneity of a being that is rational and capable of grasping concepts (a form of cognition that relates mediately to the object through similar features common to many things). Both intuition and concepts are required for knowledge. As Kant famously writes, "Concepts without intuitions are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind" (A51/B75): to discriminate we need information, but for information to be useful we need to be able to organize it. According to Heidegger (1997: 90), however, Kant came to realise that another faculty – the power of imagination – is required to mediate between the two. The imagination is a faculty of the mind that is responsible for spatial-temporal organization and the synthesis of reproduction. It is responsible for the setting up of associations between earlier and later intuitions, enabling the mind to transition to earlier representations of the same object of experience. It is also the vehicle through which the mind can grasp concepts by delineating general outlines of a thing without being limited to any singular representation of the thing supplied by experience.

For Heidegger (1997: 112), Kant had stumbled upon something revolutionary. But it was something that also disturbed Kant so much that he hesitated to give a full account of it. Kant ultimately 'shrank back' from giving imagination the priority of unifying the two faculties. He mistakenly thought that sensibility could only be investigated via empirical or psychological means and understanding only via logic or rational means. Since the *a priori* ground for knowledge cannot be found in psychology, he must commit to establishing the objectivity of reason in logic. Therefore, in the second half of the First critique he reverted to the distinction between the faculties of sensibility and understanding, focusing on the 'I think' as the principle of understanding that unifies the two faculties to form the ground for knowledge. Heidegger argues that this is a mistake. Transcendental apperception should be interpreted in relation to the threefold, not twofold, synthesis, prioritizing the imagination as

the faculty that unifies them. It is not the case that the objectivity of knowledge can only be established through the logical analysis of understanding. Instead, as Husserl showed, we can use the phenomenological method, which can uncover the hidden root of both psychology and logic. Phenomenology can clarify the workings of mental activity while avoiding any metaphysical or ontological commitments erroneously assumed by psychology and empiricism, and ultimately provide the ground for science and logic. In Husserl's categorical intuition, similarly, imagination plays an important role in determining knowledge. Husserl admits, with Kant, that the validity of knowledge claims must ultimately refer to some sensuous intuition: "it lies in the nature of the case that everything categorical ultimately rests upon sensuous intuition, that a 'categorical intuition', an intellectual insight, a case of thought in the highest sense, without any foundation of sense, is a piece of nonsense" (*LI* II, Inv. VI §60, 817f.). As I will discuss in more detail in the next chapter, the evidence supplied by perceptual intuitions of entities is always incomplete. But how, for example, can we determine that the redness of this apple is sufficient evidence for my belief that this apple is indeed red, given all the different possible perceptual experiences of red?

As it turns out, the imagination can fulfil this role by providing imagined particulars of the relevant universal where perceived instances are unavailable. We produce free variants of redness (crimson, vermillion, carmine, alizarin, etc.), and through these arbitrary series of examples the intuition will be able to identify and evidentially confirm an element of similarity between the variations, out of which the general essence of redness emerges. "It then becomes evident that a unity runs through this multiplicity of successive figures, that in such free variations of an original image, e.g. of a thing, an invariant is necessarily retained as the necessary general form, without which an object such as this thing, as an example of its kind, would not be thinkable at all" (Husserl, EJ §87, 341). This aspect of the categorical intuition is crucial for Heidegger because it puts the age-old problem of universals in a new light. It is no longer the case that there is a realm of universals to which no objective thing can correspond. Objectivity, rather, gives itself in the categorical intuition. "The exhibition of categorical structure serves to broaden the idea of objectivity such that this objectivity can itself be exhibited in its content in the investigation of the corresponding intuition" (HCT, 72). Objectivity does not refer to an inaccessible universal, but rather to the essence of a thing in itself that emerges out of the multiple, free intuitions that we have of the perceived

thing, thanks to the act of identifying synthesis. As such, objectivity can be phenomenologically explicated just as much as the content of a perceptual intuition can be phenomenologically explicated.

> … phenomenology has shown that the apriori is not limited to the subjectivity, indeed that in the first instance it has primarily nothing at all to do with subjectivity. The characterization of ideation as a categorical intuition has made it clear that something like the highlighting of ideas occurs both in the field of the ideal, hence of the categories, and in the field of the real (HCT: 74).

The positive discovery in Kant's *a priori* of transcendental apperception is that objects must stand over against us in the first place so that we can have empirical experience of them as objects in our intuitions. Yet Kant also believes that the *a priori* is what belongs to the subject's mind. Kant located validity in the 'I think' of the transcendental subject's understanding, because he was ultimately trapped in the metaphysical assumption that the gulf between the objectivity of logic and rationality and the subjectivity of psychology and empiricism can only be bridged by establishing the former as the ground for the latter. However, through Husserl, Heidegger shows that this gulf is a phantom. Kant wondered how something in the mind can have validity for something beyond the mind, betraying his mistaken assumption that transcendence concerns how the isolated mind can reach out to an external world. Kant's brand of the *a priori* transcendental subjectivity is contradictory because he first establishes the condition of our empirical experience of entities in the objectivity of objects and then tries to answer how the isolated subject can transcend to the outer sphere.

Through Husserl's phenomenological method, Heidegger argues that the *a priori* is not limited to, or is even primarily associated with, subjectivity. Receptivity and understanding, and intuition and concepts, both occur in the field of the real. The subject is already in the world amongst objects before it transcends 'beyond' its intuitions. Any philosophical method that tries to establish the conditions of validity in either the objectivity of objects (e.g., transcendental realism) or the subjectivity of the human being (e.g., transcendental idealism) while committing to the *a priori/ a posteriori* distinction between external world and an isolated subject remains blind to the contradiction inherent in their conception of

transcendence. But if the distinction is 'collapsed' in such a way, don't we end up blurring the distinction between reason and understanding and between appearances and the thing-in-itself, thus losing the ground for validity in everyday acts of investigating what is the case? And doesn't Heidegger's claim to the *a priori* of disclosedness seem self-contradictory and confused, generating disastrous epistemological consequences? I do not think so. To show why, I must discuss Heidegger's engagement with Kant on transcendence and the thing in itself.

Kant's insights into the independence of objects are crucial for Heidegger, but he also disagrees with Kant with regards to the link between Dasein's transcendence and the independent object. This disagreement is critical to understanding the ontological difference. Kochan and Lawrence Hatab discuss the conditions of possibility for Dasein's experience in relation to Kantian epistemic humility, which in Heidegger becomes Dasein's finitude. According to Rae Langton (1998, as cited in Kochan 2017: 112), when Kant speaks of the thing in itself, he does not mean that we can never know what the object is like beyond its appearances. He actually means that the thing-in-itself, insofar as it is autonomous and 'lonely', has intrinsic properties that can only extend to itself and are unaffected by our senses. We know that the thing in itself exists because it is the same as the thing that we experience, and this is fully compatible with the idea that we cannot know of the intrinsic properties of the thing. In Langton's interpretation, Kant makes a distinction between sensible intuition and intellectual intuition that necessitates the subject's attitude of humility in the face of its epistemic finitude. Human beings have the capacity to intuit things via their senses, but only God has the intellectual intuition whereby he can pick out the intrinsic properties of things and things in themselves. Being the finite subjects that we are, the thing in itself will always exceed what we can know of it. The human being can only know the appearances of objects. Where Kantian humility is humility in the face of the divine being's absolute knowledge, Kochan argues that for Heidegger epistemic humility is Dasein's humility in the face of the social and cultural conditions in which we always already find ourselves, and a natural world that "constantly outstrips our best efforts to know it" (Kochan 2017: 118).

However, argues Kochan, according to Heidegger's reading of Kant this does not mean that the appearance of the object and the thing in itself are two different kinds of things. They

are rather the same thing experienced in two different ways – either finitely for the human being, or infinitely for God. Heidegger's book on Kant contains some compelling evidence that he holds such a position. Near the end of §5 in *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics* Heidegger quotes from Kant's *Opus postumum*: "the difference between the concept of a thing in itself and the appearance is not objective but merely subjective. The thing in itself is not another Object, but is rather another aspect (*respectus*) of the representation *of the same Object*." (Kant 1995: 653 (C55l), as cited in Heidegger 1997: 23, emphasis Heidegger's). Heidegger then explains that Kant's distinction between appearance and the thing in itself is based on the distinction he draws between finite and infinite knowledge. He mentions Kant's concepts of 'behind the appearance' and 'mere appearance', which in BT: 53-4, SZ: 30 are presented as the difference between an appearance where something shows itself and a *mere* appearance where something shows itself as a way of announcing *something else* that *hides* itself in the appearance, for instance the symptoms of a disease. According to Heidegger's reading, 'mere appearance' never indicates a limitation or a diminution of the thing that really exists, but it indicates that the finitude of human knowledge necessarily means the entity itself can only be known "in a manner appropriate to infinite knowledge" (Heidegger 1997: 24), i.e., the knowledge that God has as an infinite being. Heidegger further remarks in a succinct passage below:

> the discussion of the difference between finite and infinite knowledge with a view to the difference in character between what is known in each respectively now points out that these concepts of appearance and thing in itself, which are fundamental for the Critique, can only be made understandable and part of the wider problem by basing them more explicitly on the problematic of the finitude of the human creature. These concepts, however, do not refer to two classifications of objects arranged one behind the other within 'the' completely indifferent, fixed (field of) knowledge (Heidegger 1997: 24)

Accordingly, it is possible to see how Lafont's and Habermas' readings of the ontological difference are incorrect. The disclosure of being allegedly determines how beings are manifested to us. Because of this, there is no difference between how beings (things) show themselves and how the beings themselves are. Lafont and Habermas therefore implicitly assume that beings as manifested to us and beings in themselves are two different kind of

things, which is to grossly distort Heidegger's stance on realism and idealism and to ignore his repeated emphasis on the fact that we really 'see' the real thing in our experiences. This also contradicts his crucial reading of Kant's take on finite and infinite knowledge of the same entity.

However, Heidegger also departs from Kant in an important respect that may further cement my case against Lafont and Habermas. According to Kochan as well as David Carr (2007: 31), Heidegger believes that Kant is still committed to a 'substance ontology'; Kant believes that both the subject and the object are kinds of substances. This causes him to fall into the conundrum of how the subject-substance (the finite human knower) can transcend from its inner sphere into another sphere where the object-substance exists independently (Kochan 2017: 130-1). As I mentioned, for Heidegger the 'subject' is not a substance, but it is Dasein, which is always already being-in-the-world alongside objects. There is no issue of how the subject can transcend from the inner realm to the external realm, because Dasein already exists alongside independent objects.

> Transcendence does not mean crossing a barrier that has fenced off the subject in an inner space. But what gets crossed over is the being itself that can become manifest to the subject on the very basis of the subject's transcendence. Because the passage across exists with Dasein, and because with it beings which are not Dasein get surpassed, such beings become manifest as such, i.e., in themselves. Nothing else but transcendence, which has in advance surpassed beings, first makes it possible for these, previously surpassed *as beings*, to be ontically *opposite* (Dasein) and as opposite to be apprehended in themselves (MFL, 166, emphasis original).

Furthermore, in the "Essence of Ground" essay, Heidegger writes: "Transcendence means surpassing [*Uberstieg*]. That which accomplishes such surpassing and dwells in this surpassing is transcendent (transcending)" (1998: 107).

The phrases 'the passage across exists with Dasein' and 'dwells in this surpassing' is a useful way of understanding Dasein's transcendence. Transcendence does not indicate a constitutive power of the subject, nor a passing through of a barrier, but it indicates a way in which Dasein is carried over the independently existing thing in order for the thing to manifest itself to Dasein as the thing that it is. Dasein can only enter into an ontic relation with beings as objects and thereby apprehend what they are because transcendence first

surpasses beings. There is another way to illustrate this. A stone does not transcend. It exists alongside other things, but the stone in itself cannot be opposite the waves or apprehend itself as being opposite to the waves as an object. Dasein transcends. It exists alongside other things just like the stone exists along with the waves. Both existence (e.g. of Dasein and of things) and essence (the essential structures of a thing that makes it what it is) belong on the side of one member of the ontological difference, namely, the structure of being. This is part of the constitution of Dasein as being-in-the-world. "Thus the distinction between reality and existentia, or between essentia and existentia, does not coincide with the ontological difference but belongs on the side of one member of the ontological difference. That is to say, neither realitas nor existentia is a being; rather, it is precisely the two of them that make up the structure of being" (BPP: 78). In Dasein's transcendence, therefore, 'passing over' to recognise the object as an independent object doesn't take us into an 'outer sphere', as if we had passed over being-in-the-world. As Kochan puts it pithily, this sort of reading of the ontological difference "cuts the knot in the wrong place. The distinction between independent existence and dependent essence is a distinction in the being of a thing, not between a thing and its being" (Kochan 2017: 56).

Implicit in Lafont and Habermas' picture is a view of objects of experience as belonging to what Kochan calls a 'glass bulb' view of reality: the individual or collective mind is sealed within the interior of the glass bulb while the external world is on the exterior, and the two realms are separated by apparently impenetrable glass. According to Lafont's picture, the world is the exterior of the glass bulb that Dasein tries but fails to reach through linguistic and symbolic acts of interpretation, which is the interior of the bulb. For example, Lafont writes:

> From Heidegger's reflections, it turns out, contrary to the basic suppositions of the philosophy of consciousness, that because our relation to the world is mediated by understanding, we have no other access to the things themselves than the access to 'entities in the how of their discoveredness.' This is precisely the sense in which the being-in-itself of an entity (as knowledge of essence) is disclosed in our understanding of being. And only because the being of entities in themselves is already decided in advance in the understanding of being, and is understood only by means of it, can entities be uncovered (i.e., experienced) at all. In this way, reference ultimately becomes *immanent in language.* Because of the distinctive status that is

conceded in this way to the knowledge of meaning (as a guarantee of the identity of reference), it is, by the same token, necessarily immunized against intraworldly experiences, or conceived as revisable. (Lafont 2000: 229)

This doesn't seem right. Now, I believe that Lafont and Habermas would agree that Heidegger at least wants to affirm that the innerworldly is not radically different from the world, since he is committed to Husserl's insight that we really do experience the real thing. However, for Lafont and Habermas, Heidegger fails to prove what he wants to affirm because the epistemological inaccessibility of the world is an unavoidable consequence of his hermeneutical transformation of Kant's transcendental idealism. While Lafont and Habermas' worry is legitimate, I think it is slightly misplaced. Their epistemological concern about how Dasein can access real things betray metaphysical assumptions that 'cuts the knot in the wrong place', mispresenting Dasein's transcendence and the ontological difference. As Kochan explains: "To recognise external-world scepticism as a genuine epistemological problem, in need of some kind of solution, is to have already adopted an ontological image of the subject as a discrete and worldless substance-subject" (Kochan 2017: 100).

While disclosedness is termed *a priori*, Dasein's experience of entities is not 'mediated' by linguistic meanings that attempt to reach beyond the exterior of the glass bulb. The disclosure of meaning horizons may delineate and limit the concepts we use to interpret entities, but it would be wrong to see this as a 'veil' and as a historically contingent *determination* of how entities manifest themselves. This is because Heidegger holds onto Kant's insight that the appearance and the thing in itself are the same object experienced in two different ways, transforming this, through Husserl, into the difference between the essence and existence of the real entity in the world. That is, as transcendence Dasein experiences the real entity in the world. Dasein can determine what and how the entity is according to the normative standards of measure that are part of its world. How Dasein can recognise an object as what it is, however, is no accident of contingent meaning horizons. Rather, to borrow Husserl's language, the objectivity of objects gives itself in the categorical intuition: the essence of the thing in itself emerges from the manifold free intuitions we have of the object. This is implicit in Heidegger's account of temporality, since he argues that Dasein's being and its capacity to talk about entities are grounded in the ecstatical unity of

temporality. Heidegger explains: "the unity of the 'outside-of-itself' in the raptures of the future, of what has been, and of the Present – is the condition for the possibility that there can be an entity which exists as its 'there'" (BT: 401, SZ: 350). In other words, Dasein is a temporal being. He further adds:

> Our Interpretation of the temporality of Being alongside what is ready-to-hand and present-at-hand *within-the-world* – Being alongside circumspectively as well as with theoretical concern – shows us at the same time how this temporality is already the advance condition for that possibility of Being-in-the-world in which Being alongside entities within-the-world is grounded (BT: 402, SZ: 351, emphasis original).

In circumspection, we can interpret an entity as something like a hammer for hammering nails. In theoretical modes of comportment, we can interpret an entity in a very specific context, such as in a controlled laboratory setting with expectations that the data collected from the sample will match the hypothesis. Both types of interpretation, which uncover something about what that entity is, are founded upon the temporal structure of Dasein's existence. Furthermore, Dasein exists alongside other Dasein. Being with other Dasein is part of its essential structure. This means that Dasein must posit the objectivity of that entity not just for itself but for others. In such a way, the intersubjectivity of validity and objectivity is also an essential part of what it means to experience the world as Dasein.

What I have argued here is very much in line with Habermas's views on what is implicit in the structure of experience. We always know objects as certain kinds of things through interpretation. However, what the objects *are* are not reducible to our interpretations. We grasp objects in their objectivity, which transcends our merely subjective experience of those objects. The presupposition of a common objective world is a key element in Habermas view. When subjects talk about something that they disagree on, the disagreement stems from the two speakers having different kinds of interpretations attached to the same object. It is only possible for us to disagree about something at that level because there is one objective world that we disagree about. The orientation towards a common objective world is able to sustain this relationship of reference to the same real object despite disagreement.

For Habermas as well as the other critics, one of the cornerstones of rationality is the maintenance of the distinction between the innerworldly and the world. I have argued that

Heidegger does recognise the necessity of this distinction, and this is present in how he interprets Kant and Husserl. According to the minimal realist reading of disclosure, there is no question that Dasein is in a world alongside things in themselves that exist; our interpretations/disclosed horizons of meaning are not 'veils' that separate us from what things are in themselves. Interpretation allows Dasein to get at what things are without ever exhausting the thing's being. There is necessarily a place for objectivity and validity in world disclosure. Whilst Heidegger pointedly avoids terms such as subject and object and does not talk about objectivity in any explicit sense in *Being and Time*, I think that they nonetheless remain operative in his account of Dasein's intentional experience. I will argue for this further in Chapter 6, where I look at his account of propositional truth in assertive acts of interpretation, and his adaptation of Husserl's concept of truth and evidential intuition.

In the meantime, I will summarize my findings. I argued that the linguistic idealism charge is unfounded. Heidegger does not support the view that all worldly intelligibility is linguistically mediated. It is not the case that we can only uncover entities on the basis of signs. Heidegger does not support the thesis that meaning determines reference because the ontological difference does not lead to a constitutive/constituted view of meaning and reference, subject and object. The criticism that things in themselves can never be known beyond our interpretations is unsubstantiated because Heidegger is committed to the view that our understanding of being does not exhaust what objects in themselves are. I argued that the disclosure of worldly intelligibility is not grounded solely on the disclosive function of language. Rather, it is grounded on other existentiales of Dasein such as circumspection, care, discourse, and being-in-the-world. However, what exactly is Heidegger's view on the connection between language, Dasein, and world disclosure? This question is the focus of the next chapter.

Chapter 5: Language and Disclosure

Introduction

Previously, I responded to Lafont's criticism that there is no difference between the world disclosive function of language and discourse, and her claim that consequently instrumental language cannot be said to be derivative of the world disclosive function of language. I replied that Heidegger does not make the Humboldtian distinction between language in its instrumental and world disclosive functions, nor does he apply a strict ontological/ontic distinction to them. I argued that Heidegger's notion of language is best characterized as a phenomenon; while language is a 'totality of words' that might be expressed through assertions, or might involve predication and designation, there is no special 'transitional ontic-ontological' status given to language above other modes of speaking. Rather, language is just one possible mode of the concrete manifestations of the existentiale of discourse. Discourse is the articulation of intelligibility: the expression of what Dasein already understands about the world. But how does language, as a manifestation of discourse, put this pre-understanding into words? How does language give a clue to how the world is disclosed to Dasein at the same time that Dasein discloses the world? In short, what does Heidegger really think about the relationship between language and world disclosure?

Discourse as an existentiale is Dasein's capacity to participate in acts of expression of intelligibility. Discourse must have a specific worldly way of being. It must be a way of being of Dasein. Discourse is factically expressed in language (*Sprache*). *Sprache* not only translates as language, but also as talking. While language is a totality of words, i.e. a system of signs as found in the dictionary, language is also talking, i.e. speech in the form of utterances and writing (including the ways in which something is uttered, like intonation, modulation and tempo). However, as has already been stressed, language (utterances) are not the only manifestation of the existentiale of discourse. Non-linguistic expression is seen in gesture, symbols, facial expressions, silence, and so forth. So why specifically look at language as a manifestation of discourse if it is only one of many other possible modes? How does our everyday talking, which usually involves language in the form of speech and writing and so forth, especially give us clues into the Dasein's primordial understanding of what it means to be in the world?

The first reason is linked to Heidegger's method of using fundamental ontology to overcome the logical prejudice. He is trying to undo ingrained philosophical assumptions that come along with the traditional theory of language. He argues that our conception of or approach to language has been corrupted by the logical prejudice. That is, the theory of language is all about analyzing how the human being's expression of sentences can refer to present-at-hand objects in the world by means of certain syntactic rules, resulting in problematic views such as the idea that truth is primarily a property of propositional statements. Heidegger diagnoses the underlying cause as their inability to find the proper 'theme' or the proper 'horizon' for asking the question about the being of language. "Philosophical research will have to dispense with the 'philosophy of language' if it is to inquire into the 'things themselves' and attain the status of a problematic which has been cleared up conceptually" (BT: 209-10, SZ: 166).

The second reason is that Heidegger recognises that there is something peculiar about the being of language that is inextricably linked to the being of Dasein. Using words to interpret and communicate our understanding of the world is obviously essential to the way of being of Dasein. The question is how to unpack this while eschewing the distorting framework of traditional theories of language. Heidegger's solution for examining this unique relationship is first to ontologically clarify the being of language (HCT: 262). I choose the word phenomenon to describe Heidegger's concept of language, since it recognises that aspect of language being a 'totality of words' by means of which Dasein can articulate meaning, while emphasising its interconnectedness with the other modes of comportment, which altogether make up Dasein's existence. How does Dasein talk about the world using utterances and significations? Or, what is the conceptual structure of Dasein's activity of language use? Heidegger gives an account of this in Dasein's primary mode of interpretation, which is the 'so-as', or the 'existential-hermeneutic as'. Heidegger then argues that the apophantic-as, which is commonly interpreted by his contemporaries as the assertion of propositional statements, is derivative of the hermeneutic-as, which is the unconcealment of entities through interpretation. He will also elucidate different facets of Dasein's activity of making assertions, facets that are lost on theories of language that are tied to the grammar of propositional intentionality. This move will allow him to refute the correspondence theory

and to expose the inadequacies of traditional theories of language. Thus, this will set the proper ground for doing a new ontology of language.

After all, it is in the 'unconcealment/propositional truth' debate that we encounter our key problems of how assertions can refer to entities directly and be measured according to some reliable standard of truth. Examining the 'so-as' structure of interpretation will set us up for looking at a specific aspect of language, i.e. its designative and attributive functions in relation to scientific enquiry and theories of direct reference, to argue that Heidegger's account of world disclosure does not entail a 'strong incommensurability thesis'. So, it seems that it is crucial to first understand what Heidegger means by 'the way in which discourse is expressed is language… discourse is existentially language'. How does language, as the concrete manifestation of discourse, expose that Dasein is already a being that understands and shares such an understanding with others?

Discourse (*Rede*) means talk or speech. It also carries the meaning of rumour or addressing someone. Heidegger's basic insight behind distinguishing discourse from language is to highlight Dasein's basic activity of speaking or communicating. He remarks that the original meaning of *logos* is the act of speaking. "In the first stage of understanding λόγος, there was no distinction between λόγος as the act of speaking and λόγος as language. The word for 'speaking' subsumed what we call 'language.' On the other hand, (speaking as) making verbal sounds was the most direct way that 'language' was experientially accessible to the Greeks" (LQT: 5-6). Language, especially seen from the theoretical perspective of his contemporaries, is an abstraction from the everyday activity of talking. Such an abstraction removes language from the rich context of being with other Dasein and being-in-the-world. Language is not a process of expressing how outer objects are related to inner mental contents. Rather Dasein is already 'outside' with the world, and every manner in which it expresses itself is bound up with the world. To understand a science of language and why it matters, we must relate it back to human beings and how it is primary for our human condition. The ontological structure of language cannot be clarified in abstraction from the ontological structure of Dasein who is a being that always already understands the world as meaningful: "we are able to say something about the being of language, insofar as language is possible, only because of the human capacity to understand — that is, existence itself, to which the structure of understanding belongs" (LQT: 128). Thus, we firstly need to ask how

speaking enables the articulation of intelligibility. Only then do we ask the question of how the technicalities of language are combined to make that work. Discourse, which is to talk, doesn't make sense unless we think about a context of being with others. In the activity of talking, there is another Dasein who is there and already sharing the world with us:

> in our primary, natural experience of how human beings live together with each other, we understand speech as the revealing of something by speaking about it, and as a thinking that determines and orders it. Language, speaking, thinking: they coincide as the human way of being. They are the way we reveal and illumine (both for ourselves and for others) the world and our own human existence (*Dasein*), so that in this luminosity we gain sight: human insight into ourselves and an outlook on, and a practical insight into, the world. (LQT: 6)

When Dasein talks, these modes of expression are not only about propositional contents, but intonation, tempo, etc., all of which speak. Discourse includes modulations of the voice, gestures, and so on. All this highlights that discourse is the 'event' of talking to someone, in the same way that when Dasein 'sees' an 'object' it is a phenomenologically rich 'event' of encountering something that is already meaningful in the world. So, discourse as an existentiale can be defined as Dasein's capacity to participate in these acts of expression. Language is derivative of discourse because it is a basic product of speaking: "to significations, words accrue". As Heidegger remarks in BT: 205 SZ: 162, in communication Dasein's understanding is shared. There is already sharing going on before there are words. This is the nature of being with other Dasein.

5.1 Language and Interpretation

Dasein is a being that understands what it means to be situated in its world along with other Dasein. Understanding involves Dasein's projection of itself towards various possibilities for being. Equally, since these possibilities are ones that are disclosed in the world, they also have a 'counterthrust' upon Dasein. It is a 'counterthrust' because the world and its entities have a certain independence or 'hold' over Dasein in that objects must give themselves to us if we can form any 'judgment' or 'representation' of them at all. Or, better yet, in the simple embodied seeing of the room which I am in, I have no power over how the desk, the

computer, lamp, etc., give themselves to me in my phenomenological experience. I can't *not* see them as such in my immediate experience. This is the point behind Heidegger's emphasis on the nuances of the word for object (*Gegenstand*) meaning to stand over and against. Dasein cannot know or 'constitute' some knowledge about the object without the object first giving itself to us. This process by which we navigate and express our understanding of these worldly entities which stand over against us is interpretation. Heidegger describes this as 'understanding developing itself', 'understanding becoming itself', and "the working-out of possibilities projected in understanding" (BT: 188-189, SZ: 148). The purpose of interpretation is to make our understanding of these entities explicit in discourse, speaking. The structure of interpretation is called the 'as' structure.

Golob (2014: 70-1) helpfully dubs this as the '*a* as *b*' structure of interpretation, where *a* stands for the actual entity/entities and *b* stands for the particular aspect of the entity that the interpreter is making explicit by taking-as. Of course, whatever stands for *a* is already standing within a meaningful context of the interpreter's world and understood as such by the interpreter. *B* is only the explicit framing of what the interpreter had already implicitly understood of *a*. For example, consider the kind of interpretation that is involved in communication about an entity between two Dasein. Suppose I invite a colleague into my office, and I pull up another chair and point towards it so she can sit beside me to look at the computer screen. My colleague and I already have implicit understanding of the practical purposes of chairs and the social practices of preparing seats for guests, and so forth. What I am doing with my gesture of pointing towards the chair is to create a space of communication that makes my invitation explicit to us both.

This also demonstrates the fore-structure of understanding which grounds interpretation (BT: 191, SZ: 150). Fore-having (*Vorhabe*) is the totality of involvements or background of significances which are pre-understood by Dasein, such as the practical uses of furniture and social practices in our example. Fore-sight (*Vorsicht*) is the guiding point of view that flags the particular aspect of the entity or state of affairs that is to be interpreted. For example, the context of office behaviour and etiquette restricts the interpretation of my gesture to something like 'please take a seat' as opposed to 'move over more chairs' or 'fix the chair'. Finally, fore-conception (*Vorgriff*) is the conceptual framework that facilitates the articulation of our fore-having and fore-sight through the interpretation. For example, we

have the fore-having of many background significances of social etiquette and practical uses of office chairs in the as-which of my interpretation (the pointing gesture); the fore-having is conceptually organised ('chairs as something to sit on', 'chairs as appropriate furniture to offer to guests', etc.) and made explicit, thus accessible, in the space of communication.

Even in the simple gesture of pointing at the chair, Dasein is already taking the chair 'as' something; moreover, this capacity of Dasein to take something 'as' something is only possible because of Dasein's pre-understanding of worldly significances, e.g., what the chair is for in the background of other equipment, or what the invitation means in the background of social practices. This shows that when we are uttering something like 'feel free to sit on this chair', by no means are we pulling signs and words out of a mental reservoir to tag onto a particular entity in the physical world. Our utterances and gestures do not 'assign' 'properties' to isolated objects. What 'properties' entities have, what they mean and how they are used are not determined piece by piece by singular utterances of Dasein (the process of testing conceptual definitions of entities by appealing to necessary and sufficient conditions is a good example). Instead, we can only interpret an entity 'as' something against the background of the entire context of worldly significances. This demonstrates the relationship between unconcealment and world disclosure. To uncover (*entdecken*) is to discover, discern, or light upon. Interpretive acts like gesturing or asserting makes pre-understanding explicit; that is, they bring a certain pre-understood aspect of the entity or state of affairs to light. That Dasein can uncover entities as such-and-such in the act of interpretation is only possible because the relational whole of the world had already been disclosed (*erschlossen*) – as demonstrated by the fore-structure. In short: interpretation is possible because of understanding, and uncovering is possible because of world disclosure.

It bears noting that the derivative relationship above is not linear, but circular, because the fore-structure is related to the disclosure of the world as a whole, and equiprimordially to the disclosedness of Dasein who dwells in and interprets the world.

> As the disclosedness of the 'there', understanding always pertains to the whole of Being-in-the-world. In every understanding of the world, existence is understood with it, and *vice versa*. All interpretation, moreover, operates in the fore-structure, which we have already characterized. Any interpretation which is to contribute understanding, must already have understood what is to be interpreted (BT: 194, SZ: 152).

That last remark points towards the famous hermeneutic circle: interpretation is made possible by understanding but interpretation also makes understanding possible. Heidegger is emphatic that this should not be seen as a vicious circle, but a virtuous one. For example, if a scientist were to conduct scientific research, she cannot properly interpret the world without first recognising the conditions that frame and guide her research. Similarly, the historian's research about our ancestors' social and cultural beliefs, economic situation, religion, and so forth, cannot proceed without drawing upon common information about human beings and how we relate to the world. In both cases, hermeneutical interpretation and understanding includes re-interpreting the language they use to describe the world, such as terminology and conventions of framing a research project.

How does language relate to interpretation and hermeneutic understanding? In the chair example, gesturing was one possible mode of articulating our pre-understanding, i.e., one mode of discourse. I could also have asserted "feel free to sit here", which would be using language to manifest discourse. As we emphasised before, discourse is speaking, the expression of understanding: that is to say, what my colleague and I understand of the chair and the office and so forth had already been articulated before I, for the purposes of opening the space of communication and interaction, made our understanding explicit with my gesture (or assertion). To assert something using language is therefore a concrete manifestation of Dasein's capacity to interpret, that is, to speak about its pre-understanding of worldly significances. Heidegger obviously has more to say about assertions and how this mode of interpretation is derivative. I will address that later. For now, I want to continue our efforts to provide a broad picture of the role that language plays in world disclosure.

5.2 Discourse, Language, and Temporality

The fore-structure of interpretation points to the fact that Dasein is a temporal being. Its disclosedness is temporally structured. According to Heidegger, temporality is not a case of 'now points' that come and pass in a uniform, infinite and linear fashion. Neither is temporality a matter of distinguishing time from eternity. Instead, the temporality of Dasein's disclosedness is constituted out of thrownness, fallenness, and projection. These respectively correspond to the three temporal ecstasies of past, present, and future. Thrownness is linked

to the fact that Dasein is already enculturated or historical; fallenness to Dasein's preoccupation with the average understanding of *das Man* in phenomena such as idle talk and curiosity; and projection to Dasein's orientation towards the future.

Dasein's existentiale of discourse (speaking) is evidently temporal in character. We can see this in the fore-structure of understanding. Dasein can speak because meaning has already been articulated in being-in-the-world and being-with-one-another. This corresponds to the temporal ecstasy of the present, where Dasein share an average understanding of worldly significances such as social practices and practical uses of equipment. That Dasein is thrown into a language corresponds to the temporal ecstasy of the past. Dasein's concern for its projects in relation to who it wants to become or not become corresponds to the temporal ecstasy of the future. Importantly, the three temporal ecstasies are concurrent in Dasein's existence. They form the structural dimensions of each event of intelligibility through the existentiales of thrownness, fallenness and projection. The description of intelligibility as an 'event' is an excellent way of capturing the equiprimordiality of speaking, understanding and interpreting, and the equiprimordiality of Dasein's way of being, its being in the world, and being-with-one-another. We can see how the as-structure of interpretation and the fore-structure of understanding is a unitary phenomenon insofar as it rests on Dasein's temporality. In the activity of interpreting an entity as something, Dasein simultaneously understands what that entity is insofar as it had already been disclosed in its possibility.

For instance, when the farmer interprets the south wind as a sign of rain and says as much, this event simultaneously realises the past (the skills passed down from his father, those farmers who came before him in his family) and the future (harvest, perhaps a confirmation of his identity as an inheritor of the land). Temporal markers of language, such as tenses, are not founded in the fact that discourse is 'about' or 'according to' time. Rather, discourse itself is temporal, and speaking about anything is "grounded in the ecstatical unity of temporality" (BT: 401, SZ: 349). Thus for Heidegger, Dasein's temporality and its disposition for speaking is the *a priori* condition of possibility for its ability and concern for making sense of things in its world. "Only in terms of the temporality of discourse – that is, of Dasein in general – can we clarify how 'signification' 'arises' and make the possibility of concept-formation ontologically intelligible" (BT: 401, SZ: 349). How signification 'arises' refers to the question of how signs come to mean what they mean, or how words accrue to

meanings. We have already explained this by appeal to the fore-structure of understanding and meaning. Equally significantly, Heidegger argues here that the temporality of discourse makes the possibility of concept-formation ontologically intelligible; that is, the condition of possibility for Dasein's capacity to form, understand and make use of concepts is founded in discourse, which is in turn founded in Dasein's disclosedness.

This is important since it once again confirms that it is not language as such that is important for Dasein's disclosedness, but language as one mode in which the existentiale of discourse can be instantiated. Secondly, concepts are founded not in language, but discourse. This means that interpretation—that is to say, the *a* as *b* structure of Dasein's primordial mode of intentionality—is conceptual but not necessarily linguistic. This confirms Golob's (2014: 103) argument that Heidegger supports conceptualism, i.e., that Dasein's primordial intentionality is conceptual even though it is non-propositional. The other crucial point here is that the formation, understanding and use of concepts obviously requires normative and pragmatic standards. This indicates that it is entirely possible for the *a* as *b* structure of interpretation to be held to criteria of correctness, contra Lafont and Tugendhat. I will discuss this in more detail in the coming chapter.

The final issue to address in this section is how language is (derivatively) related to temporality if language is a concrete manifestation of discourse. Heidegger writes:

> … discourse does not temporalize itself primarily in any definite ecstasis. Factically, however, discourse expresses itself for the most part in language, and speaks proximally in the way of addressing itself to the 'environment' by talking about things concernfully; because of this, making-present has, of course, a privileged constitutive function (BT: 400, SZ: 349).

The *phenomenon* of language is connected primarily to the present, to Dasein's preoccupation with the present in its circumspective concern for the world. Note xxiii elaborates on the term 'making-present', which is a term used to describe cognition, especially in relation to Heidegger's interpretation of Husserl. Where Husserl associates making-present with sense perception, Heidegger argues that making-present in perception and intuition must first be grounded in intentionality. Intentionality, moreover, is not primarily founded in consciousness, but in the "ecstatical unity of Dasein", i.e., the temporality of Dasein. Dasein's everyday talking is very often instantiated in language use,

e.g., making assertions about entities or states of affairs to communicate with a fellow Dasein. In these events, through language our speaking makes things explicitly present to the communicators. This could be what Heidegger means by the 'privileged constitutive function' of the making-present of language (note: making-present could equally be accomplished by gesturing or other modes of expression): what entities are in themselves is explicitly encountered in the factical manifestation of discourse, because our pre-understanding of what an entity is made explicit in the *a* as *b* structure of the intentional act.

There is another side to this. The phenomenon of language is not only found in Dasein's circumspective concern for entities, but also in Dasein's relation to its existentiell possibilities. The other side of the coin is Dasein's everyday preoccupation with the present that causes it to shrink away from its own possibility of being projected towards death. This is where we encounter Dasein's fallenness into inauthentic modes of discourse such as idle talk, levelling and curiosity. That is to say, language can be a concrete manifestation of Dasein's inauthentic mode of relating to its own temporality, thus to its disclosedness. "Both the disclosedness of the 'there' and Dasein's basic existentiell possibilities, authenticity and inauthenticity, are founded upon temporality. But disclosedness always pertains with equal primordiality to the entirety of *Being-in-the-world* – to Being-in as well as to the world" (BT: 400, SZ: 349). Temporality sets the horizon, i.e., the possibilities as well as limits, for Dasein's existentiell possibilities. As the quote demonstrates, disclosedness pertains equiprimordially to Dasein's disclosedness and the disclosedness of the world. It is not just about Dasein disclosing something about existence through uncovering entities, but the world itself has a 'hold' over Dasein in that it 'shows' itself. The unity of the three temporal ecstasies is always emphasised, as is the fact that Dasein has no transcendental 'power' over the constitution of entities despite its unique character of having an understanding of being.

5.3 Language and Meaning

How does the meaning of worldly entities fit into the framework of hermeneutic understanding and temporality? How does Dasein articulate these worldly significances, or meanings, using language? Heidegger is quick to remind us that "Meaning is an *existentiale* of Dasein, not a property attaching to entities, lying 'behind' them, or floating somewhere as an 'intermediate domain'. Dasein only 'has' meaning, so far as the disclosedness of Being-

in-the-world can be 'filled in' by the entities discoverable in that disclosedness" (BT: 193, SZ: 151). While meaning is an existentiale of Dasein, this does not grant Dasein a meaning-constituting priority over entities, because as we have said, entities have a certain 'hold' over Dasein. Similarly, the world has a certain 'hold' over Dasein insofar as Dasein is a being that cannot help but be 'there' in the world. So, 'meaning is an existentiale of Dasein' might be fleshed out as something like 'Dasein is a meaning-making being but equiprimordially meaning also makes Dasein'.

How does meaning make Dasein, as a being that factically navigates its relationship to the world using language (amongst other possible modes of interpretation)? How does the word 'chair' come to signify that piece of furniture in my office, or the words 'please take a seat' signify the invitation to sit on the chair? Heidegger says that words accrue to meanings. But the relationship between meaning and language is not a matter of adding language to pre-linguistic experience. Instead, language has an intimate relationship to Dasein's thrownness and historicity. "[E]xistence, as understanding and sensemaking, is intrinsically historical, so too the particular kind of being of that manifold of words that we call our vocabulary as a whole, or language, is also historical" (LQT: 128). For example, Dasein is born into a culture and society where certain meanings are already available. Conventional words have already accrued to these meanings so that they can be easily accessible, for instance, when Dasein is being taught a language or passed down something from culture. This goes to show that language comes in at the ground. Dasein is always already linguistically structured. We are not pre-linguistic beings to which language are added. As Heidegger remarks, "we do not come into the world with a definite supply of words and we are also not gradually yoked into a definite context" (Heidegger 2005: 14).

As Carman remarks: "when Heidegger says, 'words accrue to significations (*Bedeutungen*)' (SZ 161), he does not mean that we attach prefabricated words to already articulated things like ready-made tags or labels, but that words are themselves already an integrated part of a practice, a custom, an institution" (Carman 2002: 212). Meaning and language have a reciprocal relationship due to Dasein's temporality and historicity. In contrast to Lafont's picture, it is not as if meaning is posited by the disclosure of being, and then subsequently articulated through words. Rather, from a temporal perspective language can be seen as a medium of being:

A word's meaning is not already present on the basis of the way the throat and tongue make speech possible. These are φύσει (by nature), not so a word. Words are as one sees fit, κατά συνθήκεν (by convention), that is to say, each word first had to come to be as such and has its genesis. The sound of a word does not have a meaning for all time and does not actually have *the* fixed meaning that refers to a subject matter – a word as a whole is drawn, not from a primary, primordial experience of the subject matter, but from preconceptions and the nearest at hand views of things. The word's genesis is not born by a human's physiological being, but by his actual (*eigentlich*) existence. Insofar as a human being is in the world and *wants* something in that world and wants it with himself, he speaks. He speaks insofar as something like a world is *uncovered* for him as a matter of concern and *he* is uncovered to himself in this 'for him'. But the word is, thus not here like a tool (οὐχ ὡς ὀργανον) [not as an instrument], for example, the hand. Language is the being and becoming of the human being himself. (Heidegger 2005: 11-12)

This dense but evocative passage illustrates how the phenomenon of language is a medium of being that is entwined with Dasein's factical life. Words come to be what they mean due to historical processes. The meaning of a word can change. How a word came to have a certain meaning for us cannot be identified as a particular instance where, for example, a child who called the sky 'sky' had a eureka moment of understanding that the word 'sky' repeated to him by his mother actually refers to his primordial wordless experience of the atmosphere above. Instead, the child's understanding of the meaning was already built into, or even anticipated, by his embodied experience of the sky. The child speaks by pointing or gurgling while looking at the sky; his mother encourages him by nodding and repeating the word 'sky'; his understanding of the word's meaning is drawn from a wide range of preconceptions such as his parents' use of sounds, words and gestures to guide his other worldly experiences.

Dasein, as being-in-the-world and being with others, always has a concern for the world and for himself. As the example above demonstrates, the way in which Dasein navigates his existence in this world is bound up with language through and through. The word is not like a tool or instrument by which we bring a clearer picture of our unarticulated feelings about our existence. Instead, the way in which we understand and shape our factical

life is inextricable from language. This point is made neatly by Charles Taylor. In his discussion of human agency and language, he argues that the life of a human being, especially his understanding of his identity, necessarily involves self-interpretation. When he interprets his existence by evaluating whether it is shameful for him to enter into the reality TV show *The Bachelor*, for instance, his emotions about shame, pride, masculinity, etc., are constituted by the social-cultural understandings of shame, etc. These interpretations require language. He interprets himself not by using the word 'shame' as an instrument to articulate this heavy, hot feeling that makes him want to hide his head; rather the evaluation of shame had already been incorporated into the word by his community. "What a given human life is an interpretation of cannot exist uninterpreted; for human emotion is only what it is refracted as in human language" (Taylor 1985: 76).

5.4 Language and Disclosure

Given all that we have said about language being grounded in discourse (speaking) as an activity of Dasein, it is not likely that the 1920s Heidegger placed any particular emphasis on the disclosive aspect of language, contra Lafont and Habermas' reading. Carman, for example, argues that "…language makes a crucial contribution not to Dasein's disclosedness itself, but to the particular self-interpretations Dasein finds itself within actual historical fact" (Carman 2007: 222); while Dahlstrom (2001: 11) argues that in *Being and Time,* Heidegger sees language as an object that should be investigated by natural science rather than ontology. There is considerable support for this view; our foregoing quotes indeed demonstrate that Heidegger thought of language as a phenomenon that must be investigated from Dasein's existence. For example, if we go back to the *Logic: The Question of Truth* quote cited on in the opening section of this chapter, we find Heidegger's argument that the phenomenon of language should be investigated from the question of how human beings can gain practical insight into their world (i.e., as a matter of actual historical fact). This fully reflects the aim of the fundamental ontology of Dasein, which is to gain insight into the meaning of being as such through clarifying the different modes of being as ordinarily experienced by Dasein. In summary, Dasein is disclosed because it understands how it stands in relation to being. Dasein articulates such understanding through the existentiale of

discourse, and language demonstrates discourse as a worldly phenomenon in Dasein's historically situated, factical practices.

I think we can be reasonably confident that the *Being and Time* period Heidegger does not place a heavy emphasis on the link between language and disclosedness. However, to complicate the matter, the later Heidegger allegedly revises some of his views on language. In BT: 121, SZ: 87 Heidegger argues that the being of words and language is founded upon significations. Lafont argues that Heidegger then questions this 'founding' relationship in a marginal handwritten note. Heidegger writes: "Untrue. Language is not built up in layers, but rather *is* the primordial essence of truth as the 'there'" (SZ: 442, 87c, as quoted in Lafont 2000: 37 ftn.). She also quotes from the lecture series *On Time and Being* where Heidegger adds: "language is not only ontic, but from the outset ontic-ontological" (Heidegger 1972: 51, as quoted in Lafont 2000: 37). What do we make of these remarks? Is it really the case that the later Heidegger grants language a constitutive power by emphasizing its world-disclosive function over Dasein's disclosedness? Lafont argues:

> In the artwork essay, by contrast with *Being and Time,* Heidegger will explicitly identify *language* as the standard that satisfies all of these requirements [of thrown projection, which is free of human creation and action]. He will ascribe a privileged status to language over all other cultural phenomena on the basis of the world-disclosing function that distinguishes it. Language itself, in its function as the originary world-disclosure 'which brings entities as entities into the open *for the first time*' (UKW, p. 59; italics added), thereby becomes 'poetry in the essential sense' (vis-à-vis poetry in the *customary* sense, which exhibits a 'Projection-character'). In this way, as Heidegger's marginal note to *Being and Time* puts it, language is ultimately grasped as 'the originary essence of truth as the there' (SuZ, p.442, 87c). (Lafont 2000: 163, emphasis original)

It cannot be denied that in OWA Heidegger says that language first brings being into appearance through naming, but I suspect that Lafont's emphasis is misplaced. For after that sentence, Heidegger does not use the word language but instead uses the word *saying* in relation to thrown projection. "Such *saying* is a projecting of clearing, in which announcement is made of what it is that beings come into the open *as*" (OWA: 198, first emphasis mine). He then says that "Projective saying is poetry… Poetry is the saying of the

unconcealment of beings. *Actual* language at any given moment is the happening of this saying, in which a people's world historically arises for it… *Projective saying* is saying which, in preparing the sayable, simultaneously brings the unsayable as such into a world" (OWA: 198-199, emphasis mine).

If Lafont is right that Heidegger explicitly identifies language as the primordial site for world-disclosure in contrast to his ambiguous approach in BT, then why would Heidegger identify saying, rather than language, with thrown projection? I would argue that this passage actually demonstrates that Heidegger is preserving the distinction between discourse (speaking, saying) and language, and is showing that it is speaking that discloses the world for Dasein. This reading fits well with the remark "Actual language at any given moment is the happening of this saying…" where 'actual' language refers not to the 'world-disclosive function' nor the 'instrumental function' of language, but to the phenomenon of language in a broad sense, the way in which speaking has a worldly kind of being in Dasein's actual, historically situated practices. One might object that this distinction between speaking and language is still too vague; but the following passage strongly suggests that the ambiguity is intentional:

> The basic movement is not from language to speaking but from speaking to language. In fact, language and speaking are not distinguished at the start; and the first explorative questioning of that started from both sides at once, that of language and that of speaking, and oscillated between the two with no fixed point of reference. That point of reference is 'truth' understood as uncovering, as indicative showing-as. In order to be understood as ἀπόφανσις, speech needs to be brought back to the act of uncovering. (LQT: 113)

In the passage above, Heidegger not only seems to anticipate the ambiguous exposition of the relationship between discourse and language in *Being and Time* and the Artwork essay, but more importantly, he explains his strategy behind maintaining that ambiguity: it is to discover the condition of possibility for how Dasein can speak meaningfully at all, using unconcealment (as a capacity and activity of Dasein) as the 'point of reference'. Crucially, in the artwork essay, this 'point of reference', which is unconcealment, remains the same. The question of how the artwork or how poetry is a 'happening' of truth is still answered by appeal to the unconcealment of truth: "Creation [of the artwork] is such a bringing forth. As

such a bringing, it is rather a receiving and removing within the relation to unconcealment" (OWA: 187); "Preserving the work does not reduce people to their private experiences, but brings them into affiliation with the truth happening in the work. Thus it grounds being for and with one another as the historical standing-out of human existence in relation to unconcealment" (OWA: 193).

We need this point of reference of unconcealment because it is only through investigating the activity of Dasein, viz., its capacity to uncover, that we can get at the broader phenomenon of disclosure. Whereas Heidegger in *Being and Time* focuses on the phenomenological explication of Dasein's unconcealment of entities in practical activity and assertions, the later Heidegger focusses on the phenomenological explication of Dasein's unconcealment of entities in artwork or poetry.

I hypothesise that there are several interrelated reasons behind the shift of emphasis to Dasein's unconcealment of entities in artwork or poetry in the later Heidegger. First is Heidegger's disappointment with the modern tendency to technological enframement which causes him to move his focus away from Dasein and onto the entities themselves ('letting things be themselves'). Second, artwork or poetry have a special power of showing entities as they are in their historical situation; while artworks are 'productions' of Dasein they also have their own way of being which has a 'hold' over Dasein. Third, artwork or poetry epitomizes the peculiar relationship that language has with Dasein's being; namely, language is an important concrete manifestation of how we 'make' meaning while meaning 'makes' us. Therefore, in OWA Heidegger is aiming to provide a phenomenological description of how meaning 'makes' us, using the concrete manifestation of speaking (discourse) in artwork or poetry as his clue.

In the same way that 'speech needs to be brought back to the act of uncovering' (thus to unconcealment), how the artwork discloses is related to how the work uncovers the historical situation for Dasein. What the work uncovers is truth since it uncovers beings as they are in Dasein's historical situation. If we are now focusing on the phenomenological description of how entities themselves are uncovered 'in truth' through the artwork, then we require a clearer picture of what truth means to Heidegger. We require an account of whether a normative-pragmatic framework of identifying and evaluating truth is compatible with his account of unconcealment and world-disclosure. Being-in-the-world equiprimordially

determines the horizon for Dasein's existentiell possibilities. As such, what is the appropriate mode of relating to worldly entities in the primordial 'as' of our basic intentional experience, so that we can 'genuinely' understand the world and our relation to it? Does the temporality of disclosedness constrain scientific and social progress? Is the 'as' structure of interpretation subject to universal standards of correctness, and if so, can we give a phenomenological description of what that looks like within the framework of Heideggerian temporality? These difficult questions will be addressed when we move on to the issue of truth and unconcealment in the next chapter.

Conclusion

I want to summarise by reviewing some key concepts and how they function in the broader context of Heidegger's fundamental ontology of Dasein. Dasein has a pre-understanding of worldly significances because it is thrown into the world. Dasein's pre-understanding is called the fore-structure of understanding. Fore-having describes the background significances that are already available to Dasein, such as the referential totality of equipment. Fore-sight describes the point of view that frames the context for understanding. Fore-conception describes the conceptual framework that guides the articulation of what Dasein understands. The fore-structure of understanding is the basis for the *a* as *b* structure of interpretation. This as-structure describes how Dasein experiences entities that show themselves to Dasein. The entity, which is the *a* variable, does not show itself as a theoretical object, but as an entity that is already situated upon background significances. The *b* variable, which is what Dasein takes *a* 'as', is already contextually and conceptually framed by fore-sight and fore-conception. Thus, interpretation is understanding 'becoming itself' by making what had already been articulated in the fore-structure explicit.

The interdependence of interpretation and understanding points to the hermeneutic circle of understanding. This circle is to be taken in a positive sense because it explains how Dasein can only 'know' because it was already in the world that it understands. The self-showing of entities and Dasein's interpretation are concurrent in the event of Dasein's basic intentional experience of this entity. This unity is explained by the unity of the three temporal ecstasies of present, past and future. These ecstasies correspond to Dasein's existential states of throwness, fallenness and projection. As a being that is in the world and with others, and

as a being that already understands, Dasein is one who has a disposition to speak. It has a concern to speak about the world which it understands. Interpretation makes pre-understanding of ready-to-hand entities explicit; that is, it expresses how the individual tool is situated in the referential totality of equipment. The existentiale of discourse underlies interpretation because discourse is Dasein's general activity of articulating worldly significances. Discourse is Dasein's capacity to participate in acts of expression of intelligibility. There are different modes of expressions of intelligibility, such as gesturing and verbally communicating. These modes of expression are derivative of discourse since they are factical instantiations or concrete manifestations of this existentiale.

Language is one mode of expression of intelligibility. By language, Heidegger primarily means the phenomenon of communicating with other Dasein by means of utterances, which can be verbal, written, or different combinations thereof. Moreover, these acts of linguistic communication include the way in which they are enacted, such as intonation and tempo. This shows that language is something that we encounter in the real world, e.g., in the form of speech or writing. Heidegger's point to emphasising language as a phenomenon is to show that propositions and signs are secondary aspects of language. Language is a system of signs, e.g., words found in the dictionary or grammatical forms, but we need this system of signs because we are creatures that talk. We use language to talk, and this occurs upon the background of understanding and the whole context of worldly significances. This point is missed by the philosophical tradition, i.e., theories of language and epistemology, which misrepresent the relationship between human beings and language as one of using propositional statements to express propositional attitudes or mental judgments, which then refer to objects that are somehow 'outside' of our mental states.

To be sure, Dasein uses language to talk about entities in the world. But how does Dasein 'find' words to refer to entities? This is not a case of selecting words from a totality of signs to tag onto an entity. Rather, Dasein has the 'right' words for that entity because of the fore-structure of understanding. Dasein's understanding is in part linguistically constituted because Dasein, due to its thrownness, is thrown into a language. For instance, fore-having can be made up of cultural practices and social values like freedom, justice and shame, which are learned, experienced and passed on through language. Heidegger's exposition of the phenomenon of language as a factical manifestation of Dasein's existentiale

of discourse thus provides an important snapshot of world disclosure. The relationship between Dasein and its activity of language use is based on the hermeneutic circle of understanding and on temporality. In any event of using language to utter something about an entity, it is an event where the fore-structure is articulated, where the three temporal ecstasies are unified in interpretation, and where the disclosedness of the world and of Dasein is revealed.

Are we thus mired again in the problem of linguistic idealism? If Dasein is a linguistic being from the ground up, it appears that even experiences that are not explicitly linguistic can involve language in some sense. For example, handling a paintbrush in my art studio doesn't obviously involve utterances or writing. However, the fore-structure of understanding that grounds my work will certainly involve things like the history of surrealism, which require articulation by words to some degree. If so, does that mean Heidegger is still committed to linguistic idealism? Does it mean the meaning structures of the world are determined by language? This sort of reading might be tempting, but as I have emphasised throughout this exposition of language, Heidegger grounds meaning in the overall structure of Dasein, not language. Meaning in Dasein's existence is not reducible to being a carrier of language. It is dangerous to push the constitutive aspect of language to the extreme by saying that worldly intelligibility can all be linguistically structured at bottom. To do so would be to ignore the other existentiales of Dasein. If being concerned for the world, working, being anxious, boredom, fear of death, etc., are all reducible to linguistic phenomena, this is surely a very malnourished picture of human existence.[11]

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[11] While I cannot address this in too much detail due to the limits of the thesis, there is another aspect of language that Heidegger develops in a more existentialist framework, to further drive home the point that meaning is not just a linguistic category. One part where Heidegger might put a limit of language is conscience and death. Conscience is a key phenomenon of Dasein but it does not involve language. Indeed, it requires one to refrain from speaking words. Death determines existence but is not intelligible and articulable in language as a determinate event. In a sense, the capacity for meaning in death is grounded in the 'failure' of language. (BT: 281-5, SZ: 237-241; BT: 318, SZ: 273-4).

Chapter 6: The Problem of Truth

Introduction

In this chapter, I will look at the problem of truth and unconcealment. There are several related issues. What does Heidegger mean by propositional truth and the primordial form of truth as unconcealment? How exactly is the former derivative of the latter? How are assertions related to these two senses of truth? In section 4.4, I addressed some of these questions by arguing that Heidegger's account of truth does not occlude the epistemological question of how Dasein can ascertain knowledge according to standards of validity and objectivity. In Chapter 5, I gave a preliminary account of how the apophantical-as of assertions is derivative of the hermeneutical-as of interpretation, and how Dasein uses language, e.g., assertions, to interpret and understand the world. In the present chapter I will add to these discussions by tackling the issue of how, according to the framework of unconcealment, assertions of propositional statements can be true or false. According to Heidegger's critics, the main issue is that he has no grounds to claim unconcealment is a more primordial notion of truth than propositional truth. If unconcealment is meant to be a primordial sense of truth, then it must account for normative elements of truth such as processes of correctness and justification. However, Heidegger's explanation of how acts of uncovering via assertions can be correct or incorrect according to evidence is vague at best. This is a serious issue. If Heidegger fails to establish how unconcealment is the condition of possibility for propositional truth but maintains that we must reject the assumption that the site of truth is in the correspondence between thought and thing, then he seems to be only providing us an equally unpalatable alternative. This alternative is a hermeneutical-existential theory of truth where truth merely means whatever is agreed upon by a community according to a historically contingent horizon of meaning.

In section 6.1, I address the criticism that unconcealment merges the ontological question of the definition of truth and the epistemological question of the criterion of truth. I reply that unconcealment does merge the ontological and epistemological questions of truth in a sense, but it is not problematic in the way that Lafont and Tugendhat thinks it is. In section 6.2, I will explain assertions, propositional truth, and uncovering, in the broader context of Heidegger's fundamental ontology. It is important to clarify these key terms

because on both sides of the debate there are misconceptions about the degree of importance that assertions and propositional statements have for Heidegger, and *why* they are important to him. In sections 6.3 – 6.5 I address the criticism that Heidegger's primordial truth is not subject to evidence and confirmation, which is a necessary requirement for truth. According to the critics, propositional truth, which is determined according to evidence, cannot be grounded in uncovering, which does not require confirmation by appealing to evidence. However, I respond that uncovering does involve evidence, and this is shown in Heidegger's development of Husserl's response to the correspondence theory, and how he illustrates the different senses of phenomenon, viz., appearance and semblance.

The next question is how the primordial 'as' of interpretation fares as a procedure that gives us reliable knowledge. We need to give a phenomenological description of how different manifestations of discourse (the assertion of propositional statements, gesturing, etc.) can be true or false. There is the question of how this description can fulfil the requirements of epistemology, since the hermeneutical-as cannot be explained by the framework of propositional intentionality (e.g., confirmation, judgment, correspondence). For example, can we explain how the assertions of propositional statements can refer, attribute and designate correctly or incorrectly within the framework of uncovering? I will argue that we can, to a degree.

6.1 Two Questions of Truth

Heidegger allegedly conflates the epistemological and ontological question of truth. According to Lafont, given that language is ontologically constitutive of Dasein's existence, Heidegger's existential analytic must also take on the epistemological task of explaining how we ascertain knowledge through this world-constituting language. Lafont and Habermas argue that Heidegger's solution is too one-sided. He is specifically accused of neglecting the epistemological question by collapsing it into the ontological question concerning what conditions must be in place in order for us to access and experience entities meaningfully at all.

I want to break this up into two claims. The *stronger* claim is that Heidegger believes he can solve the epistemological question of truth by collapsing it into the ontological question. This is because the ontological condition of disclosure can genuinely answer the

epistemological question of what it means for the human being to know about the world and how it can access the world, whereas the correspondence theory can only do so in a distorted and confused way. Accordingly, propositional truth and falsity, which is a mistaken definition of truth resulting from the correspondence theory, is *replaced* by the new concept of truth as unconcealment. Ultimately, the *collapse* of the epistemological question *into* the ontological means that Heidegger's claim that propositional truth is derivative of unconcealment as truth is not justified. This stronger claim seems to be Lafont and Habermas' position. The *moderate* claim is that Heidegger neglects the epistemological question of truth in his exposition of the ontological meaning of truth as unconcealment. He holds on to aspects of propositional truth and falsity since his exposition of unconcealment preserves a sense of correctness and evidence, but he is only able to give a vague and somewhat confused account of it. Accordingly, the specific sense of truth as correctness is submerged in the sense of truth as unconcealment, and it is unclear whether he can be justified in qualifying unconcealment with the term 'truth'. This moderate claim is Tugendhat's position.

Most of Heidegger's supporters focus on rejecting the stronger claim and use this to also reject Tugendhat's criticism of the 'derivative' theory. They argue that Lafont and Tugendhat's criticisms are misplaced: unconcealment is simply a different kind of truth unrelated to propositional truth and falsity. For instance, Wrathall (1999: 70-86) argues that Heidegger does not reduce propositional truth to unconcealment, nor is he intending to put forward unconcealment as a new theory for correctness. Heidegger is only seeking to establish unconcealment as a condition of possibility for propositional truth. Carman (2003: 259) agrees with Wrathall's analysis but thinks that his solution is simply the trivial claim that the practice of assertion is grounded on Dasein's disclosedness. On the other hand, Carman also finds Lafont and Tugendhat's reductive claim untenable. Thus he tries to find a middle point by reading Heidegger's concept of truth as hermeneutic salience. This is the idea that truth as unconcealment is a phenomenological account of the hermeneutic conditions for our common-sense interpretation of truth as correctness, especially in the context of our historically determined expressive-communicative practices, thus restoring the normative dimension to truth that Tugendhat believed to be missing in unconcealment (Carman 2003: 258-263).

However, like Wrathall, Carman still hasn't shown how Heidegger can be justified in calling unconcealment truth. As Dahlstrom (2001: 396-7) points out, Tugendhat is not denying the phenomenon of disclosure, nor even that disclosure is the condition of possibility for propositional truth and falsity – he is questioning whether Heidegger is *justified* in *qualifying* unconcealment as truth if he cannot account for how acts of assertive uncovering can be determined as true or false according to reliable normative standards. Dahlstrom's solution is to appeal to the primordial self-showing of disclosedness. Disclosure must be presupposed as the horizon for any other truth. Since disclosure shows itself to be true, Heidegger is justified in calling this original disclosure truth (Dahlstrom 2001: 403-7). However, this again sidesteps Tugendhat's concern, because Tugendhat had already questioned how the original truth of disclosure can *add anything new* to our normal understanding of truth if disclosure cannot be empirically accessed or be directly subjected to critical analysis. Smith neatly summarizes how Heidegger's supporter's attempt to justify the derivative theory largely misses the mark:

> … one cannot simply claim Heidegger has two senses of truth, one ontic and another ontological, then move to clarify this latter phenomenon (i.e. disclosedness as the ontological condition of truth traditionally understood) without first addressing the way in which this 'other' sense of truth has the normative resources necessary to deserve its title. The question that must be at the forefront of this reply is: how can disclosedness be understood as the primordial phenomenon of truth and what justifies that claim? (Smith 2007: 173)

In light of this, I think that opponents from Lafont's side have good reason for arguing that many of Heidegger's defenders simply 'sweep the question of truth under the rug' by rejecting the stronger claim and ignoring the moderate claim. I agree with Lafont and Tugendhat's general observation that unconcealment must be able to account for core epistemological concerns. I also think that on both sides of the debate over the stronger claim there are misunderstandings of what Heidegger understands by the epistemological question and why and how he problematises it. If we clarify these misunderstandings, we will be able to give the moderate claim the attention it deserves.

I begin by addressing the stronger claim. According to Lafont and Habermas, Heidegger answers the ontological question by appeal to the prior disclosure of worldly

intelligibility via language. This disclosure becomes the absolute ground for truth. How we know and ascertain truth is answered by appeal to the theory of unconcealment. Yet, unconcealment only establishes the ontological conditions for experiencing the world meaningfully; namely, that linguistic meanings are already preestablished and available. But, as I have argued, this argument rests on a misunderstanding of the relationship between unconcealment, disclosedness, and language. Lafont implicitly reduces unconcealment to disclosedness. She believes that unconcealment does no more than reveal the pre-disclosed linguistic meanings that enable us to experience entities meaningfully. This rests on her untenable claim that Heidegger believes that all worldly intelligibility is linguistically constituted. The result is a supposed conflict between the transitional ontic-ontological status shared by Dasein and language.

As I argued in Chapter 4, there is no such conflict. Not all meaning is linguistic, and Heidegger doesn't support a 'transitional' view of language as being an ontic instrument as well as a world-disclosing force that constitutes worldly intelligibility. Even though he recognises the unique place of language in Dasein's existence, language is only one possible mode of the concrete manifestation of discourse, and it cannot be equated with discourse. It is true that unconcealment ultimately leads back to Dasein's disclosedness, but the former does not 'reduce' to the general 'meaningfulness' of the latter, because the former is a capacity whilst the latter is an existentiale. The ontological conditions for experiencing the world meaningfully are strictly speaking Dasein's disclosedness, not unconcealment.

I emphasise the difference between the existentiale of disclosedness and the capacity of unconcealment in order to show that unconcealment cannot just be a theory for how propositional truth and falsity is grounded upon hermeneutic conditions and normative practices. If this were the case, then unconcealment contributes nothing new to the insight that our normal understanding of truth as correspondence between propositional statements and the extant entity rests on the prior disclosure of worldly significances. The argument that the unconcealment of entities at bottom collapses into Dasein's (or language's) prior disclosedness, thus Dasein's understanding of worldly significances, is precisely Lafont's claim. Heidegger's supporters are in danger of inadvertently affirming this claim by concentrating their attack on the stronger thesis, i.e., by arguing that unconcealment is a different kind of truth, especially a primordial kind, and that propositional truth is therefore

derivative of it. Heidegger's supporters focus on the argument that the thematic interpretation of propositional assertions is grounded on the hermeneutic interpretation of our broader practical involvements in the world. In doing so, they haven't really shown how Dasein's specific capacity to uncover entities by means of the activity of assertions adds something new to the traditional epistemological account of how we acquire and revise knowledge. This is precisely the problem Tugendhat points out:

> [because] the truth of an assertion does not lie in *the way in which* it uncovers but only in *that* it uncovers is he then able to carry truth over to all disclosure in general without further justification. The question is no longer one of determining whether it is possible to find, *in the realm of circumspective concern*, a difference corresponding to that between the true and the false assertion. Rather, simply because it uncovers, *concern is in general characterized as a mode of truth*. (Tugendhat 1992: 88, emphasis added)

I think that Tugendhat would have no problem with accepting the thesis put forward by Wrathall, Carman and Dahlstrom that propositional truth is derivative of unconcealment, if 'derivative' means that it is grounded in the broader, dynamic process of uncovering, of caring for the world, and so forth. However, 'derivative' in this sense must be kept strictly separate from the issue of whether unconcealment and disclosure qualifies for the term 'truth' if it is so unhelpfully broad. More recently, Christian Skirke gives a similar diagnosis of the various responses to Tugendhat's case against Heidegger.

> It is uncontroversial that there has to be a world, and an implicit grasp of it, so that there can be understanding at all. This alone, however, does not explain why and how truth enters the picture. If opposition to untruth becomes a fundamental feature of existential projects, by contrast, we have an answer to the question of why we conceive of understanding in terms of truth. So the aim of Tugendhat's critique of Heidegger's disclosedness is not a return to correspondence, correctness and bivalence. Its aim is to raise questions about fundamental, critical orientations in human existence. (Skirke 2016: 238)

As Skirke remarks, what is at stake for Tugendhat is whether human beings can critically scrutinize something in the disclosed world and whether the category of unconcealment can

give a conceptual account of this activity. As a minimal condition of qualifying for the term 'truth', disclosure must have an adequate and informative relation to propositional truth. This is the crux of what I termed the moderate claim. Heidegger's supporters, however, confounds these two issues. They confirm Heidegger's general thesis that in our everyday experience of the world we can well and truly know what things mean and how they work in our practical living – that our circumspective concern is in the truth. But they haven't given a good case for how propositional modes of relating to entities are subject to specific normative standards of truth and falsity within Heidegger's framework of unconcealment. It is no wonder, then, that they are accused of sweeping the problem of truth under the rug.

I want to offer an alternative take on the 'derivative' theory that goes deeper than just saying that propositional truth is grounded on meaning holism, practical experience, and so on. This theory is indebted to Sacha Golob's hypothesis that "'dimming down' [the dimming down or levelling of circumspective interpretation via apophantical modification] is not a relation between the propositional and the perceptual as Wrathall and Carman read it, but between a particular philosophical method and the proposition" (2014: 55). This observation invites us to appreciate the distinction between the activity of assertion *as* judgment as a propositional mode of uncovering entities and the framework of traditional epistemology, that is: the framework of analysing our experience of entities solely in terms of judgments that have some propositional content. This position on the derivative theory shows that traditional epistemology wrongly projects the framework and grammar of analysing propositional *attitudes* onto the description of our *general* capacity to have intentional experience of entities.

Using this version of the derivative theory, I propose that Heidegger's analysis of assertions as judgment is an attempt to describe, eschewing the *mode of explanation* of traditional epistemology, what goes on when we hold propositional attitudes (e.g. believing that p, questioning that p) about entities. Furthermore, I propose that it is unconcealment, not traditional epistemology, that has the vocabulary to fully and richly describe this *general* capacity of Dasein upon the background of its *other* existentiales. The propositional truth and falsity of our assertions is only one facet of our propositional modes of comportment toward entities. Explaining how a propositional statement is true using the grammar of traditional epistemology (e.g., the correspondence theory) only touches on a very small part of how the

activity of assertions as judgment can ascertain knowledge about entities. It is in this sense that propositional truth and falsity must be derivative of unconcealment.

Denis McManus also seems to support this reading of 'derivative'. He remarks that it is problematic to read the link between the propositional and the practical modes of comportment toward entities as a 'founding' relationship. If we say that propositional modes of comportment are possible because it is founded on 'know-how' or backgrounds of 'practical activities' of Dasein (along the lines of Dreyfus), we fail to articulate how such backgrounds are meant to show that the propositional *is* derivative, and simply exacerbates the sort of epistemological challenges the critics have identified. He argues that the founding relationship can be read in a more *formal* or *abstract* way, without forcing us to commit to a view that reduces the propositional to the pragmatic (McManus 2012a: 104). McManus also cites a passage from *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics* that cleanly expresses why the derivative argument is inconsistent with Heidegger's views:

> I attempted in Being and Time to provide a preliminary characterization of the *phenomenon* of world by interpreting the way in which we at first and for the most part move about in our everyday world. There I took my departure from what lies to hand in the everyday realm, from those things that we use and pursue…It never occurred to me, however, to try and claim or prove with this interpretation that the essence of man consists in the fact that he knows how to handle knives and forks or uses the tram. (Heidegger 1995: 177, as quoted in McManus 2012a: 104)

This reading of the derivative theory is useful because it enables us to avoid the reductive claim made by Lafont and Habermas. Saying that propositional truth or falsity is derivative of unconcealment is not equivalent to saying that "I know 'that p'" is reducible to "I know 'that p means x'" within a teleologically structured social context of my shared world", nor is it equivalent to saying that all designative assertive acts are reducible to implicit attribution of meanings to entities. Heidegger is not endorsing the view that Dasein's modes of experiencing entities by means of propositional statements and assertions are phenomenologically untenable, vulgar, or inauthentic. He does not endorse the view that our practical involvements with entities are somehow distorted by propositional modes of comportment toward them. As Golob (2014: 25) remarks, Heidegger is not saying that our

pre-thematic practical dealings with entities are somehow too rich or fine-grained to ever be captured in assertions of propositional statements. (This is the sort of claim that Wrathall and Carman are implicitly making.) But under this version of the derivative theory, we can account for how assertions as judgment is a unique mode of comportment toward entities, knowing about entities, confirming and revising our knowledge about entities, i.e., how it is a propositional mode of comportment within the framework of unconcealment that is nonetheless sensitive to specific epistemological demands.

This allows us to address the problem that we raised at the beginning of this section, of whether Heidegger conflates the epistemological question of ascertaining truth with the ontological question of the primordial meaning of truth. Recall that, as per the original 'derivative' theory that we had problematized, critics and Heideggerians alike tend to map the epistemological question onto propositional truth and the ontological question onto 'capital T' truth. Is this reading correct? I would agree that Heidegger does think that the ontological question maps onto the primordial sense of truth as disclosure. However, I do not think he maps propositions onto the epistemological question in any straightforward sense. If what we mean by epistemology is that humans as subjects are knowers with a set of beliefs that are either true or false and can be justified thus held with different degrees of credence, then for Heidegger, the correctness of propositions must first be an ontological question before it is an epistemological one. This is because epistemology in that above sense does not capture what it means to be a human being. If what we mean by epistemology is how a world-situated being like Dasein, with its existentiales of care and thrownness and facticity and so forth, can know about things in the world via different modes of comportment (perceptual, propositional, etc.,) and be able to justify their knowledge, then the correctness of propositions will be both an epistemological and ontological question. This is because the question of how we can determine truth by means of things like thematic assertions always involves the fore-structure of interpretation and understanding, which contains both epistemological and ontological elements.

In section 6.2, I will employ this version of the derivative theory to explain the activity of assertion as judgment as a specific, *propositional mode of comportment* toward entities. I argue that by appreciating the unitary structure of the activity of assertions, we will not reduce the propositional intentionality of assertions to practical involvements. In section 6.3,

I analyse Heidegger's development of Husserl's response to the correspondence theory, to show how i.) epistemological concerns such as evidence, confirmation and revision is already built into the structure of the activity of assertions-as-judgement within the framework of unconcealment; and ii.) why propositional intentionality must then be explanatorily derivative of unconcealment. Altogether, this may provide a satisfactory solution to the moderate claim.

6.2 The Structure of Assertions

In this section, I will focus on unpacking how the activity of assertion as judgment is a specific, propositional mode of comportment toward entities, or of uncovering entities, that is not reducible to practical involvements. I will also reinforce the distinction between the existentiale of disclosure and the capacity of uncovering.

Unconcealment is grounded on disclosedness. This is because Dasein's capacity to reveal individual entities is only possible if the world had already been disclosed and if Dasein is one that is disclosed. The hermeneutic circle of understanding explains what it means for the world and Dasein to already be disclosed. Dasein is thrown into a world in which significances are made available by the historical community of Dasein that preceded. These worldly significances are developed or maintained in Dasein's everyday existence, for example, through social practices and cultural customs. This is not to say that worldly significances, or what worldly entities mean, are completely 'subjectively' determined by Dasein: Dasein has no transcendental power over entities. Entities have a 'hold' over Dasein in that they have a definite way of showing themselves to us. This is demonstrated in embodied perceptual experience, in which we have no power over how the environment reveals itself to us, e.g., that we see (seeing in a broad sense) that chair in the classroom.

The other component of the hermeneutical circle is interpretation. Because Dasein is disclosed in the world and cares for the world, Dasein is also one that interprets. As a being that is mostly caught up in everyday circumspective concern for the environment, Dasein is concerned for the ready-to-hand equipment that it encounters in its work. Interpretation is the making-explicit of Dasein's understanding of the relational totality of equipment that underlies the ready-to-hand equipment. The fore-structure of understanding (fore-having, fore-sight and fore-conception) explains the conceptual structure of interpretation, i.e., how

interpretation makes our pre-understanding explicit by providing a guiding point-of-view or a conceptual framework. Since this fore-structure is none other than the hermeneutical circle of understanding, interpretation is also called the hermeneutical-as.

While interpretation is the making-explicit of the pre-understanding of what entities mean, discourse is the articulation of worldly significance in general. Discourse is an existentiale and describes Dasein's basic activity of speaking or communication. Discourse can have different concrete manifestations such as gesturing and utterances. The phenomenon of language is an important illustration of discourse because it shows how Dasein articulates what it already understands, e.g., it speaks with a historical language into which it has been thrown. Uncovering is then the explicit revealing of entities in how they have been interpreted. And since discourse is the articulation of worldly significance, uncovering is a mode of articulating the significance or meaning of entities. The former is the general capacity of Dasein to speak about the world, which enables the latter, the specific capacity of Dasein to speak about entities in the world. Again, I mean 'speak' in the broad sense of discourse, not just linguistic utterances or gesturing. Just like discourse has different worldly manifestations, uncovering has different ways in which it can be concretely instantiated in Dasein's factical life. One of these ways is assertions.

Assertions (*Aussage*) means statement, predicate, declaration, and proposition. In very general terms, assertions are a basic component of Dasein's linguistic activity. Assertions are a big part of the phenomenon of language, of how Dasein comports itself toward worldly entities by means of verbal and/or written utterances. There is obviously an important link between assertions and discourse, the existentiale of talking. Heidegger focuses on elucidating this link because he must restore the original meaning of *logos* to Dasein's general disposition and capacity to speak, and to show how the philosophical tradition has gone completely wrong in associating *logos* with assertions as judgment. What does he mean by assertions as judgment? It is generally assumed that assertions are a fundamental aspect of knowledge; for questions such as "how can John really know that Christchurch is in NZ?" is often answered by formulating the content of his belief into a judgment that is cashed out as a propositional statement, e.g., John's belief that "Christchurch is in NZ" counts as knowledge iff the proposition "Christchurch really is in NZ" matches up with real word affairs, and if

John can give good reasons for his belief.[12] According to traditional epistemology, our basic experience of worldly entities is composed of intentional states which can be explained in propositional terms.

For that reason, *logos* is translated into judgment by the philosophical tradition. As Heidegger writes, "Even if *logos* is understood in the sense of 'assertion', but of 'assertion' as 'judgment', this seemingly legitimate translation may still miss the fundamental signification [of *logos* as *Sprache*]" (BT: 55, SZ: 32); "In so far as assertion ('judgment') is grounded on understanding and presents us with a derivative form in which an interpretation has been carried out, it too 'has' a meaning" (BT: 195, SZ: 154). Assertion as judgment 'has' a meaning, just like the interpretation of an entity in the '*a* as *b*' structure has a meaning, but the meaning does not occur in a judgment. What is Heidegger getting at here? I think that he is saying: the meaning or signification that the assertion expresses are not actually derived from a mental judgment which is then verbally articulated and attached to an external object. Rather, the meaning was already there in the entity itself (or the way the entity shows itself) due to the pre-understanding which is made explicit in the interpretation of that entity as such-and-such. Therefore, judgments do not 'assign' meanings to entities through attributing properties in a propositional statement.

The 'as' in Heidegger's illustration of assertions as judgment is quite an important clue. Heidegger is talking about Dasein's activity of asserting a propositional statement, analysing this within the framework of understanding and interpretation. In this framework, assertions as judgment is a modification of the 'as' structure of interpretation (thus also of understanding insofar as the two are interdependent in the hermeneutic circle). Modification means: the assertion of a propositional statement is a derivative mode of comportment toward entities. There is a subtle but important distinction between the activity of assertions as judgment and the propositional framework of explaining what goes on in this activity. Let's call this activity the propositional mode of comportment. Heidegger is not rejecting its necessity as a mode of comportment towards worldly entities. Rather he is rejecting the traditional epistemological framework for explaining it. This framework is propositional intentionality, which is the idea that our basic experience of worldly entities is composed of

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[12] The *justification* of one's beliefs is also cashed out in propositional terms, since according to the standard notion of propositional justification in the JTB theory of knowledge the subject has to have sufficient reason to believe a given *proposition.*

intentional states that can be cashed out in solely propositional terms, i.e., by mapping the correspondence between mental content and an external object. For example, even in a contemporary critique such as Lafont's, there is a tacit assumption of an intrinsic link between the human being's basic intentional experience and the propositional form of interpreting and articulating that experience. According to this, if intentionality is indeed the mark of the mental, then the best way of unpacking how and why this is the case is to analyse the various ways in which our intentional states can be about an object or state of affairs: how do I know 'that p'? Is knowing how reducible to knowing 'that p, q, z…'? These questions are answered by appeal to truth, i.e., we know 'that p' if there is a correct correspondence between the intentional state (usually mental) and the entity in the world. In short, intentionality is primarily understood in propositional terms. The propositional content of our beliefs, assertions and other intentional states is taken to be fundamental to understanding what intentionality is. As such, epistemology creates the mistaken assumption that our primary intentionality is propositional intentionality. This has severe repercussions, such as creating the misconception that intentionality resides in the mind, that there needs to be the right correspondence between the mind and external objects, and so forth.

Heidegger seeks to show that the philosophical tradition is mistaken in their framework of propositional intentionality. Moreover, this framework leads to the distorted view that the propositional mode of comportment is the primary mode of the human experience of entities, thus the primary mode of knowledge acquisition and truth. For Heidegger, the epistemological question of "how do I know 'that p'?" cannot be asked, nor can it be subject to philosophical analysis through theories about propositional content, without assuming that such propositional intentional states of the kind "I know that p" are possible in the first place. Thus, he will argue that propositional modes of comportment are grounded on a more primordial mode of intentionality, which is the capacity to make entities manifest through the activity of uncovering, and that this should be explained within the framework of interpretation, understanding, and disclosedness in general.

Heidegger believes that the primary mode of knowledge acquisition and truth is world disclosure and the equiprimordial disclosedness of Dasein, i.e., to 'know' and to know truth in a very broad and general sense is to exist alongside other entities and Dasein in the hermeneutical circle of interpretation and understanding. This is the existential-hermeneutical

'as' and the primordial sense of truth. The second sense of truth is the uncoveredness of entities, which refers to the fact that entities have already been unveiled in the world such that we can experience them as standing in a meaningful totality of significances, e.g., in equipmentality. Next, a facet of the hermeneutical 'as' is the uncovering of entities – which is to manifest how they have been interpreted. It is a mode of comportment towards entities that makes their pre-understood meaning prominent. Uncovering is true because it manifests the way of being of an entity upon the background of the relational totality of equipment.

Finally, the propositional mode of comportment toward entities, which primarily takes the form of asserting propositional statements, is the apophantical-as. This is a mode of comportment that involves a 'levelling' of the 'as' of circumspective interpretation to the 'as' of something present-at-hand. An ontic example of this comportment is scientific practice, which theoretically or thematically considers an entity like water as something that is present-at-hand for the purposes of identifying its chemical structure, etc. This thematic consideration involves levelling down the background context of water, e.g. its practical uses for cleaning dishes and for drinking in a cup, so that the scientist can restrict her view to the explicit manifestation of water as a chemical compound.

Assertions as judgment, or the propositional mode of comportment toward entities, has three significations, which together make up the "unitary view of the full phenomenon [of assertions]" (BT: 199, SZ: 156). Heidegger outlines them thus:

- Assertions are a pointing-out: a mode of interpretation that uncovers the entity, i.e., allows the entity to be encountered in the how of its ready-to-handedness. For example, in my assertion to my colleague "this chair is free for the taking", the 'how' of the chair's ready-to-handedness is the invitation to sit down and look at the computer screen together with to me as opposed to taking the chair home. It can be seen how the fore-structure underlies this pointing-out.
- Assertions are a predication: this is the narrowing of the context of how the entity is manifested so that a particular aspect of the entity can be encountered thematically, as described above in the example of the scientific study of water.
- Assertions as communication: this is to highlight how assertions are utterances that we make in everyday life in order to talk to one another about the world that we share. It is a mode of uncovering an entity in a definite way for the purposes of opening up a space for communication.

So, the problem with the framework of propositional intentionality is that it occludes the first and third significations of assertions, and forces its framework onto the second signification, resulting in the mistaken correspondence theory of experience and the misplacement of the site of truth in judgment. Heidegger argues that truth is not primarily in the judgment, that is, in the correspondence between mental content and external object. Instead, this propositional or apophantic truth must be derivative of uncovering, namely, the manifestation of entities in how they show themselves to us. A propositional statement is true when the assertion points out, that is, demonstrates, that the entity indeed shows itself in how the assertion uncovered it.

6.3 Heidegger and Husserl on Truth, Evidence, and the Correspondence Theory

It is time to return to the new version of the 'derivative' theory and develop it in more detail alongside Lafont and Tugendhat's critiques. I will try to defend the following interpretation. Heidegger recognises the difference between entities as they are in themselves and entities as how they have been uncovered. However, if ultimately one accepts that Dasein is a being that is disclosed, a strict difference between the two cannot be sustained on the ontological level. Nonetheless, he does not abandon the epistemological requirements of confirmation and evidence.

According to Lafont (2000: 132), uncoveredness is the disclosure of intraworldly entities which functions as the condition of possibility for the 'agreement' between knowing and the object. However, entities *in themselves* and entities *in their uncoveredness* are taken to be synonymous without justification (Lafont 2000: 133). That is, there is no difference between entities as they are in themselves, and entities as how they are interpreted by Dasein through uncovering them by means of an assertion. According to Tugendhat and Lafont, if propositional truth is to be derivative of unconcealment, then there must be a clear separation between things in themselves and things as how they are uncovered. This is a problem of confirmation of whether a propositional assertion is true or false by appealing to the evidence supplied by the self-givenness of an entity. Under Heidegger's framework of uncovering, if the content of the propositional assertion "the picture is hanging askew on the wall" is really (propositionally) true, then this must rest on the fact that the assertion as a demonstrative act really uncovers the picture in its true condition of hanging askew on the wall. But, as

Tugendhat argues, what confirms the entity as really being 'as it is' is lost on Heidegger, since false propositions are also a demonstrative act that uncovers. And, as Lafont adds, this means that Heidegger's concept of uncovering is blind to the epistemological requirements of confirmation and evidence.

Lafont and Tugendhat both argue that Heidegger basically adopts Husserl's phenomenological argument against the correspondence theory while supposedly abandoning Husserl's notion of evidence as a requirement for truth. In Husserl's phenomenology, the self-givenness of entities, or how it manifests itself when given to us, must be true of the entity as it is in itself, and thus it serves as genuine evidence that what we see of the entity is true. This mode of givenness is, of course, not transcendent to human experience. The requirement for truth is the correspondence between the same real object given in two different modes of givenness: the empty intending of the object (e.g. belief that p) and the fulfilling intuition of the same object (e.g. seeing that p). According to Husserl, perceptual experiences can justify knowledge because these are cases of immediate seeing which give their objects in an originally presentive way. When we 'see' an entity, the phenomenal character of that perceptual intentional act provides *prima facie* justification for my belief that p, that the entity is such-and-such a way. This is the principle of all principles: that immediate seeing is precisely directed at something that is given, not something that is not given. "Immediate seeing, not merely the sensuous, experiential seeing, but seeing in the universal sense as an originally presentative consciousness of any kind whatever is the ultimate legitimizing source of all rational assertions" (Ideas, 1:36 [36]). "Phenomenologically, 'self-giving' means here that every perception within itself is not only, in general, a consciousness of its object, but that it gives its object to consciousness in a distinctive manner. Perception is that mode of consciousness that sees and has its object itself in the flesh." (Hua XI, p. 96; 2001, p. 140).

This justificatory character of immediate seeing is not immanent to subjective mental states. As Philipp Berghofer explains: "experiential justification is non-psychological in the sense that it is a matter of what is given and how it is given and not of how one feels about what is given" (Berghofer 2018: 158). Further, that the perception gives the object itself in the flesh indicates that the perceptual intentional act is about a real entity as opposed to

145

representations of it.[13] Finally, the act of justification requires the second-order identification of the coincidence between the empty intending and the fulfilling evidential intuition. According to Husserl's picture, then, the self-givenness of the entity in the perceptual intentional act justifies whether the proposition about the entity is true or false. However, the self-givenness of the state of affairs provides evidence in degrees of adequacy: this depends on what kind of entity is given. Physical entities give inadequate evidence (e.g., one can never see every single side of the apple tree in every possible weather or under every possible kind of lighting, etc., in the single perceptual act, because our perception of the entity can never exhaust how the physical entity as it is in itself); mathematical entities give apodictic evidence; existence gives adequate evidence.

Here we are chiefly concerned with the self-givenness of physical entities. Let us use Heidegger's askew picture as an example. The man believes that p: "the picture is hanging askew on the wall". In his immediate seeing of the picture, the picture gives itself as hanging askew on the wall. It provides evidence for his belief that p is true. This evidence is inadequate or incomplete, that is, it is not completely fulfilled for the same sort of reasons we outlined in the apple tree example. But providing that he is not hallucinating, that the room is not sloped, that the light is good, etc., we can comfortably agree that practically speaking the evidence seems to be sufficient for his belief to be justified. Furthermore, the perception of a thing involves anticipation and fulfilment. One anticipates that the picture will be indeed at a slight angle if they walk closer to inspect it, and if they continue to study the picture from different points of view they will discover that the evidence by and large conforms to their expectations, thus fulfilling their empty intending. Another important point that is adopted by Heidegger is that the perceived thing is not put together piece by piece through the combination of multiple intentional experiences of it. The thing is not hidden beneath the impressions we have of it, nor are we directly aware of the multiple impressions that together 'make up' the whole entity. Rather, we are always directly aware of the entity in its entirety. Just as Heidegger argues that in assertions we are pointing out how an entity sits in a relational context with other equipment, Husserl makes a similar point that when we make a judgment we are making propositions about states of affairs or relations. For example, to

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[13] There is also evidence that Husserl believes objects can be given even in cases of hallucinations and illusions (see Hua XVI: 15).

assert that "the picture is hanging askew on the wall" is to articulate a relation of 'hanging askew' between two entities. The immediate seeing of the state of affairs accordingly provides evidence towards my judgement. If the state of affairs coincides with my assertion, then the proposition is true.

As Lafont and Tugendhat remark, Heidegger's argument against the legitimacy of the correspondence theory as the primary site of truth basically repeats Husserl's argument. But there are subtle differences that will become crucial to our argument later, and so we must take some time to outline Husserl's understanding of the different senses of truth. In the Sixth Logical Investigation, section 39, Husserl outlines four senses of truth.

1. The experience of truth. The identification of the coincidence between empty intending and the fulfilling intuition.
2. Truth as the relationship of the coincidence itself. This is the sense of truth according to the correspondence theory.
3. The intuited thing itself; the self-givenness of the thing in immediate seeing; the evidence.
4. When the judgment really directs us toward the entity as it is in itself, that act is 'right' or 'correct'.

Truth 4, how a judgement really directs us toward the entity as it is, is explicated by truth 1 and 2. In this way, Husserl shows how truth as judgment is secondary to the act of identification.

Let us compare what we have so far with Heidegger's account of assertions-as-uncovering. Heidegger takes up Husserl's point about the truth of immediate seeing (truth 3). For Heidegger, as it is for Husserl, there is no question that the entity given to perceptual experience is the real object. Against Kant, they both hold that the thing as it is in itself is precisely the object as experienced. For Husserl, our intentional experience of entities is never completely fulfilled and there is always the possibility that our empty intending does not coincide with the evidence. These epistemological limitations on intentional experience thereby defuse criticisms that Husserl reduces entities in themselves to our intentional experience of entities in an idealist manner. It also provides the epistemological requirements of confirmation and evidence that Lafont and Tugendhat claim is missing in Heidegger. Clearly, Heidegger is also strongly committed to the view that entities have a certain 'hold'

over Dasein and can never be reduced to whatever interpretations that we have of them. What about confirmation and evidence?

6.4 Heidegger Versus Husserl on Assertions as Judgment

To address this issue, I will analyse how Heidegger's treatment of judgment differs from Husserl's. Husserl argues that truth as judgment is secondary to the act of identification by explicating how a correct judgment is accomplished by the experience of the coincidence of the empty intending and the fulfilling intuition. I believe Heidegger agrees with Husserl that truth 4 (truth as judgment) rests on truth 1 and truth 2. I hypothesize that he describes this using his own terminology of the 'preserving' of uncoveredness of entities in assertions in the dense passages at BT: 266-68, SZ: 224-25. But these passages demonstrate that Heidegger wants to go further than Husserl; to say that truth 1 and truth 2 are still trapped in the language of the correspondence theory. This is the point where he allegedly abandons the specific sense of entities as they are in themselves and the self-givenness of entities as evidence.

In my opinion, Heidegger wants to problematise Husserl's notion of truth 1 and truth 2 to argue that Husserl had not gone far enough to show why truth as judgement must be secondary. His tactic is to give a richer phenomenological account of assertions that simultaneously exposes how the framework of propositional intentionality still underlies truth 1 and truth 2. Assertions are carriers of empty intending (e.g., a belief that p) that is either confirmed or contradicted by the object given to perceptual-intentional experience. For Heidegger, assertions are much more capable than empty intending – they are themselves a mode of intentional experience of entities that can point entities out *and* make a specific aspect of their being manifest. They are also a way of communication. Most importantly, these three characteristics are jointly inherent to the activity of assertion.

Let us unpack this unitary structure further. When Dasein makes an assertion, the assertion doesn't just express something about the 'how' of the entity (e.g., in the way that the 'how' of the entity is attributed to the object in terms of propositional contents), but it also expresses Dasein's way of being towards the entity. For instance, in the assertion to my colleague "that computer chair is free for the taking", it is not just an expression about the

availability of the chair for sitting but also the offering and invitation, the relationship I have with my colleague, and so forth.

> Assertions communicate entities in the 'how' of their uncoveredness. When Dasein is aware of the communication, it brings itself in its awareness into an uncovering Being-towards the entities discussed. The assertion which is expressed is about something, and in what it is about (in ihrem Worüber) it contains the uncoveredness of these entities. This uncoveredness is preserved in what is expressed (BT: 266, SZ: 224).

Heidegger is talking about the activity of assertions in their unitary structure of pointing out, predication and communication. The uncoveredness of the entity, e.g., the ready-to-handedness of the chair as something to sit on, is preserved in the expression of the assertion, so that this can be accessible and understandable by the other Dasein with whom the speaker communicates. Instructional assertions made when training staff is a great example: consider the specific procedure of putting old stock at the back and the new at the front when restocking products. The manager asserts: "you should restock the newer products from the back so that the older products are sold first." The ready-to-handedness of the equipment, the key signification of which is to save the company more money by making sure products with shorter use-by dates are not left at the back of the shelf to rot, is preserved in the assertion. The manager's assertion has the unitary structure of pointing out the entity – the stock that is to be refilled; predication – the narrowing of the context so that a particular aspect of the entity, e.g., how it is to be restocked and why, is made explicit; communication – opening up a space for communication, in this case an instructional communication to train the employee in how to restock. This makes it possible for the trainee to understand the ready-to-handedness of the equipment preserved in the assertion, that is, the meaning of the procedure of restocking in that specific way.

There is another important aspect to assertions. Expressed assertions themselves are something ready-to-hand, since they, being linguistic utterances, are equipment used for the sake of speaking: "as something by which uncoveredness is preserved, it [the assertion expressed] has in itself a relation to the entities uncovered" (BT: 267, SZ: 224). For example, the manager's assertion is ready-to-hand for instructing the trainee on how to restock. The theory of agreement/correspondence concerns how the assertion as judgment

demonstrates that the entity had been uncovered in such-and-such a way, and this demonstration consists in showing how the assertion, in which the uncoveredness of the entity is preserved, relates to the entity in question. The assertion takes the entities as either ready-to-hand or present-at-hand, and the relation is itself taken as present-at-hand.

> The uncoveredness of something becomes the present-at-hand conformity of one thing which is present-at-hand – the assertion expressed – *to* something else which is present-at-hand – the entity under discussion. And if this conformity is seen only as a relationship between things which are present-at-hand – that is, if the kind of Being which belongs to the terms of this relationship has not been discriminated and is understood as something merely present-at-hand – then the relation shows itself as an agreement of two things which are present-at-hand, an agreement which is present-at-hand itself (BT: 267, SZ: 224, emphasis original).

Recall the distinction we made between the propositional mode of comportment, which is the activity of assertions as judgment; and propositional intentionality, which is the philosophical/epistemological framework of explaining what goes on in this activity. Under Heidegger's philosophical framework of disclosure, comportment, understanding, etc., assertions are equipment, thus ready-to-hand. The entity that the assertion is about is also equipment, thus either ready-to-hand or present-at-hand (e.g. if the equipment is broken). This is a phenomenological explanation of the unitary structure of assertions, of what goes on in Dasein's normal, everyday activity of using linguistic utterances to speak about the world, and has not much to do (if at all) with specific epistemological matters like designation or attribution.

The epistemologist fails to see the unitary structure of assertions and only focuses on the aspect of assertions as predication. He also devises the framework of propositional intentionality to analyse assertions as judgment. This framework does two things to the unitary structure of assertions. It takes the aspect of assertions as predication and distorts it into internal mental representations that are usually cashed out as propositional statements, that require a correspondence between the representation and the external thing in order to count as knowledge. This creates the misconception that this is all there is to the activity of assertions as judgment – i.e., it abstracts assertions from the fore-structure of interpretation and understanding. Recall that to Heidegger assertions, like hammer and nails, are

equipment. So, the epistemologist is thereby taking assertions as present-at-hand, just like the scientist takes the entity water as present-at-hand. And like the scientist, the epistemologist is taking the entity of which the assertion is about as present-at-hand for epistemological-theoretical consideration. Thus, the relationship of correspondence or agreement is itself present-at-hand, insofar as this relationship of agreement is narrowed down for the sake of epistemological-theoretical analysis, i.e. for the sake of (mistakenly) discovering the primary site of truth in it.

I will now compare Husserl and Heidegger's accounts of the derivative nature of truth in the sense of judgment. Husserl understands the immediate givenness of the entity as evidence, and insofar as we are talking about the (Husserlian, improved) correspondence theory, Heidegger does too. According to Husserl, in the act of synthesis I identify the coincidence between my empty intending and the fulfilling intuition. My identification of this coincidence is the *basis* of considering whether my judgment is true. This is actually mirrored in Heidegger's account of the assertion-as-judgment considered as present-at-hand in the framework of propositional intentionality. For example, let's imagine that I assert "that computer chair is free for the taking," and I can perceive that the state of affairs is indeed as I had asserted. In Husserl's model of intentionality, this assertion is an empty intending, and the immediate seeing of the state of affairs provides *prima facie* justification for my assertion. The evidence given is inadequate because the possibility of being mistaken is built into perceptual intentionality: I can anticipate that the evidence will be as I had intuited and at the same time I might be wrong if I inspect the object from a different angle. In this instance, the empty intending and the self-givenness of the entities in question coincide and I experience this correspondence between the two modes of intuition. This makes the act of my judgment 'right' or 'correct'. Thus, my propositional statement is true.

In Heidegger's framework of uncovering, there are two senses in which we can analyse the relation between assertion and judgment. First, is the activity of assertion as judgment: assertion as a modification of the as-structure of interpretation. It is a propositional mode of comportment that uncovers the state of affairs by pointing out the way of being of the entities and narrowing down the context of relations for the sake of communication. Assertions as judgment in this first sense is the unitary structure of the propositional mode of comporting toward entities which underlies 'empty intending', 'immediate seeing', and the

'correspondence' between them. Because 'immediate seeing' for Husserl is only one facet of the entity or state of affairs, it is already an implicit 'narrowing down' of the entity in how it shows itself. This makes it possible for our act of judgment to be wrong and subject to confirmation or revision. Similarly, the pointing-out of the uncovering act of assertions narrows down the entity or state of affairs such that we are focused on a particular facet of it. The other facets of the entity are concealed because they are not appropriate or related to the purpose of our assertion. Secondly, just as Husserl takes into account that we can by and large anticipate that our intuitions will match up with the entities as they show themselves, Heidegger's fore-structure of understanding gives us the foresight that our assertion as judgment will uncover the entity as it shows itself. However, I can still check whether the entity really is as I had uncovered it in my assertion. I can walk closer to perceive that the state of affairs is indeed as I had asserted – this involves uncovering other facets of the entity. If my perception reveals that the state of affairs is not as I had asserted, then my false assertion had indeed uncovered (since it points out the entity for thematic consideration), but by no means does this exclude the possibility for me to revise my belief through further uncovering of the entity, e.g., by perceiving other facets of the entity.

6.5 Heidegger's Problematisation of Husserl's Framework of Justification

On the surface, it certainly seems Heidegger's notion of assertion as judgment has nothing to do with the bivalent structure of truth and falsity. But, we can see that Heidegger's account of immediate seeing and the narrowing down of assertion as uncovering is actually not too different from Husserl's idea of the *prima facie* justificatory character of originary givenness. Both accounts clearly account for the possibility of mistaken judgments because the self-givenness of entities for both Husserl and Heidegger are facets of the real entity. Confirmation or revision of one's judgment is accordingly built into both Husserl and Heidegger's accounts of propositional intentionality. For Husserl, the self-givenness of the entity (truth 3) justifies my empty intending: it provides evidence (truth 3) for my belief 'that p'. Husserl makes the crucial discovery that the self-givenness of entities, or how they are given to us in our immediate 'seeing', is simply true (truth 3). He then shows that the correctness of the act of judgment (truth 4) is none other than the synthesising act of experiencing the coincidence between the empty intending and the original givenness of the

state of affairs. This is why truth as judgment is secondary to truth 1 and truth 2. Heidegger's discussion of how the correspondence theory renders the being-uncovering of the assertion and the uncovered entity present-at-hand in order to posit a present-at-hand correspondence between the two is strikingly similar to Husserl's argument.

Let me expand on this. The 'how' of the uncoveredness of the entity is preserved in the assertion, which is equipment insofar it uses concrete words and language forms to articulate worldly significances. The empty intending in Husserl's account, e.g. "my belief that p", is precisely the present-at-hand rendering of the being-uncovering of the assertion. The entity 'as it is in itself' in immediate seeing within this relation of justification is the present-at-hand rendering of the entity that had been uncovered in a specific way. The coincidence between the two acts of intuition is the 'relation' that is posited between the being-uncovering of the assertion and the uncoveredness of the entity, both rendered present-at-hand. Rendering them present-at-hand is the thematic interpretation of the activity of assertion as judgement under the framework of propositional intentionality. Thus, Heidegger shows in a similar way to Husserl that judgment as truth is derivative of truth 1 and truth 2. What Heidegger adds is an emphasis on conditions of possibility (uncovering and disclosure) for the general activity of assertions as judgment, which Husserl accounts for to some extent in the synthesizing act of the experience of truth and the horizonal structure of intentionality.

Recall that Heidegger is not criticizing the act of asserting as judgment (the activity of asserting something about an entity), because assertion is also a mode of comportment toward entities. He is criticizing the framework of traditional epistemology, which is precisely the relationship of justification that Husserl still preserves to an extent despite his groundbreaking discovery of the principle of principles. Husserl is ultimately concerned with finding a foundation for scientific truths through evidence, which requires the thematic interpretation and relation of correspondence outlined above; whereas Heidegger is ultimately concerned with the question of being which is not determinable through thematic interpretation and prone to distortion through any correspondence theory. For example, in Husserl's formulation, we have the same intentional object given in two different ways: perception and assertion. Husserl keeps these two modes of intentionality strictly separate because perception has a justificatory character, whereas assertion (empty intending) lacks evidence. Heidegger departs from Husserl at this point. For Heidegger, to say that perception

fulfils the empty intending of assertions and to keep them strictly separate already abstracts away from Dasein's general capacity to uncover entities. That is, both perception and assertion are modes of comportment toward entities, amongst other modes like practical involvement. Certainly, an assertion might be fulfilled by checking perceptually whether it is really the case. However, Dasein's capacity to identify the coincidence between the two intentional states is grounded on an experience of truth even more primordial than Husserl's truth 1: this is the equiprimordial disclosedness of Dasein and the world. Heidegger would argue that Husserl's formulation of the relationship of justification remains a framework of propositional intentionality that renders these two modes of comportment (or these two modes of intending the same real object) present-at-hand; and the correspondence between the two is thereby itself present-at-hand, thus burying the general *phenomenon* of disclosure that stands behind these modes of comportment.

Lafont and Tugendhat fail to recognise that Heidegger's problematisation of judgement as truth necessitates his partial abandonment of Husserl's strict difference between the conception of the entity 'as it is in itself' and the entity in how it 'appears' (in his framework, how it is uncovered), insofar as these two concepts are typically defined in terms of how they stand in a relationship of correct or incorrect correspondence. This is a partial abandonment, better yet an abandonment of terminology, because we argued in 4.4 that Heidegger supports Kant's important discovery that the thing in itself and the thing as it manifests itself to us are the same entity given in two different ways: finitely to the finite subject and infinitely to God. Given propositional intentionality's mistaken ontological commitments, which remains even in Husserl's account of original givenness, Heidegger must show that the intentional experience of the entity 'as it is in itself', and the experience of judging correctly or incorrectly about a state of affairs, is just one facet of our general activity of comporting towards entities; an activity that requires the fore-structure of understanding and the disclosedness of Dasein and the world.

This casts doubt on the trenchancy of Tugendhat and Lafont's criticism that Husserl's self-givenness of entities and the epistemological requirement of evidence is lost on Heidegger. Husserl shows how correspondence theories are mistaken by demonstrating how judgment presupposes the subject's experience of truth, namely, its capacity to identify the coincidence between two modes of intuition of the same real entity. While the self-givenness

of entities seem to secure the ground of evidence and confirmation against which an empty intending, like a belief, is compared, their self-givenness constitute inadequate evidence. At the same time, he shows how the inadequate evidence of self-given physical entities is by and large reliable given how anticipation and the capacity to recognise the entity's relational/horizonal context is built into the intentional act. I have argued that Heidegger develops this very picture in his account of uncovering, especially in the fore-structure of interpretation and understanding that underlies the unitary structure of the activity of assertion. While Heidegger does not use the term 'evidence', the uncovering of assertions clearly accounts for the possibility for being wrong and for the capacity to then revise one's judgment through further acts of 'seeing' or uncovering. The possibility of confirming and revising one's belief is built into Dasein's capacity to uncover entities, because Heidegger shares Husserl's insight that there are epistemological limitations on intentional experience, i.e., that our intentional experience of entities is never completely fulfilled and might be erroneous.

Thus, Heidegger shows that propositional truth must be derivative of the being-uncovering of assertion in the following sense: if propositional truth is the correctness or rightness of an act of judgement (Husserl's truth 4), then it is accomplished by positing a relationship of correspondence between the being-uncovering of the assertion and the entity, both considered present-at-hand for thematic analysis under the framework of propositional intentionality. This does not depart significantly from Husserl's argument that truth as judgement is derivative because truth 4 can be explicated in terms of truth 1 and 2 – that is, the experience of the coincidence between two modes of intuition of the same real entity.

Now we can use our analysis of Heidegger's adaptation of Husserl's evidential intuition to return to the issues of validity and objectivity discussed in section 4.5. Lafont seems to think that for Heidegger what we immediately experience in the original givenness of things is the absolute standard of truth. This is because the original givenness of world disclosure underlies the original givenness of every entity or state of affairs that we experience. It appears that Lafont implicitly believes that the original givenness of something is only experienced perceptually. Not only that, she also believes that all acts of perceptual experience involve interpretation, and interpretation must involve language. The experience of evidential intuition is then reducible to a set of linguistic meanings.

But evidential intuition is not only experienced perceptually, and it is not reducible to linguistic meanings. We might be tempted to say that the hermeneutic circle of interpretation and understanding which underlies all our perceptual intentional acts can be captured by a holistic web of meanings. However, this is not all there is to it. Evidential intuition also requires you to 'posit' the object to take it as something existing independently of you. This goes back to Heidegger's focus on the Kantian faculty of imagination as the primordial faculty in synthesising intuition and understanding, a point that Husserl also acknowledges in his concept of the categorical intuition. From both Kant and Husserl's account, Heidegger holds on to the important discovery that the objectivity of objects emerges from the categorical intuition because the essence of things arises from the manifold free intuitions we have of it. He shares Husserl's belief that evidential intuition is not isolated to a particular type of intentional act, e.g., perception or judgment. Rather, evidential intuition is built into the basic structure of experience, e.g., in the presupposition of objectivity.

Evidential intuition goes hand in hand with categorical intuition. For in interpretation Dasein must posit the objectivity of the thing for itself as well as for others as a requirement for intersubjective communication. To combine Kantian and Husserlian language, to be receptive to the intuition of the cup that gives itself in originary givenness we also need the transcendental apperception or categorical intuition that the 'cupness' of the cup emerges from the manifold free intuitions we have of it over time and space. These categories of objectivity and validity are not perceptually experienced but relates to the very transcendence of Dasein. This is the basis for analysing the 'correspondence' between two modes of intuition of the same thing in order to arrive at the propositional truth of a judgment.

Conclusion

I want to give a summary of my response to the problem of how propositional truth is derivative of unconcealment. Heidegger's supporters, such as Carman and Wrathall, take 'propositional truth' as the truth or falsity of the propositional content of an assertion, where the truth or falsity of the statement is confirmed or denied by its correspondence or lack of correspondence to the extant entity. They take 'derivative' as the sense that the unconcealment or 'pointing out' of entities must be the hermeneutic, ontological condition for the propositional truth or falsity of a statement. A propositional statement is true because

of the expressive-communicative, practical intelligibility of cultural-historical interpretations that make articulations of discourse possible. Heidegger's supporters often hold that such practical intelligibility, being pre-propositional, must also be pre-linguistic – further, that assertions are prone to flattening and distorting such practical interpretations. His critics retort that this doesn't answer the question of derivative in virtue of what, since it simply repeats the trivial claim that specific, thematic assertions must rest on the condition of the general, broad disclosure of worldly significances.

I tried to solve this dilemma by providing an alternative take on the 'derivative' theory. Heidegger's main reason for challenging the primacy of propositional truth is to show that the correspondence between a mental propositional attitude (e.g., "I believe that p") and an object or state of affairs is actually an impoverished account of propositional intentionality. By appreciating the unitary structure of the activity of assertions as judgment, we see that 'derivative' actually describes how propositional modes of comportment toward entities are put under certain frameworks of philosophical analysis, viz., traditional epistemology. It turns out that the propositional truth of statements derived from 'correspondence' is actually predicated on rendering the assertion as judgment and the state of affairs present-at-hand and subsequently positing a relation between them that is also present-at-hand; finally, that this is the "dimming down" of the activity of assertions as judgment done for the sake of thematically studying assertions under the framework of traditional epistemology.

I analysed assertive propositional modes of comportment toward entities under Heidegger's framework of uncovering and compared this with Husserl's account of justification. I argued that Heidegger is able to build in the epistemological requirements of evidence and confirmation into his account of assertion as uncovering, and that he expands Husserl's critique of the correspondence theory in important directions. Thus, we can identify two senses in which propositional truth is derivative of concealment. First, is the fairly innocuous one that thematic interpretation is derivative of hermeneutic interpretation. But the second, and more important one, is that the grammar of traditional epistemology in analysing propositional statements and how they ascertain knowledge is derivative of a richer, less prejudiced mode of explanation of assertions. This is unconcealment, which has a fuller vocabulary for explaining propositional modes of comportment upon the background of Dasein's embeddedness in the world, its existentiales of care, discourse, fallenness, and so

on. This solves the 'strong' thesis, the criticism that Heidegger subsumes the epistemological question of truth into the ontological question of truth. He does not replace the notion of propositional truth with unconcealment, and we are able to give a better account of 'derivative' beyond the trivial claim that thematic interpretation is grounded upon the phenomenon of disclosure. Unconcealment explains in a richer way how propositional intentionality is a possible mode of comportment of Dasein toward entities; therefore, it actually adds something new and important to the epistemological question. The bottom line is that despite his insistence on the ontological question of truth being a more pressing and primordial philosophical question, Heidegger does not forfeit the epistemological question of how Dasein ascertains and justifies what it knows.

Chapter 7: Normative demands on World Disclosure

Introduction

I have defended Heidegger against some of the criticisms that listed at the end of Chapter 3. I have argued that Lafont's criticisms — that Heidegger holds the MDR thesis, that he fully embraces the German linguistic turn, and that he is a linguistic idealist — are unfounded because they rest on substantial misconceptions about the role of language in his fundamental ontology. In the previous chapter, I addressed the famous problem of unconcealment and propositional truth and offered an alternative version of the 'derivative' argument that does not completely ignore the epistemological question of how one ascertains truth. In this chapter, I address the question of how far this solves the moderate question, namely, the problem that Heidegger neglects the epistemological question of truth and therefore cannot be justified in labelling unconcealment with the term 'truth'.

According to the critics, unconcealment cannot *qualify* as truth because it fails to explain what we are *doing* when enquiring into what is true of the world, or, to account for what truth means *in our practice.* It seems to me that there are three distinct kind of worries within this criticism that unconcealment cannot qualify as truth. We can break them down like this.

(1) First, how is validity and objectivity retained in an account of truth that is subject to *historically contingent* disclosures of meaning? An account of what truth means in our practice requires an explanation of how we determine truth claims in accordance with standards of validity and objectivity. The standards of validity and objectivity should be principles or laws that are valid for all rational subjects. According to Lafont, Heidegger holds that disclosures establish these absolute principles or laws insofar as horizons of meaning are always already determined for a historical community of Dasein. However, at the same time, these disclosures of meaning – which include disclosures of standards of ascertaining truth – are *not* valid for all insofar as they are historically contingent. In Lafont's words:

through the equating of truth with the *factual* standard of uncoveredness, which is uncoupled from all normative traits, the *detranscendentalization* already accomplished concerning the

projection of meaning is *expanded to include truth itself*. But in this way, the concept loses it *counterfactual* character without losing its character of an absolute standard of measure. (Lafont 2000: 143, emphasis original)

Habermas and Lafont argue that Heidegger's account of disclosure unreasonably blurs the line between truth as the historically contingent uncovering of meaning and truth as knowledge that can be ascertained, tested, and confirmed. As Habermas and Tugendhat remark, disclosure is immune from questions of correctness and validity. It fails to be a standard, being a moving target that cannot itself be validated. As such, there is no more to truth than what is agreed upon by a historical community, resulting in extreme cultural relativism. Lafont and Habermas' related worry is that the horizons of meaning are essentially factical – and what is essentially factical should not have absolute authority over us. This is a problem relating to Dasein's reflexivity and freedom. Heidegger cannot maintain that understandings of being are dominant for a particular historical group of Dasein if standards for ascertaining truth are simply relative to a historical horizon of meaning. We have no valid reason to follow these norms, nor can we escape from these norms. This entails that disclosures of meaning horizons are, using a phrase that Lafont borrows from Hamann, "a priori arbitrary and indifferent, but a posteriori necessary and indispensable" (Lafont 2000: 3).

(2) The second problem is the commensurability between different disclosures or horizons of meaning – how can different historical communities of Dasein recognise that they are talking about the same objective world? Given Heidegger's view of world disclosure as successive epochs, it seems that each historical disclosure of understandings of being is secluded and unalterable. Lafont thus argues: "the attempt to conceive the historical changes in our understanding of being as a learning process is just an illusion. There is no absolute truth across incommensurable understandings of being or world-disclosures. They are unrevisable from within and inaccessible (meaningless) from without" (Lafont 2002a: 188). The normative consequence is that theories and empirical evidence cannot be tested and compared due to the lack of overlap between conceptual frameworks and languages of different meaning horizons. There seems to be no way of assessing different historical

projections of meaning to see how one projection might provide a better understanding of the same objective world than another projection.

(3) Finally, how can truth claims that we make be justified through discursive communication? It is not clear that Heidegger provides an account for how we can achieve certainty and hold one another accountable to standards of justification in practice. This is especially the case when it comes to specific regions of knowledge like theoretical and scientific understanding. For example, if even a mere assertion is an uncovering of the world, we are owed an explanation of in what sense this is the case. How does uncovering in this sense differ from the specific uncovering of assertions used in practices such as scientific experimentation? The critics are also worried that Heidegger neglects the value of intersubjective modes of ascertaining knowledge, even if discursive communication appears to be crucial for disclosures of meaning. There might be some limitations to the vocabulary of Heidegger's framework of unconcealment when we are trying to explain assertive-as-uncovering in paradigmatic cases of world disclosure like scientific breakthroughs.

I acknowledge that these worries are legitimate and serious. For instance, relativism would pose a significant issue for unconcealment if we are not able to identify things beyond the collective subjectivity of our historical community. In response, I will argue that world disclosure can be open to critical analysis and revision and does not reduce standards of validity and objectivity to accepted norms. Dasein can have a self-reflexive awareness of disclosed horizons of meanings such that they can critique and reform them, and discover new meanings. I will engage with the work of scholars such as Lawrence Hatab, Denis McManus and Jeff Kochan to make a case for how Heideggerian world disclosure is not a closed hermeneutical circle, but an open one that is crucial for understanding the human condition. Dasein can process disagreement and resolve conflicts. It is not the case that Heidegger's account of world disclosure results in incommensurability between different epochs and extreme cultural relativism, because I suspect that there are some misconceptions on the part of the critics about Dasein's reflexivity, freedom, and the notion of competing worldviews. Through this reading, I hope to show that Heidegger's account of world disclosure is not as normatively deficient as the critics believe.

7.1 The Shortfalls of the Framework of Unconcealment

The critics are concerned that unconcealment fails to fully explain what truth means in our practice. That is, it doesn't completely answer the moderate question of how one can reliably ascertain truth according to standards of validity and objectivity. In the previous chapter, I tried to show how Dasein can revise and clarify knowledge through different acts of uncovering, arguing that notions of evidence and confirmation are built into the fore structure of understanding. However, a serious problem remains. Heidegger is unable to provide a full picture of how that initial act of perceptual or assertive uncovering is recognizable as true or false such that it calls for confirmation or revision. He fails to provide a convincing phenomenological account of how an assertive interpretation of an entity can be correct or incorrect in the bivalent sense of truth. We only have a phenomenological account of how we go about confirming or revising the initial interpretation by means of other interpretations.

For example, consider these two cases of 'incorrectness'. (1) I misinterpreted the bush in the distance as a man coming towards me. (2) I misinterpreted the door as a normal exit when in fact it was only meant to be used as a fire exit. In the first example, I 'covered up' the bush as it is in itself, namely, a bush. In the second example, I covered over the door as it is in itself, namely, a fire exit door. There is an obvious difference between these two types of covering-over. The first is a perceptual error, and the second is a perceptual and interpretive error. By interpretive error, I mean that something has gone awry in Dasein's narrowing down of the context of what they are trying to communicate. In the second case, we can explain how it went wrong by appealing to the fore structure of understanding, e.g. I narrowed down the context in the wrong way and I wasn't aware of the conventions of using exits in this particular lecture hall. But the first case of incorrectness cannot be explained very well by appeal to the fore structure of understanding, because there is something lacking in saying that my error is due to a mistaken narrowing-down of conventional expectations of what happens in forests at night, the horror movie plots that lead one to think too much, and so forth.

Another case of perceptual error that the language of unconcealment cannot clearly give a phenomenological account for is illusions. For example, the Muller-Lyer illusion in which two lines that are the same length appear to be of different lengths due to the arrows at either ends which point in different directions. Another is the Thatcher illusion, where we fail

to immediately detect that local features of a face, namely the eyes and mouth, have been inverted because the face is presented upside down. Yet another are optical illusions where static patterns appear to be pulsing or moving. In such cases, our visual systems simply fail to process what is happening. These perceptual errors are clearly errors in some sense. What we are 'seeing' is not 'objectively' there, that is, it is not true of the thing as it is in itself. For instance, according to the depth cue explanation for the Muller-Lyer illusion, the error is due to how our brains perceive a line as further away and thereby shorter because of how the fins are pointing inward to the line, like how the corner of a building are perceived to be sloping away. These are not clearly interpretive errors, but they are perceptual errors owing to how our brains are wired to see things in a certain way.

Heidegger cannot easily account for the difference between specific types of interpretive comportment towards entities. What goes on in assertive acts of interpretation differs according to the type of entity and state of affairs we encounter. These assertive acts of interpretation are also true or false, correct or incorrect, in different ways. That is, we can say broadly that incorrect statements cover up while also uncovering the entity, but Heidegger hasn't given us much to go on in terms of distinguishing between different kinds of covering up and uncovering that occur in different circumstances.

According to Apel (1996: 72) and Lafont (2000: 115), Heidegger eventually comes to recognise the force of Tugendhat's critique, namely, that unconcealment fails to provide a satisfactory answer to the epistemological question of how one attains truth and justifies one's truth claim. As a result of this, he is allegedly forced to abandon the claim that unconcealment, *aletheia*, is 'primordial truth'. Instead, it is 'not-yet-truth', as reflected in the ambivalent descriptions of truth in his later works. This alleged retraction of naming *aletheia* 'truth' occurs in "The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking", where he writes, ''to raise the question of *aletheia*, of unconcealment as such, is not the same as raising the question of truth. For this reason, it was inadequate and misleading to call *aletheia* in the sense of opening, truth" (Heidegger 1977c: 69). However, I am not convinced that Heidegger had gone for a full retraction. For on the page prior to the quote, he writes:

> Insofar as truth is understood in the traditional 'natural' sense as the correspondence of
> knowledge with beings demonstrated in beings, but also insofar as truth is interpreted as the

certainty of the knowledge of Being, *aletheia*, unconcealment in the sense of opening may not be equated with truth. Rather, *aletheia*, unconcealment through opening, first grants the possibility of truth. For truth itself, just as Being and thinking, can only be what it is in the element of the opening. Evidence, certainty in every degree, every kind of verification of *veritas* already move within that *veritas* in the realm of the prevalent opening. (Heidegger 1977c: 69)

As I see it, he is concerned that when philosophers employ the term 'primordial truth', 'truth' would still be understood according to the grammar of the correspondence theory, i.e., that the processes of the ascertainment of truth are all reducible to propositional modes of intentionality. They fail to fully recognise that the grammar of propositional intentionality cannot account for how the basic, non-propositional modes of human experience – such as the hermeneutical-as – already involves modes of assessing evidence, verification, and justification. In other words, it already involves an understanding of the normative and pragmatic elements of truth. If Heidegger says that unconcealment is not yet truth, it is most likely because he realises the word 'truth' is already so loaded with philosophical conceptions from the model of traditional epistemology that it is bound to cause confusion.

That is not to deny the possibility that he had caused some of the confusion himself in his account of unconcealment, which we have seen does a somewhat unsatisfactory job of describing the difference between different types of uncovering, such as perceptual errors. Nonetheless, it is not the case that in the later works he concedes with Tugendhat that his framework is entirely oblivious or dismissive of the epistemological question of the ascertainment of truth and thereby distances itself from the term 'truth' and the epistemological issues associated with it. That he has not gone for this retraction is reflected in the last sentence of the quote above. He recognises that the question of truth involves the process of assessing evidence and determining the certainty of a truth claim. He also maintains that if we are to continue asking this epistemological question then the proper way is to ask it through the framework of unconcealment.

I argued that Heidegger does not abandon his argument that unconcealment is primordial truth. I also admitted that Heidegger can only provide a very thin answer to the epistemological question. This is due to the limited vocabulary of his project of fundamental ontology and his overriding concern over the question of being in such a project. This leaves

us in a tough spot, since Heidegger's thin answer to the epistemological question does not make him immune to the Lafont's criticism: ontology cannot answer all the specific questions of the ascertainment and justification of knowledge. In other words, the moderate claim that Heidegger is not *qualified* to label unconcealment as truth remains a pressing issue. When engaging in enquiry into what is true of the world, e.g., in scientific investigation, we need to know how this is a unique kind of comportment and unconcealment in distinction from just casually seeing and uncovering that chair in my garden. And when we are communicating about scientific discoveries to test their real implications in everyday life, we need to know how this is a unique instantiation of discourse in distinction from communicating about the weather. This is where Apel and Habermas rightly point out Heidegger's failure to fully appreciate epistemological concerns in his account of unconcealment. They argue that Heidegger's account doesn't fully capture the structure of how we experience the world and what we're doing when we say that things are true of the world. The world as it is experienced by us is a lifeworld. It is the context that makes it possible for us to make certain claims that are true. For example, the claim that "this cup is full" depends on first experiencing something as a cup within its embeddedness and our practical involvements. This is what we call the broad ontological conditions for knowing in general.

However, Habermas and Apel might say that there is also a real thing in the world – that very cup – that can transcend our lifeworld. For example, it is round and it has a certain weight, among other features. When we assert something about the entity, the idea that we can be wrong, that the validity of our statement is in principle verifiable irrespective of culture, is built into that experience. This might be called the theoretical gaze. As I argued in section 4.5, Heidegger definitely thinks that truth has to do with things themselves, independent of the observer. Through his interpretation of Kant and Husserl, he argues that for knowledge and communication to be possible, speakers must first assume that the world is out there and that it is same for everybody. But is the account of unconcealment able to account for how something can be determined as true and justified as true according to a reliable standard irrespective of history and culture? In the next section, I will argue that it can.

7.2 How Validity and Objectivity are Retained in Unconcealment

Habermas and Lafont are worried that by equating truth with the factual standard of uncoveredness, Heidegger reduces truth to historically contingent projections of meaning, while making these projections 'absolutes' insofar as they determine how everything in the world can be interpreted by a historical community. If so, it would mean that he is supporting a deflationary theory of truth and a form of cultural relativism. It will be useful here to look at Richard Rorty's conception of truth given the similarities between Habermas' criticisms of Rorty and those of Heidegger. By analysing Habermas' case against Rorty we can get a better sense of whether Heidegger has the same sort of view as Rorty and whether his account of truth as unconcealment is deserving of similar criticisms.

For Rorty (1996, as cited in Anton A. van Niekerk 2020), there is no real distinction between truth as such and 'warranted assertability'. This is the idea that when we say that something is true, we are saying nothing more than that it 'works' or 'functions' successfully according to the existing linguistic meanings that are established in the historical-cultural community in which we make this claim. As such, the distinction between truth and justifiability collapses. Rorty's pragmatist reading of truth means that knowledge and truth claims boil down to linguistic meanings that a historical community of Dasein use in order to survive. Indeed, he is often accused of using a Darwinian framework to describe the human being's relationship to truth as mere coping mechanisms. As Rorty remarks, there is no point to asking what things are in themselves; what matters is which description is more useful for our purposes (Rorty 1996: 69, as cited in Anton A. van Niekerk 2020: 398). Habermas rejects Rorty's position as inadequate:

> We have to build some reservation into the notion of rational acceptability if we want to bridge the gap, but we must not blur the line between '-is true' and '-is justifiably held to be true.' We must stretch the referent of the idea that a proposition is rationally acceptable 'for us' beyond the limits and the standards of any local community. We must expand the universe of 'all of us' beyond the social and intellectual boundaries of an accidental bunch of people who just happen to gather under our skies. 'True' would otherwise merge with 'justified in the present context'. (Habermas 1996: 21)

For Habermas, a theory of meaning must not lose sight of a standard of objectivity and validity that is valid for all even beyond the unavoidable contingencies of history and culture. He wants to find a middle point between the ideal of truth and historically situated intelligibility. If parties from different historical groups are to be capable of agreeing or disagreeing upon something in discursive communication, it is necessary that there is a standard of ascertaining truth that transcends the historically specific boundaries of our language. Historical communities must also assume this standard to justify any truth claims. As Anton A. van Niekerk explains:

> … if we want to use language intelligibly – and truth claims are, as extensively argued by Habermas in his earlier universal pragmatics (Habermas 1979, 1–68), an essential part of all intelligible language – we must accept the existence, somewhere, of an "ideal public" (focus imaginarius) that must be able to vindicate the legitimacy of what we claim outside of the confines of the specific public addressed in a given discourse. (Niekerk 2020: 403)

Habermas and Lafont make similar remarks about the lack of differentiation between interpretation and knowledge in philosophers belonging to the German linguistic turn, and by extension, Heidegger. Indeed, Habermas and Lafont's claim is that the distinction between truth and the justification of truth is missing in Heidegger, just as it is in Rorty. But is it justified to regard Heidegger as holding the same position as Rorty?

Heidegger's interpretation of truth is not quite the same as Rorty's. First, as I argued in Chapter 5, worldly meaning does not boil down to linguistic meaning shared by a particular historical group of Dasein. Moreover, not all meaning is linguistic meaning. Secondly, Heidegger would completely reject the reading that Dasein's understanding of the world reduces to a mere coping mechanism. There is a temptation to carry the pragmatic reading of Dasein's relationship to equipment as ready-to-hand and for-the-sake-of-which's to the extreme, to say that Dasein's understanding of entities is no more than an understanding of how these entities fulfil a particular purpose. However, what things are in themselves are not exhausted by their practical purposes for a particular community of Dasein. Heidegger continuously emphasises how objects have a hold on us and exceed what we can know of them. Heidegger believes that how things are in themselves, and the preservation of the

distinction between the innerworldly and independent objects, are crucial elements to explaining how Dasein can experience entities meaningfully at all.

As I argued in section 4.5, Heidegger clearly appreciates the importance of the distinction between the innerworldly and worldly as a condition of possibility for experience and communication, and he accounts for this in his analysis of Kantian transcendental idealism and Husserl's categorical intuition and originary givenness. I used a minimal realist reading of Heidegger to show that he can maintain the independence of the existence of objects in themselves and the dependence of their intelligibility on Dasein without losing the categories of validity and objectivity. Our interpretation of entities does not exhaust what the essence of entities are because we are finite knowers.

I would therefore argue that Heidegger does not abandon standards of validity and objectivity and adopt an extreme case of meaning holism and relativism where things mean what they mean or are true simply because of contingent historical-cultural factors. While Dasein's interpretation of objects rests upon the fore-structure of understanding, part of what makes the meaningful experience of objects possible is the presupposition that the object is an independent entity that is the same for you as it is for me, within the same objective world. Therefore, although the historical projection of meaning is factical, the categories of validity and objectivity are maintained. These categories are not perceptually experienced, rather, like the categorical intuition or transcendental apperception, they are part of what constitutes the transcendence of Dasein. In that sense, they still have 'authority' over our experience and serves as a standard of ascertaining truth claims that is valid for all.

The critics may maintain that this is not enough. In actual practice, different communities of Dasein may still have different worldviews owing to historically specific projections, and Heidegger gives no account for why such contingent worldviews should have any authority over us. As Lafont may argue, as much as our processes of ascertaining truth appear to be indispensable because we can't live without it, such categories are actually arbitrary because we can easily imagine that another community gets by with completely different methods of validation. However, I suspect that some of these worries are slightly misplaced because they overlook some key aspects of Dasein's capacity for freedom and for subjecting itself to norms. Admittedly, Heidegger does not explicitly discuss how normativity and practices might have a hold over us beyond the contentious exposition of das

Man's 'averageness' and 'levelling down'; talking about normativity would also require him to venture into the ontic manifestations of the ground of being, a task he wants to avoid in *Being and Time*. Nonetheless, we can at least develop a picture of normativity that is consistent with Heidegger's views by drawing on his discussions of Kantian respect for the law and subsequently viewing this through a pragmatic and Wittgensteinian lens.[14]

Projections of meaning condition many kinds of practices, such as correct usage of words. Practices are rule governed. In the case of learning how to speak a language, for instance, we need to internalise an inexhaustive set of normative rules – not just what a word of phrase refers to but when it is socially appropriate or inappropriate to say a certain thing, etc. Reasoning arguably involves the same kind of thing, merging norms of practice and logic. Even perception is a rule governed practice: to pick something like a 'chair' out to talk about it or to use a word to pick out a colour like 'red' are practices that we have been assimilated to by being brought up within a set of norms in our historical community. Additionally, historically specific practices or rules have authority over Dasein because Dasein is free. Several Heidegger scholars, such as Golob and Hatab, have appealed to his notion of freedom to address this issue of the authority of norms. Broadly, the idea is that part of human agency is the capacity to be responsive to norms qua norms, especially to have reflexive awareness of one's reasons for acting on the basis of norms. We subject ourselves to these rules or norms as free subjects. According to Golob, "[Dasein's] freedom is the capacity to commit oneself to norms, and to act on the basis of them" (Golob 2014: 195). This is in contrast to merely acting in accordance with norms. For example, a parrot squawking 'thank you' to a customer in accordance to rules of greeting does not actually understand said rules. According to Hatab, Dasein's freedom is an ontological openness within conditions of historicity and sociality: "freedom can be affirmed, not as an absolute ground or condition within the self, but as something situated and contextual, calling for specific analyses regarding what kind of movement is at issue, in relation to what kind of constraint, and for what purpose" (Hatab 2000: 178).

Kochan makes a similar point. In Heidegger's reading of Kant, the law (or rules) is not constituted by the subjectivity of the individual subject. Instead, the subject directs herself to

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[14] For more on the affinities between Heidegger and Wittgenstein regarding the ground of reason/meaning, language, and human practices, see the anthology *Wittgenstein and Heidegger*, 2013, eds. David Egan, Stephen Reynolds and Aaron James Wendland.

the rules. Her directedness towards the rules allow her to recognise certain possibilities for action that are open to her as a unique subject. "Strictly speaking, then, the law is not a purely spontaneous construction of the individual subject. But neither, strictly speaking, is it purely an object of the sensibility, or receptivity, of the individual" (Kochan 2017: 201-2).

According to Lafont, Kant had assumed the subject as the source of validity insofar as the transcendental subject is constitutive of the rule or law. Because he disagreed with Kant that the transcendental subject was the site of validity through the synthetic a priori judgment, Heidegger carries this one disastrous step further, submitting the subject to historically contingent disclosures of meaning that should have no claim of authority over it. While the diagnosis of Heidegger's reasons for moving away from Kant in this matter is correct, the latter is a misreading of how Heidegger interprets Kant's picture of the subject's directedness toward the law. In *Basic Problems of Phenomenology* (BPP: 135) and *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics* (Heidegger 1997: 111) Heidegger analyses Kant's discussion of the subject's respect for the moral law. He argues that for Kant, the law itself is not empirical. Because reason is free, we give ourselves to the law. "In submitting to the law, I submit to myself as pure reason. In this submitting-to-myself, I elevate myself to myself as the free creature which determines itself" (Heidegger 1997: 111).

The law is not just a matter of merely following external rules, and especially not rules that are arbitrarily written by the individual subject. Instead, the subject encounters rules as necessary constraints that make reason possible. These constraints are the rules or norms that Hatab describe as 'situated and contextual'. For example, if Mulan submits to herself to the law of filial piety, she recognises that what constrains her might be a normative, cultural drive to conform to such laws, in accordance to her role as the first daughter to Chinese parents who have a high level of respect for tradition. Accordingly, her freedom is affirmed as situated in these norms; as free, she acts on the basis of these laws, even if her actions are in defiance of them. The authority that projections have over us is neither constituted by the individual subject nor a case of mere receptivity to the norms/rules. As free, Dasein directs itself toward the norms. Norms might be historically specific, but they are also rule governed. Submitting ourselves to such rules is the basis upon which we can recognise the possibilities for action that are available to us as unique subjects, because they constrain or delineate the context within which we reason and act. We can look at it another way: epistemic finitude

puts the demand on Dasein to not impose a certain understanding on things (objects as well as social and cultural norms) as if our interpretations can exhaust their meaning. For example, the goldsmith cannot impose his understanding of the properties of gold onto the gold alloys that he is trying to manipulate into a ring, because the material has its own way of reacting to manipulations like filing, soldering, etc., that *resist* the goldsmith's interpretation. For example, the gold may not fill the cast properly or it might break during filing. Part of being a skilled goldsmith is to be attuned to how the material is showing itself to him. Or it may be that the goldsmith discovers that the 'conflict free' lab diamonds he uses are extremely environmentally unfriendly because of the energy used to create them. His interpretations of what it means to responsibly source his materials cannot exhaust the meaning of sustainability because it is grounded in a complex web of social and cultural norms.[15]

Does this confirm the critics' worry that we cannot step back from our projection or worldview to critically engage with it? For as much as the freedom of Dasein consists in acting on the basis of or even against norms, we cannot ever 'sever' ourselves from these norms to consider them from a neutral standpoint. Heidegger himself remarks:

> [The] everyday way in which things have been interpreted is one into which Dasein has grown in the first instance, *without ever a possibility for extrication.* In it, out of it, and against it, all genuine understanding, interpreting, and communicating, all re-discovering and appropriate anew, are performed (BT: 213, SZ: 169, emphasis added).

Mulan's emancipation from internalised patriarchalism and her embrace of her identity as a female warrior, for example, did not occur out of her stepping back from her worldview, but from her acting in a way contrary to the norm within her worldview. Dasein's freedom might be called freedom from within rather than without. However, it would be mistaken to say that this means that Dasein is fated to being thrown into a particular understanding of being that it can never distance itself from; Mulan, for example, is not trapped in her patriarchal worldview despite her emancipation.

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[15] Our epistemic finitude is also well demonstrated in cases where things become devoid of meaning. For example, when the goldsmith's partner rejects his proposal and handmade ring, the goldsmith suddenly finds his craft meaningless, and everything in his workshop becomes mere *things* that serve no purpose. As Heidegger remarks, "The present-at-hand, as Dasein encounters it, can, as it were, assault Dasein's Being; natural events, for instance, can break in upon us and destroy us" (BT: 193, SZ: 152).

Further, McManus argues that the critics fail to give a clear sense to what reflexive distancing actually amounts to.

> We are not *entitled* to the notion that we are 'confined' to a particular 'understanding of Being', one that we come to label 'our understanding'… It is not that our 'factical' 'disclosure' — as 'a fate into which (we) are thrown' (2000: xiv) — renders us *unable* 'to distance ourselves reflexively' from 'our understanding' but rather that we have yet to give sense to what that 'reflexive distancing' might involve. We confront not 'something we cannot do', as Wittgenstein might have put it, but rather something we simply haven't done. (McManus 2012b: 209)

Presumably, the critics call for this reflexive distancing because they are rightly concerned that Dasein might 'tarry along' with the norms in which it had been thrown and might be left with no resources to ever question such norms since a projection is always already ahead of Dasein. McManus suggests that this worry stems from the mistaken assumption that a historical group of Dasein is thrown into a totality of understanding that becomes 'our understanding'. However, he argues, it is misleading to call projections of meaning horizons ours, local, or perspectival. If this is mistaken, then it is also mistaken to speak of 'reflexive distancing' from our understanding (McManus 2012b: 209).

We can also shake away the concern that, if reflexive distancing is something that we simply have not done, then justification in accordance to a standard of validity is impossible. As we have seen, Heidegger preserves the distinction between the innerworldly and worldly. He recognises that such a distinction is a condition of possibility for Dasein's experience. The worldly must exceed the finite knowledge of Dasein. Along with Habermas, he also recognises that the categories of validity and objectivity are indispensable to experience and communication, and accounts for this through his interpretation and criticism of Kant's a priori ground of validity. Thus, the idea here is that the presupposition of a single, objective world, and the categories of objectivity and validity, and Dasein's directedness towards norms as a free being, are compatible with the facticity of historical projections.

7.3 Commensurability Between Different Projections

This leads us to the next point of contention: that we cannot see how a competing worldview, e.g., of another community of Dasein, might be an improvement on our own. When talking about competing projections of understandings of being, we are concerned with whether a particular historically situated practice can accurately capture what is there in the world. For example, the ancient Egyptians used a sun dial to measure time, but today we use analogue or digital clocks with quartz, kinetic, solar, etc., movement to measure time with an even greater degree of precision. Or geocentrism presented the Earth at the centre of the universe, until Copernicus developed the heliocentric hypothesis which is now taken to be the correct model of our universe. Referencing Wittgenstein, McManus argues that in our basic and everyday kind of practices there is something mistaken about describing them as better or worse ways of measuring something of the world (McManus 2012b: 203, 209-211).

McManus asks us to imagine a case where someone tries to measure length by laying the ruler criss-crossing it rather than straight along it. In such a situation, it is not that the person doesn't know the means (e.g., procedures) to describe something of the world; rather, he does not exactly know what length is.

> Laying the measuring rod straight along the object is not, so to speak, the best way of measuring lengths; rather that is what it is to measure lengths. Here too the activities of the subject—laying the measuring rod straight along the object—are not constituted independently of those of the relevant objects—the characteristic being measured being their length. (McManus 2012b: 205-6)

What 'length' means is learned by learning the practice of determining length in the context of other relevant activities. Now, imagine if two people measure the length of the same object, one with a gilded bronze ruler made in 206 BCE – 8 CE in China, and the other with a more advanced and contemporary measuring instrument with a universal standard of metrics. Is the second person's measurement a more accurate measurement of the object's length? Through Wittgenstein, McManus (2012: 207) answers that it may appear so, but this is not a case of improved accuracy. It is mistaken to interpret these different modes of determination as more accurate in accordance to a 'nearer and nearer approach to an object'. The

characteristic being measured is the length, and it seems wrong to say that the latter measurement is more correct since it was achieved through a 'nearer' approach to the same object, e.g., refining the measurement by a few more decimal points. Instead, McManus argues, the practices that have been 'improved upon' in terms of being a 'better' measurement of the object is an improvement in precision rather than accuracy. As such, he further suggests, we should be careful about calling historical projections or understanding of being as 'ours', 'local', or 'perspectival' (McManus 2012b: 209). In order to come into 'disagreement' about something in the world, such as the length of a thing, then that Dasein's activities or practices must reflect something similar to 'our' practices of measurement (McManus 2012b: 209). That is, we must presume that the other Dasein has some intentional relation to length; as we remarked above, to disagree one must first presume the same objective world, and any communication occurs on the ontological basis of being with other Dasein. Such disclosures, McManus argues, cannot be definitively termed as offering different perspectives, or what Lafont terms a secluded totality of meaning that is closed off in itself; at most they only reveal a part of what is in the world.

> What we actually seem to see when we follow through on the attempt to 'imagine alternatives' to the practices described are, at best, practices that achieve other ends, revealing other objects, and at worst, 'an utter inability to apprehend at all' (L 177), a 'not-having-access' (L 183) [Heidegger, Logik lectures]. But either way, we do not find activities which reveal in a more or less accurate way the same objects as those revealed by the practices to which they are imagined as 'alternatives', better (or worse) attempts to measure the same thing. Hence, one might say that these practices embody a 'view of the world' but not a view of the objects that they reveal. (McManus 2012b: 151)

Thus, Lafont is mistaken to describe historically contingent practices such as measuring lengths as competing perspectives on the same object that they uncover. These practices instead reflect a different view of the world (more on this in the following section about the need to distinguish different kinds of disclosures, particularly worldviews). Thus, what we have is a picture where we can indeed speak of improvements of understanding in the sense of a more precise grasp of what there is. Normative practices, while factical, have authority over us in that they are valid for anyone who ask about lengths, weight, colour, and the like –

because to speak of 'competing' projections first requires us to presume the ground of objectivity and validity upon which we can compare anything. If the Lafont camp were to respond that this point can only be affirmed in relation to length, i.e., that to understand the world as it really is requires us to drop specific ontic qualifications such as length, "this requirement comes to look like the demand that one be able to derive answers from the world without posing it determinate questions" (McManus 2012b: 210). If we can affirm that Heidegger maintains the category of validity and the presupposition of a singular objective world – and I have argued that we can – then the disastrous normative consequences that Lafont and Tugendhat noted of the successive 'positing' of understandings of being seems to rest on questionable grounds.

7.4 The Justification of Truth Claims Through Discursive Communication

Underlying the criticisms that disclosures of meaning horizons are non-intraworldly seem to be an assumption that communication, agreement and disagreement between different communities of Dasein mostly involve a certain type of understanding: that of grasping the correspondence between thought (also meaning and language) and reality, and the assessment of claims against truth or satisfaction conditions. For example, to see which measurement of length is more precise than the other, one needs to check which measurement better corresponds to the object or assess whether one's claim that the log measures 2.7m fulfils a truth condition (e.g., that the log is indeed 2.7m). This explanation of how the two Dasein agree or disagree seems fine in this example, but McManus makes the important observation that not all forms of understanding involve the grasp of the correspondence between thought and reality. Instead, there must be forms of understanding (e.g., understanding social conventions) that makes it possible for us to see thought as corresponding or not corresponding to what there is. In such a case, there will also be some disclosures that are incapable of being false in the sense of failing to correspond with reality (McManus 2012a: 170) – a good example being worldviews.

If we concede that there are distinctions to be made between different forms of uncovering true or false statements, we accordingly need to be clear about what we mean by disclosures, too. The different metrics of measurement for length and weight might be a facet of disclosure, and the trope that 'women belong in the kitchen' might be another facet of

disclosure. But, clearly, these are different kinds of claims. In the claim about measurement, the criticism was that one cannot assess how one meaning is more, or less, accurate than the other. The response was that this is not a case of accuracy but of precision; we can certainly see that the contemporary measurement is an 'improvement' in the sense of being more precise, affirming that this requires us to first assume that the other party's practices reflect similarities to ours – thus, that we share the same objective world and are subject to the same universal standard of measurement.

But what does it mean to assess or measure in this way for the 'weaker sex' case? In this example, we are not comparing two alternative practices of measure that reveal different interpretations of how the object itself (the idea 'women') is. It is even stranger to say that the 21st century interpretation is a more precise measurement than the past interpretation of the same objective thing. It seems to make more sense to say that these alternative historical practices present a view of the world rather than a view of the objects that they uncover. For example, most of us believe that this 'women is the weaker sex' or 'women belong in the kitchen' are facets of a patriarchal worldview that is now outdated and offensive. If we claim that 'women belong in the kitchen' is false we might be tempted to say that this is a claim that incorrectly uncovers something about the 'object' women, or, it covers up what is true of the 'object' women. But this seems strange. Does 'women belong in the kitchen' cover up a more correct or precise definition of a women? It would be hard to say what this correct or intrinsic definition might be. At any rate, for the purposes of challenging sexist views we are less concerned with whether 'belonging in the kitchen' is intrinsic to womenhood or the female sex than we are with the social and cultural inequities attached to this claim that continue to oppress women. Indeed, if other societies happen to disagree, say Mulan's matchmaker auntie, she would argue that 'women belong in the kitchen/home' is part of the natural order of the family, the larger society, the country, and even the universe itself. This is a conflict of worldviews rather than a disagreement about the object itself.

In response to the critics' point that different communities of Dasein cannot communicate about similarities and differences about the same objective world due to their historically specific disclosures, then, we might give the following response. In the case of communicating about forms of understanding that pertain to things like the practice of measurement, it appears that we can agree or disagree about the same thing, since we must

presume a category of objectivity about the thing to which our claims successfully or unsuccessfully correspond to or satisfy/fail to satisfy truth conditions for. However, not all types of communication with another historical community of Dasein about things we agree or disagree over involve that type of understanding; we can give a good case for why we agree or disagree (e.g., students may put forward a petition to the university to not close a library) but this is not by appeal to how the claim corresponds to reality more or less precisely. In these cases of agreement and disagreement (e.g., about worldviews) communication involves a different kind of understanding.

To explain this, we can appeal to Charles Taylor's account of human understanding and language. According to Taylor, to understand the meaning of something in another cultural Dasein's world is not a matter of checking how truth conditions or satisfaction conditions are specified and fulfilled in another language. Rather, it is first and foremost a matter of seeing how it functions to articulate the horizon of concern of that culture. This is primary, because once we have understood how, say, a particular assertion functions to articulate the horizon of meaning of another culture, we have already fully understood what the assertion means, and there is no need to establish its truth conditions.

> … it is just a mistake to think that understanding these terms [e.g., the idea 'woman' or 'Christmas'] could consist in developing a theory which gave the truth-conditions of sentences using them. It is to misconceive their role in language; to see them on the model of an exclusively representative conception of meaning. If this kind of model were right, then t-c [truth-conditional] theories would make sense. (Taylor 1985: 278)

For example, imagine two people who only spoke their own native tongues were trying to 'agree on the same thing', say, that the word 'dumpling' in their respective languages refer to a small parcel of savory or sweet filling wrapped in thin dough. Presumably, they would use hand gestures, drawings, facial expressions, intonation and so forth to establish a common ground of understanding. That is, they would first communicate about the horizon of concern of their respective cultures to 'ground' a shared space for more specific articulation. It would not take long to understand that they are both talking about food, something small that is wrapped, etc. The fillings, the way it is cooked, and other details might differ, but it would be pedantic to argue that the two speakers have not reached shared understanding of what the

word 'dumpling' in their respective languages refer to. The speakers are not trying to transfer propositional attitudes of the kind "I know that p means x" to one another in hope of a match, i.e., "'p means x' must be true if both you and I know that p refers to the same entity x." Similarly, they did not reach agreement by appealing to how their claims correspond to the same object, since they understood the term 'dumpling' in the other's respective languages by first understanding the other's respective horizons of concern. This goes to show that understandings of being are not closed off totalities that prevent different historical/cultural groups of Dasein from successfully communicating to one another about the same objective world. Crucially, the framework of disclosure of meaning horizons demonstrates that to agree or disagree about the same thing we must first have the capacity to understand the other's horizon of meaning whilst presuming that the world is the same for myself and the other.

To expand on this point, we can examine the process of justifying a truth claim, i.e., the process of validation. Actual practices of distinguishing between true or false statements and validating claims are historically contingent practices. Moreover, there is no one process of validation. Instead, there are correlated ways in which we might validate claims. Forms of justification correspond to different kinds of knowledge claims with different grounds of validity. Part of validating claims requires us to first work out how we can validate them, for instance, by identifying the field in which we are conducting the inquiry, the methodology of the inquiry, the instruments we will use, and so forth. This means that many claims must be validated over time. Take the case of validating the claim that "'child-centred' teaching method is responsible for the decline in New Zealand children's performance in reading and maths'". To check the validity of such a claim, the scientist and/or psychologist might employ psychometric models that measure psychological attributes, like intelligence, by predicting a subject's performance in a certain task. They might create a questionnaire to assess the students' performance in English comprehension and basic arithmetic's. Such models are constructed from substantive and statistical assumptions made about the link between the psychological attribute that is being measured and the particular measurement task (Eran Tal 2020). More simply, they might also compare data collected over time of how students had performed in word reading tests and writing vocabulary tasks. It may be that the procedure does not consistently yield the expected result, in which case the model, such as the questionnaire, would have to be refined. Or, take the case of checking whether a scientific

claim like 'smoking causes cancer' is actually justified. In the late 1800s, a handful of physicians identified tobacco as a possible cause for lung cancer. In 1912, Dr. Isaac Adler published a paper observing the link. His claim was validated by the empirical observation that with the increase of cigarette smoking, lung cancer also increased. In 1950, physicians finally conducted case-controlled studies to draw a link between deaths and cigarette consumption, thus, using a different and arguably more precise statistical process to validate the same claim as Adler (Tracy A. Ruegg 2015). Today, cancer research is much more advanced, able to further validate the claim by providing evidence for how chemicals from cigarettes damage human DNA, interfere with how cells repair DNA damage, and so on. The historical contingency of practices (in the smoking example, the scientific practice which moved from mere observation to statistical analysis and to Genomics) does not mean we are in relativistic situation. It only means that our validation process is changing and becoming more precise. The historical contingency of practices is compatible with them being rational and justified. This might be called a pragmatic way of approaching scientific enquiry.

In this chapter, I addressed the critics' moderate claim that Heidegger is not qualified to call unconcealment truth. I gave an account of where the framework of unconcealment falls short: Heidegger does not provide a satisfactory phenomenological description of how specific modes of uncovering entities can be correct or incorrect. I argued that unconcealment is nonetheless subject to standards of validity and objectivity. By examining Heidegger's engagement with Kant, I showed how Dasein, as free, subjects itself to rules or norms. Even though disclosures are historically contingent, they nonetheless have authority over us. This is because we must direct ourselves towards the rules in order to recognise the possibilities for action that are open to us as unique subjects. I showed how the historical contingency of meaning projections does not result in incommensurability between different disclosures. The categories of validity and objectivity and the presupposition of a single, objective world are fundamental to Dasein's experience and communication. Thus, disclosure does not result in cultural relativism, it is possible for different communities of Dasein to agree about the same objective world, and it is possible for Dasein to recognise a disclosure as being an improvement on another. In the next section, I will discuss how these insights into objectivity, universal validity, intersubjective and intraworldly communication might help us save Heidegger's account of world disclosure from the criticism that he

prioritises a mystical and historically relative projection of meaning through art over scientific knowledge and discursive communication, especially in his later works.

Chapter 8: Scientific Enquiry as a Form of Disclosure

Introduction

The main question in this chapter is whether science is a form of disclosure, given the later Heidegger's controversial remarks about scientific understanding. This is an opportunity to look at scientific enquiry as a test case for what I have offered as a new account of world disclosure. The later Heidegger privileges the 'granting' aspect of disclosure, especially in the form of art and poetry. He allegedly denies that the knowledge gained from discursive practices and scientific understanding, or any forms of ontic understanding for that matter, can be world disclosive. Instead, he apparently believes that any genuine disclosures of a historical epoch must be an unmediated ecstatic beginning and 'grounding leap'. Critics argue that according to such a picture of world disclosure, any language that is not poetry or art – including ordinary intersubjective communication and scientific progress – are bound to distort the essence of what is disclosed. This seems to deprive the lifeworld and scientific progress of any world transformative capacities. I believe that Heidegger recognises that scientific knowledge can bring about change but concede that he is also critical of scientific objectification. I think that this concern is fair, but he is probably too hasty in neglecting the disclosive capacities of science due to these fears. On the other hand, I do not agree with the critics' view that this means Heidegger thinks of scientific discovery as having no intrinsic value. I argue that Heidegger, especially in his earlier works, has a balanced and even positive account of scientific understanding. I show how this view can be incorporated into the interpretation of world disclosure that I have offered. Scientific progress *is* a form of world disclosure and the framework of unconcealment *does* have the resources for potentially building up a phenomenological account of scientific modes of disclosure.

8.1 Heidegger's Biases Against Scientific Knowledge

According to the critics, the later Heidegger celebrates the disclosive capacities of art and poetry and dismisses intersubjective discourse and scientific understanding as ingenuine covering-over of the meaning of being. Heidegger describes the disclosure of a historical epoch as an unmediated ecstatic beginning that we should not seek to describe in

propositional terms lest we distort the essence of what is disclosed. Habermas argues that Heidegger thereby "shoves aside the defective everyday practice of mutual understanding as a calculation-oriented practice of self-maintenance – oblivious of Being and vulgar – and deprives the dirempted ethical totality of the lifeworld of any essential interest" (Habermas 1987: 139). Any knowledge gained from discursive practices and scientific understanding can only reflect a vulgar forgetfulness of Being and cannot be a genuinely world-disclosive force.

As discussed in the last part of Chapter 1, there is indeed a sense in which Heidegger emphasises the world-disclosive power of art over any ontic instantiations of discourse, for instance, in the form of scientific knowledge. There is also a sense in which his use of the term 'truth' in relation to the disclosure of meaning horizons through art becomes rather impenetrable and utterly distanced from questions of justification, validity, and objectivity. To give an example of such claims, we have from OWA: "Truth is un-truth, insofar as there belongs to it the reservoir of the not-yet-revealed, the un-covered, in the sense of concealment. In un-concealment, as truth, there occurs also the other 'un-' of a double restraint or refusal. Truth essentially occurs as such in the opposition between clearing and double concealing" (OWA: 185). And on science:

> Science, by contrast [to the happening of truth in the artwork], is not an original happening of truth but always the cultivation of a domain of truth that has already been opened. It does this through the apprehension and confirmation of that which shows itself to be possible and necessarily correct within this sphere. If, and to the extent that, a science transcends correctness and arrives at a truth – i.e., an essential disclosure of beings as such – it is philosophy. (Heidegger 2002: 37)

> The interest of the sciences is directed toward the theory of the necessary structural concepts of the coordinated areas of investigation. 'Theory' means now: supposition of the categories which are allowed only a cybernetical function but denied any ontological meaning. The operational and model character of representational-calculative thinking becomes dominant. (Heidegger 1977c: 58-9)

Firstly, let me lay out the points where I agree with the critics. I admitted in section 7.1 that there are notable shortfalls to the framework of unconcealment because of his thin phenomenological account of intersubjective communication and the lack of distinction between different kinds of disclosure. For example, remember McManus' protest against Lafont's point that Heidegger requires us to drop specific ontic qualifications if we are to enquire into what is disclosed of the world in and of itself: "this requirement comes to look like the demand that one be able to derive answers from the world without posing it determinate questions" (McManus 2012b: 210). But this might be seen as dodging the issue, because it cannot be denied that Heidegger is clearly dubious about whether scientific practice can escape from representationalist thinking, and yet he is perfectly happy to pose some very determinate questions about what sort of disclosure is happening in Van Gogh's painting of an old pair of shoes and Holderlin's poetic reflections on the river.

It might be the case that art and poetry disclose the truth – truth as our ontological openness to our finitude and situatedness within conditions of historicity and sociality. However, this is only one aspect to what truth means in human practice. Other aspects, such as validation and justification, are admittedly overshadowed or ignored due to Heidegger's tendencies to prioritise the world-disclosive power of art and poetry. There are also foundationalist undertones to this portrayal – e.g., his remark that the happening of truth through art is the beginning of history – that Lafont, Apel and Habermas are right to criticise. Nikolas Kompridis remarks:

> the question is not whether holism can serve as a standard for an undamaged form of life, but rather, whether it is a sufficient standard, whether we need to consider other varieties of holism, ones in which the network of interrelations is not strung up so tightly. Heidegger refuses this option, for he wants to emphasize the normatively binding character of strong holism: he esteems its authority. He believes, however, that it is necessary to immunize the normative authority of his holism against reason in any of its infectious forms. In trying to strengthen his brand of holism, Heidegger only manages to weaken it; its purity leads to inelasticity, to an intolerance of and incompatibility with other modes of cognizing and acting, such as judging, arguing, reflecting, testing, experimenting, and objectifying. (Kompridis 1994: 34)

I concede that we do have some grounds for saying that Heidegger was being too careless in his employment of the word 'truth' for historical disclosures of meaning horizons, especially in his later works. In a sense, he had set himself up for being accused of granting world disclosure absolute, world-constitutive powers in setting off the 'happening' of truth.

On the other hand, if my pragmatic and Wittgensteinian interpretation of disclosure succeeds, then we can affirm that historically contingent disclosures may nonetheless be subject to universal standards of objectivity, validity, and justification, so that we can see how one disclosure might be an improvement on another. Scientific progress is a paradigmatic case of systematically discovering new meanings and challenging the old through intersubjective communication and justification of knowledge claims according to principles of objectivity and validity, and of subjecting its own methods to critical analysis. A phenomenological explication of scientific progress can serve as an excellent demonstration of how those holes I identified can be filled.

Thus, I think the best way to approach this is to start by taking his later controversial remarks on science with a grain of salt. After all, it doesn't seem far-fetched to say that such remarks were largely inspired by biases in his post-war socio-political beliefs. As Hatab explains,

> It should not be forgotten that Germany in the 1930s was going through enormous economic and political upheaval. At a time of crisis, Heidegger's idealized vision of National Socialism can be understood as a response to four supposed threats: American materialism, Russian communism, Enlightenment universalism, and rational individualism, all posing interrelated threats to what Heidegger took to be authentic German culture and a proper engagement with being. (Hatab 2000: 201)

For example, his comments on how technological enframing leads to seeing nature purely as an economic resource are clearly responses to American materialism; his celebration of art and poetry as an overflow and as a granting of history corresponds to his worry that communism and universalism would overtake heritage and 'high' culture. Given how his discussion of the disclosive power of art and poetry is mixed in with such political and social concerns, we have grounds to treat them as philosophically suspect. It is also the more charitable thing to do.

While the later Heidegger was possibly wrong about scientific disclosure, there is evidence that Heidegger in *Being and Time* had a much more optimistic view of science. For example, Kochan argues that in *Being and Time,* Heidegger illustrates *two* conceptions of science. One is logical, the other existential. According to the logical conception, science is a conceptual scheme made up of the representations of nature that it produces, and the validity of this representation is expressed in a series of true, interconnected propositions. According to the existential conception, science is a mode of being in the world, specifically a mode that uncovers worldly entities for the purpose of thematic interpretation. Kochan (2017: 59-60) believes that while Heidegger commits himself to an existential conception of science, he does not believe that the two conceptions are fundamentally incompatible, nor that the logical conception is confused and ultimately untenable. Heidegger writes:

> In seeking the *ontological genesis* of the theoretical attitude, we are asking which of those conditions implied in Dasein's state of Being are existentially necessary for the possibility of Dasein's existing in the way of scientific research. This formulation of the question is aimed at an *existential conception of science.* This must be distinguished from the 'logical' conception which understands science with regard to its results and defines it as 'something established on an interconnection of true propositions – that is, propositions counted as valid'. The existential conception understands science as a way of existence and thus as a mode of Being-in-the-world, which discovers or discloses either entities or Being. (BT: 208, SZ: 357)

Theoretical attitude implies that it is not the scientific method as such that 'flattens' our primordial mode of experiencing the world but the attitude, i.e., assumptions, underlying the methods that may distort it. The logical conception fails because it rests on a mistaken understanding of truth and it also divorces science from being-in-the-world. *Dasein existing in the way of scientific research* implies that scientific research is a mode of Dasein's experience of the world. Science is an ontic practice, but one that is still bound to human worldly experience.

Thus, I think Kochan's reading is largely on the mark. As we have emphasized in the previous chapter concerning unconcealment and truth, Heidegger is concerned with how the grammar of traditional epistemology distorts propositional intentionality, rather than being concerned with how propositional intentionality is somehow a 'flattened' and 'abstracted'

mode of relating to entities. If this reading succeeds, then the same argument applies to Heidegger's conception of science. That is, Heidegger is critical of how the grammar of logic (the logical prejudice) *distorts* the scientific mode of relating to worldly entities insofar as its mistaken concepts about propositional truth and representations ignores the existential character of scientific modes of being in the world.

On Heidegger's behalf, we might argue that the grammar of unconcealment provides a richer illustration of our scientific modes of interpreting entities, which in turn informs the logical conception of science as to where it goes wrong and where it can improve. For example, the logical conception might maintain that the representation of nature that science produces does not *exhaust* what nature is, and it might concede that the validity of its representations are subject to self-reflexive hermeneutical interpretation, that the body of knowledge it yields is not valid purely in virtue of the interconnection between true propositions but also because of the normative standards that scientific practices first presuppose. These standards, too, must be subject to revision in the face of demands for epistemic justification. The methods science employs might be too imprecise and require an update. For instance, units of measuring time might be revised through the discovery of the zeptosecond (a trillionth of a billionth of a second), which may help scientists achieve a more consistent or precise result in quantum computing and superconductivity. Conventions in disseminating scientific information have also been revised due to the demand for transparency and accountability: scientific discoveries are subject to stringent peer review before publication, hypotheses are tested by replicating the experiment, and a theory might be falsified through this process. Science is self-revising based on intersubjective (even cross-discipline) critical feedback.

We can use this to show how the later Heidegger might have been far too pessimistic about scientific disclosure, thus underestimating how processes of discovery and justification in scientific practice can be genuinely world-disclosive. Now, he claims that if science causes a radical paradigm shift, then it has already become philosophy. This is on the ontological plane where there is a new disclosure of meaning horizons. Yet, on the ontic plane, science can only operate by means of a concealing representational-calculative mode of thinking. So, science cannot disclose unless it becomes a philosophy? That seems unlikely. Scientific disclosure cannot come about by chance or fate, rather, it is by systematic scientific progress.

The scientific method, even though it is ontic in the sense of being a regional application of the understanding of being, must have genuine value. As I discussed in the previous chapter, validity and justification are the result of practices that take place *over time*. How sciences refine their methods and various modes of validation is historically and culturally contingent upon the meaning horizons that have already been disclosed. On the other side of the coin, however, what had already been disclosed will also be subject to reflexive, critical analysis according to our increasingly precise and varied modes of validation. We might appeal, again, to a pragmatist reading for an account of how a universal standard of truth and knowledge helps us identify whether a science is genuinely world disclosive. We can develop a model of scientific paradigm shifts where previous knowledge systems are not completely overtaken, rather gradually transformed.

Hatab further suggests that the relation between disclosure and truth is more multi-layered than one might think. He outlines several characteristics of truth. Truth requires *reliability*: a quality of steadiness, continuity, and repeatability. Truth requires *workability*, which is the pragmatic component of truth that makes it something effective in our everyday dealings with the world. Truth requires *agreement*, that different communities of Dasein can communicate about something according to a standard that is more than just subjective opinion or historical conventions (Hatab 2000: 44-5). Responding to the critics, we have shown that Heidegger's account of scientific disclosure (at least from our pragmatist-Wittgensteinian reading) satisfies all these requirements: it allows us to make reliable, systematic progress by gradually improving and expanding our processes of validation; this process necessarily involves agreement and disagreement, communicable according to a standard of justification and objectivity.

However, one area where Heidegger's account of world disclosure is admittedly lacking in terms of phenomenological explication is sociality. Hatab argues that truth must be a cooperative and intersubjective endeavour: "Given the importance of upbringing, inheritance, testimony, trust, and corroboration, truth is a cooperative, intersubjective endeavour rather than a monological discovery" (2000: 44). However, as Habermas and Apel point out, Heidegger doesn't have many positive things to say about the role of intersubjective communication in the disclosure of new meanings. Language as poetry can disclose, but everyday speech is often depicted as idle talk that conceals as opposed to

187

unconcealing new modes of more genuinely experiencing things in the world. And we have already mentioned that Heidegger is dubious about whether scientific knowledge can escape representationalist thinking.

In *What is thinking?* for example, Heidegger describes the common speech as a binding universal instrument for everyone: "Common speech puffs itself up as the sole binding rule for everything we say – and now every word at variance with it immediate looks like an arbitrary violation" (Heidegger 1968: 192). He then urges a 'release' of originary language (as in, language as poetry) from the 'leash of common speech', but also says that this must happen "without… rating customary speech as a decline, or as low" (Heidegger 1968: 192). Unfortunately, he fails to elaborate on how that last point can be achieved. However, I don't think that this lack is fatal for the theory of unconcealment. By appeal to McManus and Taylor's analysis, I have shown that different communities of Dasein can certainly communicate and agree about the same thing in the world according to standards of objectivity and justification. I argued that Dasein's supposed inability for understanding and communication was based on a misinterpretation of what historical disclosures amount to. The critics' implicit support of the glass bulb model of experience and reality leads to misconceptions that agreement between different historical groups of Dasein requires us to reflexively distance ourselves from 'our' perspectives or 'our' horizons of meaning. And in the previous chapter, we have given a preliminary illustration of how intersubjective communication is at least compatible with Heidegger's account of world disclosure.

8.2 Scientific Disclosure and the Scientific Mode of Comportment Toward Entities

I gave an argument for how scientific practice can be world-disclosing in a very broad sense. However, to cement the argument, I might need to say something more specific about what distinguishes the scientific mode of comportment toward entities from other modes of comportment, like dealing with hammers in the workshop. This phenomenological explication is important in that the scientific processes of validation, which is measured according to a universal standard of truth, requires a level of precision and systematicity as well as theoretical abstraction that is obviously different from our practical modes of comportment toward entities. How do the practical and the theoretical modes of uncovering entities – and thereby potentially disclosing the world – inform each other? How is scientific-

theoretical comportment a unique mode of uncovering entities, whose disclosive capacities are not reducible to the broader, practical mode of dealing with worldly things? And if intersubjective communication is so essential to the scientific process, how does Heidegger account for the important role of language in scientific disclosure? Whilst I cannot provide a full answer to these complex questions due to limited space, I want to at least acknowledge the force of these issues and give a brief sense of how they might be approached.

Joseph Rouse explains the problem well:

> Heidegger's account of science incorporated an ontologically decisive but concretely elusive 'changeover' from 'the understanding of being that guides concernful dealings with entities' to 'looking at those available entities in a 'new' way as occurrent' (SZ: 361) … Yet Heidegger merely asserted such a changeover without adequately describing it. The associated changeover from Dasein's practical familiarity with linguistic signs as 'equipment for indicating' to explicit, decontextualized assertion was likewise both central and obscure in Heidegger's early philosophy of language. (Rouse 2005: 181)

Dreyfus and Spinoza (1999) give an example of one normative consequence of this obscurity. They argue that the changeover to theoretical-scientific comportment cannot get us to a world that is independent of our practices. If Heidegger holds onto an existential conception of science, i.e., the view that scientific practice cannot be separated from the world, then he would be forced to admit that there is no separation between content and conceptual scheme. This deflates his realism, so that we have no way of telling whether the content accurately represents what is true of the world rather than just being something imposed upon the world by a conceptual scheme.

As Glazebrook (2012: 368) elucidates, we are running into a tension between Heidegger's realism and its tentative compatibility with scientific realism, and the historicity of Dasein. If worldly intelligibility leads back to the historicity of Dasein, then the worry is that whatever knowledge is gained out of regional ontologies such as science will still be relative to a particular culture and history to a degree, no matter what we have said about the necessary presumption of the same objective world. This could potentially undermine the scientific realist position that both observable and unobservable aspects of the world can be

reasonably explained by scientific theories, thus, that we have good reason to believe in knowledge gained from scientific investigation.

Many commentators, including the critics we have been discussing, approach this problem by starting with the claim that Heidegger believes that the theoretical mode is derivative of the practical mode. That is, any kind of theoretical engagement with entities is only possible because we already know what entities mean upon a background of holistic meanings and practical activities. Okrent, for example, gives a pragmatic reading where the derivative nature of apophantic-as to hermeneutic-as is implicitly mapped onto a derivative relationship between ready-to-handedness and present-at-handedness of entities. Considering the chemical structure of water as a present-at-hand entity is derivative of considering water as something we drink, something we use to wash dishes, and so forth.

This reading is problematic, as it lends support to Lafont and Habermas' criticism that Heidegger prioritizes the hermeneutical-as and the practical, artistic, existential modes of uncovering at the expense of rationality, discursive communication, and universal standards of truth and justification – even to the extent of explanatorily and ontologically reducing scientific means of attaining knowledge to the practical-existential. It is also problematic in that it explains the changeover by appeal to the derivative argument without really explicating how this changeover occurs specifically for scientific understanding. And so, it confirms the critics' worry that Heidegger's account of theoretical comportment gives us no good reason to believe in the findings of science. Fortunately, I believe that we have grounds to argue that this interpretation is mistaken.

Trish Glazebrook argues:

> He intends to show that there are both instrumental and theoretical practices, but he does not use a conceptual apparatus involving anything like rigid designators to secure a way from one to the other. His strategy is not to establish a secure bridge between praxical involvement and theoretical analysis, but rather to trace both back to being-in-the-world – where 'world' is not just this or that context or framework, or the cosmos, or the sum total of the actually extant, but rather the site of ontologically meaningful encounters with things. (Glazebrook 2001: 386)

Kochan adds:

although Heidegger does argue that the thing is 'released' in the mathematical [or scientific] projection, this means neither that it becomes decontextualised, nor that its place is eliminated. It means, instead, that the thing comes to be experienced differently. Its situatedness in an everyday environment becomes unimportant for the subject's understanding of what it is. Its context has not been eliminated, but instead replaced by the artificially constructed and controlled environment of the laboratory. (Kochan 2017: 302)

Kochan and Glazebrook both argue that the difference between practical comportment (ready-to-hand) and theoretical comportment (present-at-hand) is not that the latter is reducible to the former. Modification does not mean derivative. Praxis and theory cannot be separated in this way. This is supported by Heidegger's description of scientific experience in *Being and Time*, where scientific consideration of entities, even though it suspends the 'tarrying along' of circumspective concern, instead takes on a 'more precise kind of circumspection'; "And just as praxis has its own specific kind of sight ('theory'), theoretical research is not without a praxis of its own" (BT: 409, SZ: 358). As Glazebrook remarks, the difference between ready-to-handedness and present handedness cannot be read as a corresponding difference between theory and practice. Golob also argues that the 'levelling' that occurs is in the grammar of explaining practical and theoretical involvement, and not the involvement themselves. I think all this is largely correct, since, as I have emphasized, assertions as judgment (assertions as judgment, i.e., apophasis, being a mode of discourse often used in theoretical comportment that requires us to take an entity as present-at-hand) is just one mode of comportment toward entities, and along with other modes like gesturing or non-propositional exclamations it is equiprimordially derivative of interpretation.

What this means is that science, as the discovery of the ready-to-hand, retains its ontological significance insofar as the value of its discoveries are not reducible to hermeneutical-existential interpretation. For instance, let me use the 'smoking causes cancer' example mentioned in the previous chapter again. The researcher needs to adopt a theoretical-scientific attitude towards the subject of research and interpret tobacco-afflicted cells in a petri dish as an occurrent entity. This allows the researcher to isolate the entity under certain conditions of interpretation, for example, the hypothesis and anticipated outcome of the experiment, that she is looking for defects in communication between cells, the method of accurately quantifying intracellular and extracellular proteins using protein

analysis tools, and so forth. Clearly, the theoretical-scientific mode of her comportment toward the entity cannot be reduced to pragmatic know-how. The scientific discoveries that her research yields are intrinsically valuable because they can potentially disclose new significances about the link between smoking and cancer by adding to the existing body of research and enriching our overall knowledge about the dangers of tobacco use.

This is a disclosure that happens over time through discursive practices, not a disclosure that just 'happens' and resists empirical observation and description. Indeed, the value of disclosures is lost if communities of Dasein cannot access them and talk about them. Heidegger may want to hide the essence of being from Dasein's tendencies to objectify nature and dodge our own responsibilities for the possibilities and limits of our own factical and existential situation. However, we cannot take up such responsibilities if we are barred from reflexive, critical analysis of the meanings into which we had been projected. Under my new interpretation of unconcealment and disclosure, though, I think that the resources are there to retrieve this element of reflexivity and critique.

The next step in reassessing Heidegger's account of world disclosure might be to provide a phenomenological account of how scientific comportment is a unique mode of uncovering entities if the theoretical and practical are so entwined. If scientific comportment is a more precise kind of circumspection, we want to know that this kind of circumspection can capture what there is about the real objective world to a more precise degree than our everyday sort of circumspection. We would need an elaboration of what a 'more precise kind of circumspection' actually involves. When testing a scientific hypothesis, what is the praxis of setting up the conditions of examining an object? What is the praxis of scientific discourse, for instance, when a community of scientists are engaging in debate about the viability of a new theory for explaining a particular disease? These might be the kind of questions to tackle in a future investigation into the disclosive capacities of science.

Conclusion

In this dissertation, I have offered a reassessment of Heidegger's concept of world disclosure with the aim of showing that it is possible for Dasein to have a reflexive and critical awareness of what is pre-disclosed. I conceded with the critics that Heidegger's phenomenological explication of how Dasein uncovers entities in propositional modes of comportment is unsatisfactory when it comes to the question of how one can reliably distinguish between true and false acts of uncovering, and how one can justify knowledge claims through intersubjective communication. These questions of ascertainment and justification are crucial epistemological concerns that must be addressed in any philosophical account of what truth means in our human practice. However, I argued that Heidegger does not completely neglect these concerns, because it can be seen in his engagement with Husserl and Kant that he preserves notions of validity, evidence, and objectivity in his interpretation of unconcealment as primordial truth. I suggested that Heidegger may be more attuned to these epistemological and normative issues than the critics might think. I provided a case for how historical disclosures of meaning do not result in the loss of the standards of validity and objectivity, nor incommensurability between different projections of worldly intelligibility. Instead, world disclosure is open to critique and transformation through practices such as scientific enquiry.

In Chapter 1, I discussed the concept of world disclosure in relation to some of the key components of Heidegger's position. For instance, by looking at the link between *phenomenon* and *logos,* I demonstrated how the equiprimordial disclosedness of the world and Dasein grounds our human capacity to know about *real things* in the world and to talk meaningfully about them. Chapters 2 and 3 discuss the criticisms of world disclosure from Tugendhat to Lafont, paying close attention to how these thinkers interpret Heidegger's stance on reality, language, knowledge, and his relationship to the philosophical tradition – most notably the German linguistic turn and the theory of knowledge. Chapter 4 challenges these critiques by showing where they may have misjudged Heidegger. He cannot be a linguistic idealist in Lafont's sense of the term because he does not adopt the Fregean theory of meaning and reference. Nor does he support the meaning determines reference (MDR)

thesis because he is committed to the position that what things are in themselves can never be exhausted by the meanings that we attribute to them.

Chapter 5 develops the insights gained from the defence of Heidegger by showing how language is linked to Dasein's disclosedness. In particular, language is bound up with Dasein's capacity to interpret what things mean in the world and to navigate its existence in the world. These insights into language, speech and disclosure provides a foundation for my argument in Chapter 6, where I respond to the famous disagreement between Heideggerians and his critics on his notion of unconcealment as truth. I offered an alternative reading of the theory that propositional truth is derivative of unconcealment by showing how this 'founding' relationship is between the *grammar* of propositional intentionality and the hermeneutical-existential 'as' rather than between the theoretical and practical modes of comportment as such. This provides a stronger foundation to defend Heidegger against the criticism that he is not justified in calling unconcealment and disclosure truth because his notion of truth befuddles rather than clarifies our normal understanding of the term. Chapters 7 and 8 addresses what I have called the critics' 'moderate' claim: Heidegger does not provide a full account of how the framework of uncovering can live up to epistemological and normative demands like the problem of how one can ascertain truth and justify one's knowledge claims. Using a pragmatic and Wittgensteinian framework, I tried to show how unconcealment nonetheless has the *resources* for meeting these legitimate demands and argued that this is fully compatible with Heidegger's position. I critically engage with Lafont, Habermas, and Apel's criticism that Heidegger neglects discursive communication and the positive possibilities of scientific enquiry. Using my reinterpretation of world disclosure, I demonstrate how scientific progress can be a paradigmatic case of transforming the world through reflexive awareness and critique of our meaning horizons.

I hope that this project can serve as a useful starting point for further research into Heidegger's concept of world disclosure. For example, more analytically oriented philosophers may rightly be suspicious of what Heidegger's account of truth has to contribute to the question of how human beings have the capacity to know about the world and to justify truth claims. Much of the work on Heidegger's notion of truth have not done much to extend beyond the trivial idea that knowledge is historically situated, or worse, they simply reiterate – in excessive jargon – the priority of unconcealment over propositional truth.

However, my reinterpretation of disclosure goes beyond this trivial claim, showing how unconcealment adds valuable contributions to contemporary epistemology. It takes the epistemological questions of validity and justification seriously, demonstrating where contemporary theories of knowledge might fall short. It can show how these theories might be implicitly perpetuating the idea that empirical experience and rationality are inherently opposed, that cognitivist models of the mind are based on serious misconceptions about human experience, and so forth. My reassessment of world disclosure can also be developed in terms of how it is situated in theories of language, for instance, in relation to theories of direct and indirect reference. I admitted that Heidegger's phenomenological description of uncovering is lacking in terms of the distinction between different types of unconcealment – for example, how a word can designate something about an entity as opposed to attributing something to the entity. There is also a need to expand on how intersubjective communication is important for disclosure, given the rising interest amongst Heidegger scholars in how disclosure is relevant for critical theory, ethics, and political theory. But I think that there are resources in his account of disclosure that allows us to meet these challenges without contradicting his key commitments. I hope that the present dissertation has provided some of those resources for future research into Heidegger's conception of human experience, knowledge, and truth.

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