

The Ontology of Sense and Transcendental Truth: Heidegger, Tugendhat, Davidson

(Chapter 3 of Draft MS: *The Logic of Being: Heidegger, Truth, and Time*)

In this chapter, I consider the contemporary prospects for an understanding of *truth* that draws both on the outcomes of Heidegger's questioning of being and on twentieth-century 'analytic' inquiry into language and its structure. To be successful, such an understanding must accommodate, on the one hand, Heidegger's conception of linguistic truth as grounded in an ontologically prior phenomenon of unconcealment or disclosure, and on the other, the patterned structure shown in Tarski's schema for the structure of truth predicates for particular languages. Because the fullest development of the implications of this structure in relation to "natural" languages is Donald Davidson's, I here explore the prospects for reconciling Davidson's conception of truth with Heidegger's within a unified methodological framework of hermeneutic interpretation and phenomenological demonstration.¹

At first glance, the two projects in which these specific conceptions arise can appear to be methodologically quite at odds with one another. Whereas Heidegger, eschewing formal calculi, develops the implications of an ontologically prior phenomenon of the unconcealment of entities and the disclosure of world, Davidson's interpretive project develops the implications of the Tarskian framework first designed for the study of truth-predicates of formal languages, thus privileging *linguistic* truth as basic. The difference captures a familiar and more general tension between characteristic methods of analytic philosophy and those of phenomenological ontology. Whereas the analytic philosopher is likely to look to the *clarification* of the structure of logic or language as the basis for any possible illumination the concepts of truth and meaning, the phenomenologist characteristically seeks a concrete *demonstration* of the "matters themselves" underlying the concrete phenomena as they are factually given. Following the first approach, the analytic philosopher tends to take the kind of truth exhibited by assertoric sentences, propositions, or other linguistically shaped items as basic, whereas the second approach leads the phenomenologist to point toward a "pre-linguistic" or "non-linguistic" phenomenological basis for this kind of truth in the actual appearing of things. The two approaches find prominent examples in the projects of Davidson and Heidegger, leading the latter to his longstanding critique of the "logical" assumption of the primacy of the "assertion" or assertoric sentence in the analysis of truth, while leading the former to propose an account of linguistic truth that may seem deeply and essentially committed to just this assumption. Despite these apparently vast and interconnected differences, however, I argue here that the approaches can indeed be reconciled in such a way as concretely to indicate the unified *problematic* of truth that actually lies at the *unified* hermeneutic and formal-ontological basis of both conceptions.

¹ This does not mean, however, that I presuppose or maintain that the specific project of Davidsonian semantics as classically formulated, namely that of providing a Davidsonian "theory of meaning" for a given natural language (such as English) must be able to succeed. Indeed, we shall see good reasons to think that no such theory can be given that is both complete and consistent. Nevertheless, as I shall argue, these reasons themselves provide important positive *indicia* of underlying features of the constitution of natural languages bearing on their ontological status.

In the sense developed here, the formal indication of a problematic, in which the central contours of a phenomenon first become intelligible, is neither a *definition* of the phenomenon nor a general *theory* of it. It is, rather, an indicative demonstration of the phenomenon as it presents itself, grounded in an interrogative questioning of it, and thereby pointing to the determinate points of its possible conceptual articulation, including importantly the demonstration of the inherent points of aporia or theoretical blockage that may ultimately render untenable the hope for a single and adequate theory. In particular, if, as Heidegger and Davidson both effectively argue, there is no direct route from empirical facts, ontic configurations of entities, or the epistemic or cognitive capacities of agents, subjects, or communities, to the structure of truth as such, then there are good reasons for thinking that truth as such can neither be defined in a unitary way nor described by a single, complete, and consistent theory applicable to all languages and situations. Nevertheless it remains possible that the underlying phenomenon can be indicated both in its concreteness and in its givenness by means of a twofold formal demonstration of its underlying ontological and logical-semantic structure in relation to its manifold concrete appearances in languages and concrete lives. For even if there is no route, either from the Heideggerian questioning of “being in the sense of truth” or from the *plural* structure of truth-definitions for particular languages given by Tarski, to a unitary concept or theory of truth in general or as such, it is nevertheless possible to see in both, and in the consideration of their mutual relationships of founding, precedence, and problematization, the indication of an underlying formal structure that is ultimately determinable neither as simply “ontological” nor “semantic.” One outcome of the clarification of this structure, as I shall argue, is the demonstration of a constitutive and positive phenomenon of *undecidability* at the logical/ontological basis of linguistic sense and presence. This further points, as I shall argue, to the deeper problem of the *temporality* of language as it is learned, instituted, spoken, or developed, and thereby to the question of the specific relationship of the *logos* to time, beyond or before the imposed criteria that regulate this relationship on the basis of an assumed rubric of eternal, standing presence.

I

There are criteria for the truth of *things* and *events*, relative to particular empirical situations or domains of inquiry; and there are, as Tarski showed, formal/structural definitions of the truth *predicates* employed in particular languages, relative to those languages, and constitutively linked to their own structures of linguistic *sense*. But to ask after the possibility of a unified semantic/ontological structure of truth is to wonder whether there is, behind each of these, a phenomenon of truth as such, conditioning and underlying the articulation of criteria of the genuineness of entities and phenomena in particular ontic domains as well as the conditions of the truth of sentences in particular languages. In this chapter, I designate as *transcendental* any conception of truth that is, in this way, not limited either with respect to languages or regions: that is, any conception of truth that aims to indicate its nature or structure prior to the specification of its bearing within a well-defined field of inquiry or a particular historical language. Beyond this, nothing much is meant to turn on the terminology.² The point is just

² In particular, I do not wish to inscribe the implication of a definitive connection, either of motivation or result, to Kant’s transcendental idealism or any subsequent (e.g. “fundamental ontological”) version of it. As we shall see, it is essential to the conception of truth to be extracted from the unified reading of the Davidsonian and Heideggerian programs that it be able to be construed in a completely *realist* way.

to indicate the universality of what might otherwise be called a *general* concept of truth, correlative to a single phenomenon of *truth in general* or as such, were it not problematic (as, we shall see, it is) to understand the relationship of truth to its determined situational instances as that of any kind of *genus* (even a “maximally general” or “preeminent” one) to its more narrowly determined species.

In his last, posthumously published book, *Truth and Predication*, Donald Davidson argues for the necessity of a concept of truth that is “transcendental” in this sense. In particular, he suggests that the use of Tarskian truth-definitions for particular languages to produce theories of meaning for them, in the context of radical interpretation, depends upon a pre-existing understanding of a prior concept of truth which is itself not specific to any particular language. This concept is to be distinguished from particular Tarskian definitions of the truth predicates for particular languages that Davidson conceives as offering specific “theories of meaning” for those languages. For these definitions themselves do not indicate what the various truth-predicates have in common; but it must be possible to see them as having a deeper, common structure if we are to use them in the linguistic interpretation of beliefs and meanings at all.

As commentators have objected and as Davidson himself acknowledges, neither the specific Tarskian definitions of truth-predicates nor their general pattern suffice by themselves to define the underlying *sense* of truth in a way that goes beyond their *extensional* adequacy in each case. For example, as Dummett points out, Tarski’s definitions provide no guidance in *extending* the concept of truth to the case of a new language, and as Field has objected, they provide no guidance, even in the case of a single language, in extending the concept of truth to apply to sentences involving concepts or terms introduced *de novo* and thus not provided for in the original truth-definition.³ Both objections are related to Dummett’s suggestion that in an important sense, Tarski’s definitions fail to capture the “point” of the introduction of a truth-predicate into a language to begin with. Admitting the trenchancy of these objections, Davidson agrees that in an important sense, Tarski has not provided a definition or full clarification of the concept of truth, even as applied to particular languages. But it is nevertheless possible to see the use of the Tarskian structure as justified and illuminating, provided only that we understand it within the broader practice of linguistic interpretation and the broader concept of truth it invokes. Davidson puts the matter this way:

My own view is that Tarski has told us much of what we want to know about the concept of truth, and that there must be more. There must be more because there is no indication in Tarski’s formal work of what it is that his various truth predicates have in common, and this must be part of the content of the concept. It is not enough to point to Convention-T as that indication, for it does not speak to the question of how we know that a theory of truth for a language is correct. The concept of truth has essential connections with the concepts of belief and meaning, but these connections are untouched by Tarski’s work.⁴

In particular, while particular Tarskian theories for specific languages point to a general structure which must be fulfilled by any systematic account of meaning for a particular language, showing the “kind of

³ Davidson (2005), pp. 16-17.

⁴ Davidson (2005), pp. 27-28.

pattern truth must make, whether in language or thought,” (p. 28), neither the particular Tarskian truth-definitions nor this general pattern suffices to exhaust the underlying concept of truth as it must in fact be presupposed in actual interpretation.⁵ This understanding is supplied by the systematic interpretation of the speakers’ utterances in radical interpretation, but it is dependent in that context upon the prior grasp of a non-language-specific concept of truth as such, which we must be able to have without yet having any detailed explicit understanding of the structure of any language. It is this “untutored grasp” of an underlying concept of truth that we then, according to Davidson, draw on in interpreting a language by attributing truth-conditions to the utterances of its speaker, and which further convinces us that the structures of Tarski’s formal machinery, in application to particular languages, “pretty much accord” with this antecedent concept.⁶

Familiarly, on Davidson’s conception, a “theory of meaning” for a natural language recursively embodies a compositional structure of assignments of meaning to the language’s primitive predicates and singular terms.⁷ This structure of meaning can be embodied, Davidson suggests, by a theory which yields as consequences all of the true T-sentences for a particular language. This is the structure described by Tarski in “The Concept of Truth in Formal Languages” as the one that must be exhibited by any extensionally adequate definition of the term “true” as it is used in a (formal or natural) language.⁸ According to Tarski, any such definition will be adequate only if it implies all sentences of a certain form, what he calls form (T):

X is true, if and only if, p.

Here, ‘p’ stands for any sentence of the language and ‘X’ is to be replaced with a name for that very sentence, formed by enclosing the sentence itself within quotation marks, or by some other naming device.

Thus, for instance, a Tarskian theory of truth will imply that

“Snow is white” is true (in English) if and only if snow is white.

Tarski suggests, in “The Concept of Truth in Formalized Languages” and “The Semantic Concept of Truth”, that a definition of the truth predicate that implies all the instances of the T-schema will be both “materially adequate” and “formally correct”; that is, it will capture the actual behavior of the truth-

⁵ Davidson (2005), p. 28.

⁶ Davidson (2005), p. 31.

⁷ For the program of the provision of a “theory of meaning” through the radical interpretation of natural language, see, e.g.: “Truth and Meaning” (1967); “Radical Interpretation” (1973); “In Defense of Convention T” (1973), all reprinted in Davidson (2001). Following standard practice in the “analytic” literature, I here use “natural language” to indicate a contrast with “formal” or “artificial” languages, and thus actually to refer to what Heidegger, by contrast, generally calls “historical” languages. This usage should not be taken to indicate, however, any judgment at this point as to whether the character of these languages is in fact deeply “natural” or deeply “historical” (or neither).

⁸ Tarski (1944).

predicate for the language and will do so in a way that reveals its underlying formal structure.⁹ And as he goes on to show, such a definition can in fact be constructed from that of a more primitive “semantic” relationship, that of “satisfaction”. The relation of satisfaction coordinates primitive singular terms of a formal language to particular objects, and primitive predicates to sets and sequences of objects; intuitively, the relation is that of “reference” in the case of the singular terms and the sets and sequences that a predicate is “true of” in the case of predicates. Given the specification of the satisfaction relations, the definition of the truth-predicate can be built up recursively from them.¹⁰ In this way it is possible actually to define the truth-predicate (which must characterize an infinite number of possible sentences) from a finite set of axioms (the specification of the satisfaction relations for the (finitely many) basic terms of the language).

In Davidson’s project of analyzing the semantical structure of natural languages, the order of explanation that characterizes Tarski’s truth-definitions is, in a certain way, reversed. Rather than beginning with primitively specified satisfaction relations for particular formal languages in order to build up the recursive structure of truth for the language, Davidson (following Quine) envisages the radical interpreter beginning with the project of interpreting an already existing natural language at first completely obscure to her, and working to reconstruct its underlying structure from the attitudes of holding-true and rejection of particular sentences exhibited by its speakers. Nevertheless, the recursive structure underlying the true T-sentences remains the primary object of investigation, and Davidson argues that (as for Tarski) this compositional structure, in turn, must be adequate in the sense that it yields as deductive consequences the whole *corpus* of T-sentences for the language in question. A speaker’s understanding of the language may then be considered equivalent to her knowledge of this recursive structure, and an interpretation of it in another language may be considered to be a precondition for successful understanding of speakers of the first language by speakers of the second.¹¹ In particular, where what is at issue is the interpretation of an unknown language (as it is in the situation of “radical interpretation”), the theory of meaning will, in yielding the T-sentences for the language under consideration, specify truth-conditions for each sentence of the considered language by means of the interpreter’s own distinct language, thus yielding a systematic translation or interpretation of the alien language as a whole.

It is in this way that an antecedent grasp of the concept of truth is required for the actual interpretation of a language in terms of the Tarskian structure, as well as for any interpretation at all insofar as it essentially involves the attribution of truth conditions to utterances. As Davidson argues in *Truth and Predication*, the necessity of this effectively presupposed concept of transcendental truth for interpretation bears against the claims of those who have seen in Tarski’s conception the warrant for *deflationary* or *redundancy* accounts of truth, on which there is nothing much more to say about truth than to point out that truth predicates function disquotationally, or that to say that something is true is

⁹ Tarski (1933).

¹⁰ Or, in fact, non-recursively, exploiting a method due to Hilbert for converting recursive definitions into explicit ones.

¹¹ See, e.g., “Truth and Meaning,” p. 17; “Radical Interpretation,” pp. 125-26

just to assert it.¹² In particular, if such a concept of transcendental truth is indeed prerequisite for interpretation, the Tarskian truth predicates may have “further essential properties” beyond just those actually directly involved in the Tarskian individual theories, even if these theories themselves make no use of these further properties.¹³ Nevertheless, Davidson argues that, despite the way in which such a transcendental concept of truth is requisite for interpretation, it would be futile to attempt to *define* truth in this sense, and all historical attempts to do so have in fact accordingly failed. For since truth in the sense in which it is necessarily presupposed in successful interpretation is one of the simplest and most basic semantic concepts we possess, it would be quixotic to attempt to define it in terms of supposedly more basic or foundational ones (including, Davidson suggests, reference, “correspondence,” “coherence”, or any other such specialized philosophical notion). What we *can* do, however, is to make the underlying concept of truth clearer by considering its essential relationships with other basic semantic concepts, including those of reference, sentential meaning, and sentential predication themselves. This is just the kind of reflective inquiry that takes place in Davidson’s own analysis of the implications of radical interpretation, and he sees it as at least implicit in Tarski’s own thinking with respect to what the latter called his “semantical” conception of truth. What is to be clarified in the inquiry is just that transcendental concept of truth which, as Davidson argues, must be able to be presupposed in practice in any interpretation of another’s utterances, insofar as interpreting them involves ascribing truth-conditions at all, but which can also be formally captured in the pattern of T-sentences which systematically connect these conditions to structured utterances in a particular case.

It is clear that Heidegger’s treatment of truth as “unconcealment” [*Unverborgenheit*] also considers the underlying phenomenon of truth as “transcendental” in the sense I have described.¹⁴ In *Being and Time*, this account largely takes the form of a description of the “original” phenomenon of truth as uncoveredness [*Entdeckendheit*].¹⁵ Thus understood, truth as unconcealment or uncoveredness is “prior” in several senses, but perhaps the most central of these is its presuppositional character with respect to the phenomena of a (linguistic) assertion [*Aussage*]. Thus, in section 44 of *Being and Time* (the section that concludes Division I’s “Preparatory Fundamental Analysis of Dasein”), Heidegger explains the truth of *assertions* as grounded in their uncovering or unconcealment of entities:

¹² Davidson (2005), pp. 10-14. Despite possible anticipations in Frege (see chapter 1, above), the first explicit suggestion of a “redundancy” theory is given by F.P Ramsey in Ramsey (1927).

¹³ Davidson (2005), pp. 26-27.

¹⁴ As noted above, though, this should not be confused with the sense in which Heidegger speaks of Dasein’s “transcendence” toward the world.

¹⁵At the outset of discussion of Heidegger’s concept of truth, some terminological clarifications are in order. Heidegger uses “unconcealment” or [*Unverborgenheit*] through much of his career (especially after 1928) as a maximally general term for the discussion of the phenomenon of truth; as such it appears to be intended as a translation or near translation of the Greek term *aletheia*. In *Being and Time*, itself, though, Heidegger barely uses “unconcealment” but rather uses “uncoveredness” [*Entdecktheit*], both as a synonym for “unconcealment” but also more narrowly, in reference to entities (especially as they are shown or uncovered in assertions), while “disclosedness” [*Erschlossenheit*] is used in relation to Dasein or its constitutive phenomenon of world. I am grateful to Mark Wrathall for pointing out some of these distinctions to me in conversation; cf. also Wrathall (2011), pp. 16-17.

To say that an assertion “*is true*” signifies that it uncovers the entity as it is in itself [*an ihm Selbst*]. Such an assertion asserts, points out, ‘lets’ the entity ‘be seen’ (*apophansis*) in its uncoveredness [*Entdecktheit*]. The *Being-true (truth)* of the assertion must be understood as *Being-uncovering* [*Entdeckend-sein*] ... “Being-true” (“truth”) means Being-uncovering. [*Wahrsein (Wahrheit) besagt entdeckend-sein*].¹⁶

This uncovering is itself grounded, according to Heidegger, in the structure of Dasein as well as that of the world itself. In particular:

Uncovering is a way of Being for Being-in-the-world ... What is primarily ‘true’ – that is, uncovering – is Dasein ...

Our earlier analysis of the worldhood of the world and of entities within-the-world has shown ... that the uncoveredness [*Entdecktheit*] of entities within-the-world is *grounded* in the world’s disclosedness [*Erschlossenheit*]. But disclosedness is that basic character [*Grundart*] of Dasein according to which it *is* its “there”.¹⁷

Heidegger is here thus concerned with a “most primordial” phenomenon of truth as uncoveredness that has two holistic aspects. First, the most primordial phenomenon of truth is grounded in (or even identifiable with) disclosedness as the “basic character of Dasein.” Second, this basic character – the disclosedness of Dasein – is also identifiable with the disclosedness of the world, what underlies the possibility of any showing or appearing of entities within the world.

According to Heidegger, more generally, the possibility of predicative assertion in language has its condition of possibility in a more basic phenomenon of interpretive disclosure.¹⁸ The most basic underlying structure of linguistic assertion is characterized as that of an “apophantical as” in which an assertion describes or characterizes an entity *as* something or as being some way: for instance, as having some particular feature or characteristic, or standing in some relationship to another entity. But this “apophantical as” of the assertion is itself, according to Heidegger, ontologically founded on a more basic “as” structure of hermeneutical understanding or interpretation [*Auslegung*].¹⁹ This more basic “as’- structure,” whereby any entity is disclosed *as* something or other, always characterizes, in a fundamental way, any possible understanding or interpretation of entities. This is the case, in particular, already when entities are disclosed in “concernful circumspection” [*besorgenden Umsicht*] as ready to hand [*zuhanden*], prior to any explicit thought or linguistic assertion about them. In such circumspection, for example in handling a hammer, there need not be any explicit judgment or linguistic assertion, but it is nevertheless possible for an entity to be interpretively disclosed *as having* a particular character (for instance, the hammer as “too heavy”).²⁰ Nevertheless, the original, primordial “as”-structure of hermeneutic understanding can under certain conditions become transformed into the

¹⁶ GA 2, pp. 218-219.

¹⁷ GA 2, p. 220.

¹⁸ In this sense, in particular, “Assertion and its structure...are founded upon interpretation and its structure” (GA 2, p. 223).

¹⁹ GA 2, p. 158.

²⁰ GA 2, p. 157.

explicit formation of an assertion. In particular, by way of a transformation in our way of being “given” the object, the “fore-having” which already characterized the hermeneutical disclosure of the hammer as hammer is changed over into the “having” of something present at hand, which can now be the “about which” of an explicit assertion.²¹ The primordial ‘existential-hermeneutical ‘as’ of circumspective interpretation is thus modified into the ‘apophantical’ ‘as’, which makes it possible to formulate any explicit assertion about the object.

The more basic existential-hermeneutic “as” structure, as it operates in “everyday circumspective interpretation” (with or without an explicit, thematic focus) itself breaks up into three “fore”-structures that jointly connect the individual entity to the total context of involvements that articulate, for Heidegger, its basic character.²² First, there is a “fore-having” [*Vorhabe*] whereby this totality of involvements is always already (in some sense) “understood.” Second, there is a “fore-sight” [*Vorsicht*] which begins to separate from this total context of involvements the specific entity in question and makes it capable of being conceptualized. Finally, there is a “fore-conception” [*Vorgriff*] which “decide(s) for a specific way of conceiving” the entity, and thus “can be drawn from the entity itself, or ...can force the entity into concepts to which it is opposed [*widersetzt*] in its manner of Being.”²³ The threefold fore-structure of understanding is itself “existentially-ontologically” connected to the basic phenomenon of projection [*Entwerfen*], whereby entities are “disclosed in their possibility” [*ist Seiendes in seiner Möglichkeit erschlossen*] by Dasein.²⁴ This involves that entities are “projected upon the world” [*auf Welt hin entworfen*]; “that is, upon a whole of significance [*ein Ganzes von Bedeutsamkeit*], to whose reference relations [*in deren Verweisungsbezügen*] concern, as Being-in-the-World, has been tied up in advance.”²⁵ In particular, it is the projective relation of Dasein to this totality of significance that allows entities to to be understood with respect to their distinctive ways of being. Meaning or sense (Sinn) is itself “that wherein the intelligibility [*Verständlichkeit*] of something maintains itself” and the “upon-which” [*Woraufhin*] of “a projection in terms of which something becomes intelligible as something [*aus dem her etwas als etwas verständlich wird*].”²⁶ As such, the concept of sense comprises [*umfaßt*] the “formal framework” [*formale Gerüst*] of what is articulated in understanding interpretation.²⁷ Furthermore, given that it has this structure, according to Heidegger, ““meaning” must be conceived as the formal-existential framework of the disclosedness which belongs to understanding.”²⁸ That is, meaning or sense is the underlying form of the disclosure that allows understanding and interpretation to take place, on the basis of the unitary grounding of the fore-structure of understanding and the as-structure of interpretation in the phenomenon of projection by which Dasein maintains entities in their intelligibility.

²¹ GA 2, p. 158

²² GA 2, p. 150.

²³ GA 2, p. 150.

²⁴ GA 2, p. 151.

²⁵ GA 2, p. 151.

²⁶ GA 2, p. 151.

²⁷ GA 2, p. 151 (transl. slightly altered)

²⁸ GA 2, p. 151.

Heidegger's understanding of the most basic common precondition of assertoric and non-assertoric truth thus involves a general phenomenon, that of the "existential-hermeneutic as," which is further characterized both as the foundation of the possibility of interpretation of the being of entities in their specific domains of projective appearing, and as the ultimate underlying basis of the structure of linguistic predication. As grounding the possibility of the truth assertions and entities but not itself limited to particular languages or ontic domains, Heidegger's conception of truth thus is, like Davidson's, a "transcendental" one. Moreover it is itself, like Davidson's, grounded in an underlying conception of interpretation which links truth systematically to the intelligibility of particular entities and sentential truth-conditions as well as to the *holistic* intelligibility of their maximal context, the world as such.

For both philosophers, in fact, the idea of the hermeneutic basis of transcendental truth in the sense I have discussed points to a threefold holistic connection among truth, entities, and predication which must be decisive in pointing to the structural contours of any successful conception of it. For insofar as to speak truly about an entity is to predicate something truly *of* it, and insofar as what is truly predicable of an entity characterizes what it *is* (in the "predicative" sense of "is"), the idea common to both philosophers of a hermeneutic presupposition of the transcendental concept of truth in actual interpretative practice points, in both cases, to the determinate connection of that transcendental concept to the underlying structure of predication in sentences, on one hand, and to (what is called in the Heideggerian jargon) the "being of beings," on the other. The idea of such a threefold connection among truth, predication, and the being of entities is classically formulated by Aristotle in the famous 'definition' of truth and falsity in *Metaphysics*, book 4:

To say of what is that it is not, or of what is not that it is, is false, while to say of what is that it is, and of what is not that it is not, is true...²⁹

On the conception suggested by Aristotle, in particular, the characterization of falsity and truth is linked both to predication (in the formulation "to say of...that...") and to the being and non-being of entities ("what is" and "what is not"). Although neither philosopher rejects this formulation *tout court*, both Heidegger and Davidson effectively suggest that its significance can only be rightly understood if the possibilities of truth and falsehood to which it points are first seen as grounded in the more basic underlying hermeneutic *situation* in which we holistically "make sense" of languages and the world, and in the transcendental phenomenon of truth that is operative there.³⁰ Such an underlying phenomenon of truth, indifferently "linguistic" and "non-linguistic," is not to be construed as the general type or overarching *genus* of which particular criteria of truth or linguistic theories of meaning are more determined species or instances. It is, however, the hermeneutic and problematic basis on which the basic connection between the structures of linguistic predication and the determination of the being of

²⁹"τὸ μὲν γὰρ λέγειν τὸ ὄν μὴ εἶναι ἢ τὸ μὴ ὄν εἶναι ψεῦδος, τὸ δὲ τὸ ὄν εἶναι καὶ τὸ μὴ ὄν μὴ εἶναι ἀληθές," (*Metaphysics* IV, 7, 1011 b 25-27).

³⁰ Whether it is the interpretation of language or of the world that is at issue, though, what is meant here is "hermeneutics" only in the sense of a "hermeneutics of facticity" (cf. chapter 2 above), which should be distinguished from the more specific sense of "hermeneutics" (roughly, as interpretive activity grounded in a tradition) developed, for instance, by Gadamer in Gadamer (1928) and (1960). For some reflections by Davidson on the relationship of his own project to Gadamer's, see Davidson (1997) (esp. p. 275).

entities can be clarified on the basis of an interrogative inquiry into the more original “connections” of truth, sense, and being themselves.

What grounds are there for thinking that Heidegger’s and Davidson’s specific conceptions of truth can indeed be brought together into such a single, hermeneutically oriented conception? To begin with, it is helpful to note that there are at least three general *negative* features of both philosophers’ accounts of truth on which they agree, in contrast with a variety of other contemporary theories and accounts. First, both philosophers reject *correspondence* theories of the basis of truth. Second, both philosophers reject *coherence, anti-realist, and other epistemically based* theories of truth. Third, both philosophers reject the existence of propositions, Fregean thoughts, ideal contents, or other *timeless* entities as the primary truth-bearers.

First, *both argue against correspondence theories of the basis of truth.* In *Being and Time* and elsewhere, Heidegger presents his account of truth as an alternative to what he sees as a still-dominant “traditional conception of truth.” The traditional conception, as Heidegger describes it, has two main substantive components: first, the claim that the *primary* “locus” of truth is the assertion or judgment; and second, the claim that “the essence of truth lies in the ‘agreement’ [or correspondence] of the judgment with its object.”³¹ Both components are captured, according to Heidegger, in the scholastic motto according to which truth is *adequatio intellectus et rei*, which has its ultimate roots in Aristotle’s description of the soul’s experiences (*pathemata*) as *omoiomata* or “likenesses” of things (*pragmaton*), and continues to characterize conceptions of truth such as Kant’s and those of nineteenth-century neo-Kantians.³² Heidegger asks after the “ontological character” of this supposed “truth-relation” of agreement: “With regard to what do *intellectus* and *res* agree?” On one view, the requisite agreement is one between an ideal content of judgment and a real thing about which a judgment is or can be made.³³ This relationship, like the relationship between ideal contents and real *acts* of judgment, may be said to “subsist.” But Heidegger asks whether such “subsisting” has ever been clarified ontologically and what it can, basically, mean; this is, as he points out, nothing other than the question concerning the actual character of the relationship of *methexis* (or participation) between the real and the ideal, with which “no headway has been made ... in over two thousand years.”³⁴

More broadly, Heidegger considers how the relationship of agreement which is supposed by correspondence theories to hold between entities and judgments about them actually becomes manifest phenomenologically. In judging or asserting that “the picture on the wall is hanging askew,” Heidegger argues, one is not related primarily to “representations” or psychological processes, but rather to the picture itself. And in the act of perception that confirms the truth of the judgment, there is again no matching of representations to objects, but rather the phenomenon of the picture revealing

³¹ GA 2, p. 214.

³² GA 2, pp. 214-215.

³³ Heidegger appears to have in mind Husserl’s view, though he does not say so explicitly here, and it is also not clear that the view that is sketched captures accurately all the aspects of Husserl’s actual discussions of the “synthesis of fulfillment” between the content of an significative intention and the content that may fulfill it (see chapter 2, above).

³⁴ GA 2, p. 216.

itself “just as” it (truly) is.³⁵ This is not, as Heidegger points out, a relation of representation between the picture and a representation of it; nor is it a comparison of various representations with each other. Rather, in the demonstration, the picture *itself* is uncovered as being a certain way; in the perceptual confirmation of the judgment, the entity that was judged about *shows itself* as being a certain way (indeed, just the way it was judged to be). If what takes place here is indeed the most basic and primary phenomenon of truth, it is clear that truth cannot be theorized as having a basis in the correspondence of subject and object, or of the psychological with the physical, or in any other relation of representation or agreement.³⁶

Davidson’s arguments against correspondence theories are differently motivated and situated, but their upshot is, in important ways, structurally similar. In particular, Davidson has essentially two reasons for holding that there is no tenable relation of “correspondence” between language and the world to be found at all, for “there is nothing interesting or instructive to which true sentences correspond.”³⁷ The first is that, as Davidson argues drawing on an argument made in different forms by Frege, Church, Gödel, and Neale, if a sentence is said to correspond to one entity in the world, it must ultimately be said to correspond to *all* of them.³⁸ The resulting picture evokes, in some ways, the Eleatic thesis according to which all that exists is the One of a total and ultimately undifferentiated reality; however, as Davidson notes, it is no longer in any important sense a picture of truth as *correspondence* at all.³⁹ Davidson’s second reason for rejecting correspondence accounts of the truth of sentences turns on the problem of predication, and in particular on the problem of accounting for the unity of sentences. As Davidson here suggests, any theory of the truth of sentences that treats it as a *relational* property will ultimately fail to account for the kind of truth-evaluable unity that sentences exhibit. This is because any such theory will advert to a relationship between a true sentence and some entity (be it a fact, state

³⁵ GA 2, p. 218.

³⁶ Some commentators, e.g. Wrathall (2011, pp. 12-13) and Carman (2003), pp. 159-61) have read Heidegger as holding that correspondence theories actually provide an accurate account of propositional truth itself, in that an assertion can indeed be considered to be true just when it corresponds with a state of affairs it is “about,” provided this propositional truth is seen (as usual) as a limited phenomenon within the broader horizon of truth as unconcealment. (Wrathall cites as evidence for this a passage from Heidegger’s 1931 Plato lecture “On the Essence of Truth”). If the attribution of this position to Heidegger is exegetically correct (I take no position either way on this), it appears, especially in light of the Davidsonian arguments canvassed in the next paragraph, that he has overestimated rather than underestimated the possible coherence of correspondence theories of sentential truth. For as we shall see (section II below), even if we consider assertoric, linguistic truth to take place only on the condition of a prior holistic phenomenon of the unconcealment of entities itself preconditioning the holistic phenomenon of linguistic meaning and reference, it is neither necessary nor probably possible to see each individual sentences as made true by its unique correspondence to any single distinct entity.

³⁷ Davidson (2005), p. 39.

³⁸ The argument, though perhaps already at least implicit in Frege’s arguments for the claim that the “reference” of a sentence is always one of the two truth-values (True or False), is sometimes called the “slingshot” and is given in (slightly different) classic forms by Church (1956) and Gödel (1944). For the discussion and further references, see Davidson (2005), pp. 126-30.

³⁹ Davidson had earlier suggested in “True to the Facts” that the Tarskian truth-theory is understandable as a (special kind of) correspondence theory owing to its employment of a concept of reference or satisfaction; later on, he also called this “correspondence without confrontation.” In *Truth and Predication* (pp. 38-41), however, Davidson explains clearly and directly that to call the Tarskian theory a “correspondence” theory in any respect was a mistake.

of affairs, situation, or whatever) that makes it true; and it will then be necessary to explain the unity of the sentence in terms of the unity of *this* entity. But this does not solve the problem of unity, but only reiterates it.⁴⁰ The appeal to correspondence, or indeed to *any* relation between sentences and entities as the basis for truth, is shown to be idle and useless for its intended explanatory purposes.

Both argue against timeless truthbearers. As we have seen, both Heidegger and Davidson apply arguments against correspondence and representationalist pictures of truth that resemble and descend from arguments made by their respective forebears, Husserl and Frege. Davidson's application of the Slingshot, in particular, develops a line of thought that some have seen as at least implicit in Frege, and his more general argument linking correspondence truth to a problematic infinite regress echoes Frege's own argument in "Thought" against correspondence theories. Somewhat similarly, at least one strand of Heidegger's anti-correspondence position in *Being and Time* echoes Husserl's own criticisms of "picture theories" of meaning and emphasizes the implications of the type of anti-representationalist direct realism that Husserl had long advanced.⁴¹ However, while both Husserl and Frege were led by their shared opposition to psychologistic and individualist-subjectivist accounts of meaning to embrace "ideal" contents as the ultimate bearers of truth, Davidson and Heidegger clearly reject any appeal to *timeless* or *a priori* entities or phenomena, including propositions, Fregean thoughts, extra-temporal "senses", ideal contents, or the like. Instead of maintaining the privileged link between sense and such timeless phenomena that traces back to Plato, both thus theorize the nature of truth and the meaning of sentences as inherently *temporal* phenomena of actual human life.⁴²

Both argue against epistemic, anti-realist, warranted assertability, or coherence theories. If there is a 'transcendental' concept or phenomenon of truth that hermeneutically conditions the structure of truth in particular situations and languages without being reducible to them, its structure, for both Davidson and Heidegger, is not to be found in a criterial or limitative consideration of its grounding in practices or capacities of knowing or asserting, but rather, prior to these, in its deeper interconnection with being itself. This implies, for both, that truth cannot be reduced to, or explained in terms of, any concept or phenomenon of practice or knowledge grounded in, and limited to, the contingent reach of human abilities and practices. Davidson makes the point in the course of a critical discussion of recent anti-realist theories such as Dummett's, which holds that the truth of sentences in a language is to be

⁴⁰ Davidson (2005), chapter 4 (see esp. pp. 84-86).

⁴¹ In fact, as Tugendhat points out in his own critique (Tugendhat (1967), p. 331), Husserl himself had actually given a similar argument against "picture" theories already in the *Logical Investigations*, some 25 years before Heidegger's writing of *Being and Time*, which makes the basis for some of Heidegger's occasional criticisms of Husserl as a "correspondence" theorist rather mysterious. One version of Husserl's own argument is given in *Logical Investigations*, vol. 2. See Husserl (1900/1901), Investigation V, chapter 2, § 21, "Appendix to § 11 and § 20. Critique of the 'image-theory' and of the doctrine of the 'immanent' objects of acts".

⁴² In Heidegger's case, this rejection is motivated by the larger critique he undertook over a period of several years prior to *Being and Time* of Husserl's failure to pose the question of the *ontological basis* of the distinction, presupposed by Husserl and contemporary neo-Kantians alike, between the ideal and the real, a question whose most important aspect is the question of the temporality of both "realms" and their supposed interrelation (see chapter 2, above). In Davidson's case, it is motivated largely by his inheritance of Quine's devastating arguments against the intelligibility of any such notion of content; this inheritance has the consequence that Davidson, like Quine, insists upon the availability in principle of the evidentiary basis for a systematic theory of meaning in the *empirical* evidence available to a radical interpreter.

understood in terms of the possibilities of their verification, and Putnam's "internal realism," which characterized truth as warranted assertibility in an idealized sense:

We should not say that truth is correspondence, coherence, warranted assertability, ideally justified assertability, what is accepted in the conversation of the right people, what science will end up maintaining, what explains the convergence on final theories in science, or the success of our ordinary beliefs.⁴³

Davidson's basic reason for opposing all of the family of "anti-realist" accounts on which truth is dependent on standards of ascertainability, assertibility, or actual practice is that "antirealism, with its limitation of truth to what can be ascertained, deprives truth of its role as an intersubjective standard."⁴⁴ As Davidson suggests (adopting an objection originally made by Putnam) it is essential to this role of truth as a standard that truth cannot be "lost"; that is, it cannot be correct to hold that a sentence that is true at one time can ever become untrue later.⁴⁵ But on an account like Dummett's, which links truth to justified assertibility in the sense of the actual capabilities of an individual or community to verify or assert sentences, truth *can* be lost in this sense, for actual abilities develop in historical time and may also diminish or vanish. Conversely, as well, it must be possible to understand, believe, and assert some claims that can never be conclusively verified (Davidson gives the example: "A city will never be built on this spot,") but Dummett's anti-realist attempt to link truth to assertibility is that it makes this possibility obscure, since it denies that such a claim has a truth value at all.⁴⁶

The only alternative, while maintaining a constitutive link between truth and "human" practices or the epistemic abilities they are seen as embodying, is to *idealize* the requisite abilities. This is the alternative suggested by Putnam, as Davidson reads him, with his "internal realist" account, which identifies truth with idealized *justified* assertibility, or what reasonable belief would converge upon ultimately, given "good enough" epistemic conditions.⁴⁷ The problem with this alternative is that the idealization deprives the appeal to abilities of any distinctive force. In particular, if we idealize away from *any* possibility of error, we are simply no longer making any important use of a concept of human *abilities* at all.

Heidegger's own attitude toward the view that truth "presupposes" human abilities or practices is well expressed in a passage from *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*:

It is not we who need to presuppose [voraussetzen] that somewhere there is "in itself" a truth in the form of a transcendent value or valid meaning floating somewhere. Instead, truth itself, the basic constitution of the Dasein [*die Grundverfassung des Daseins*]... is the presupposition for our own existence [*setzt uns voraus, ist die Voraussetzung für ihre eigene Existenz*]. Being-true, unveiledness [*Wahrsein, Enthülltheit*] is the fundamental condition for our being able to be in the way in which we exist as Dasein. Truth is the presupposition for our being able to

⁴³ Davidson (2005), pp. 47-48.

⁴⁴ Davidson (2005), p. 48.

⁴⁵ Davidson (2005), p. 46.

⁴⁶ Davidson (2005), p. 47.

⁴⁷ Davidson (2005), pp. 44-46.

presuppose anything at all. For presupposing is in every case an unveiling establishment of something as being [*in jedem Falle ein enthüllendes Ansetzen von etwas als seiend*]. Presupposition everywhere presupposes truth.⁴⁸

For Heidegger, in other words, truth does not presuppose or rely upon our (individual or social) epistemic abilities or assertoric practices; rather, the phenomenon of truth as unveiledness is the basic phenomenon that conditions *our* “being able to be in the way in which we exist as Dasein” at all. As Davidson also suggests, this does not mean that truth is not to be understood as standing in a basic relationship to sense or meaning, as this is also manifest in our practices, but only that this relationship does not take the form of a *reduction* of truth or meaning *to* these practices. Rather, as Heidegger says, it is truth that itself preconditions – as the transcendental phenomena underlying its particular cases – the sense of things as they can show up in them. In *Being and Time*, Heidegger describes this preconditioning in terms of the basic structural relation of Dasein to unconcealedness or disclosure, in terms of which Dasein is “primordially” structured by truth, and is “equiprimordially” both “in truth” and “untruth”. In later texts, for instance in the *Beiträge*, this conception of truth as a precondition for *our* ways of existing is further radicalized, in the context of the deepened problem of the truth of being/beyng (Seyn), into the problem of *attaining* Dasein by means of attaining a standing in the ontologically privileged region of what is now thought of as the open region of the “clearing” in which all truth (linguistic as well as non-linguistic) takes place. But in neither case does the basic and essentially important constitutive *relationship* thereby indicated between the structure of Dasein and that of truth provide any encouragement to the anti-realist idea of a grounding or foundation of truth in knowledge, assertion, or any practices or procedures thereof.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ GA 24, pp. 315-16. Cf. *Being and Time* (GA 2), pp. 227-228 for a briefer but similar formulation of the same claim.

⁴⁹ As we shall see in subsequent chapters, this is not only because Heidegger’s concept of Dasein does not involve or encourage any foundational conception of “human” practices or abilities as criterial for being and its truth, but (more deeply) because of the way the constitutive idea of a practice or ability, whether individual or social, is itself problematized and undermined through the ultimate implications of an ontological analytic of truth and time. In terms of such an analysis, truth is constitutively related to sense, not because sense is itself rooted in human abilities or practices, but because sense is in turn linked to the *being* of beings, to their being in the sense of existence and to their being the ways that they are. In this way it is possible to see truth, resisting the anti-realist arguments, as essentially a *realist* structure touching on the very Being of beings itself, while at the same time refusing to construe this realism as “mind-independence,” correspondence, or any other ontically specified relation.

It is from this perspective that it is also possible to understand the true significance of superficially anti-realist remarks such as Heidegger’s, according to which “ ‘There is’ truth only in so far as Dasein is and so long as Dasein is.” (GA 2, p. 226) and Davidson’s that “Nothing in the world, no object or event, would be true or false if there were not thinking creatures” (Davidson 2005, p. 7) Both declarations can be upheld and maintained in a basically realist framework, if the underlying phenomenon of truth is seen in its genuinely *ontological* structural relationship to Dasein and to the structure of thought. It is not that the structure of Dasein, or the existence of thinking creatures itself, is for either philosopher intelligible quite independently of the link between these phenomena and truth; rather, as Heidegger and Davidson suggest, both Dasein and the characterization of any creature as “thinking” depend upon the structure of truth in its specific linkage with them. But the actual existence of Dasein or its activity of thinking is not, in either case, a sufficient or comprehensive condition *for* particular truths, but

Beyond these initial negative similarities, more positive grounds for the possibility of a *rapprochement* between Davidson's and Heidegger's conceptions emerge on a closer consideration of how the underlying hermeneutic structure of truth is linked, for both, to the specific structure of linguistic predication. For Davidson, as we have seen, Tarski's structural approach to truth plays an essential role in the project of giving a theory of meaning for a natural language. Beyond this, however, Davidson suggests that we can find in it essential ingredients for an actual solution to the ancient problem of the predicative *unity* of a sentence, or the problem of how the separately meaningful elements of a predicative sentence come together to produce something unified and evaluable as true or false. In the second part of *Truth and Predication*, Davidson considers attempts by Plato, Aristotle, Hume, Leibniz, and Russell to explain the truth-evaluable unity of a predicative sentence by accounting for the way in which what these philosophers understand as its separately meaningful parts come together to form a unified structure.⁵⁰ Each of these attempts fails, he argues, either by failing to explain the actual basis of the unity of the sentence or by doing so in a way that does not account for how this unity is evaluable as true or false. On Davidson's telling, though, Tarski's conception of truth provides the essential structure that is needed to account for the unity of the proposition without inviting the problems of infinite regress and explanatory idleness that seem recurrently fatal for the earlier theories. In particular, Tarski is able to succeed where others have failed by providing a systematic way, through his recursive truth definitions, of linking the meanings of the smallest meaningful parts of sentences (the individually referring terms and predicative expressions) systematically with the truth-conditions of those sentences as whole. The key concept underlying this possibility of solution is Tarski's concept of satisfaction.⁵¹ It is this concept that allows the theorist to characterize the circumstances in which entities or sequences of entities are assigned to the variables in an open sentence which would make the sentence true if the variables were replaced by names for those entities and sequences. In this way, the systematic truth-conditional structure of the language becomes accessible to theoretical reconstruction in the form of a Tarskian truth-theory; as Davidson suggests, indeed, there is no other structure that could systematically elucidate the essential structural relationship of predication with truth, in such a way as to account for the infinite possibility of forming truth-evaluable predicative sentences that every natural language affords.

But this does not mean, as Davidson emphasizes, that a privileged relation of satisfaction, or any other reference-like relationship, holding between singular terms and particular objects is presupposed. Rather, the application of the Tarskian pattern to natural languages aims to discern how the systematic pattern of truth-evaluable sentences itself involves that singular and other terms have semantic roles

rather (at most) a necessary and structural condition for truth as such. The result of construing the dependence this way is that while, as Heidegger and Davidson both emphasize, it is incoherent to suppose truth to be completely and constitutively *independent* of the actuality of life and practices, it is also not the case that truth can simply be seen as an outcome of these alone or as capable of full explanation in terms of them. For a similar conclusion, also reached through a comparison of Heidegger's views with those Davidson expresses in *Truth and Predication*, see Okrent (2011); cf. also Wrathall (2011), pp. 53-56, for some partially similar suggestions about the upshot of the comparison.

⁵⁰ Davidson (2005), chapter 5.

⁵¹ Davidson (2005), pp. 159-161.

that require them to be satisfied by particular objects. In making this application, the theorist does not presuppose a specific concept of satisfaction, or any other reference-like relationship, but rather the general concept of truth. Since this general concept is, Davidson suggests, the “most basic semantic concept that we have;”⁵² it is idle to hope for a definition of *it* in terms of satisfaction or any other relation. Nevertheless, we can *use* the general concept to illuminate the structure of predication. The result is a general method that allows us to characterize, for any predicate, the conditions under which it is true of any number of entities, and thereby to use the predicative terms of the language to quantify over “endless” unnamed entities as well.⁵³ Nothing more (but also nothing less) can be expected, as Davidson suggests, of a theory of meaning for a language.

As Davidson in fact points out, however, this leaves the “nature” of the satisfaction “relation” itself unclear. It is not clear, for example, from what independent perspective *it* could be specified or how it might be possible, independently of the pattern of truth-values exhibited by the sentences of a language as a whole, to “fix” the satisfaction relations themselves. In fact, as Davidson argues, in the context of the interpretation of a natural language, it is actually impossible to “fix” these relations in advance of developing an interpretation of the language as a whole (for the interpreter does not have independent access to “primitive relations” between words and objects, or general terms and their extensions) and such an interpretation itself depends on discerning the systematic pattern of the truth-values of sentences in the language as a whole. This is why Davidson suggests that in working out an actual interpretation, the “satisfaction relations” must be seen as an outcome of the systematic pattern of truths, rather than as a substantive basis for them. In adopting this practice, rather than “building up” the concept of truth, as Tarski does, for a particular language from particular, specified satisfaction-relations, we are rather using our *general* concept of truth (the “most basic semantic concept we possess”) to provide an explicit reconstruction of the structural basis of meaning for the particular language at hand, including the particular “satisfaction” or other reference-like relationships we interpret it as involving.

Without disputing the actual hermeneutic utility (and even necessity) of this general sort of picture of what is involved in interpretation (on which truth is primary and reference-like relations such as satisfaction are secondary), one must note that it is actually in substantial initial tension with Davidson’s solution to the problem of predication itself. This solution turns (as we have seen) on Tarski’s use of the general idea of satisfaction as the *basic* explanatory notion in characterizing the structure of a language overall, in terms of which the truth of a predicative sentence as consisting in the predicates being *true of* the entities named by its constants or “quantified over” by its variables. Here, “true of” is simply a formulation of the general relation of satisfaction as it applies to predicates in relation to entities or sequences of entities, and Davidson’s idea is that it is the specification in terms of this relationship that is alone capable of avoiding the problems to which historical theories of predication are recurrently prone. But for all Davidson says, it remains in a certain sense obscure what is meant by a predicate’s being “true of” an entity; in particular, because of the way that this is, for Davidson, conceptually dependent on the primitive and unanalyzed notion of truth (rather than conversely), we have no specific

⁵² Davidson (2005), p. 160.

⁵³ Davidson (2005), p. 161.

characterization (nor, Davidson suggests, could we have one) of the *actual* relationship to which the formulation points, and which is clearly at the basis (in one sense) of the possibility of predication itself. Even as central a matter as what it is a relationship *of* (whether, for instance, of words to words, or words to things, or things to properties) is not made any clearer simply by referring to the relationship, deep-seated though it is, between truth and satisfaction that figures in the form of Tarski's theories.

A way of putting the issue, using terminology that is not Davidson's, is that despite its obvious structural merits, the suggested solution leaves the basic relationship, and hence the actual structure of predication itself, *phenomenologically* (or ontologically) unclear. We have from Tarski the basic idea that we illuminate the structure of predication by saying that a sentence is true if its predicates hold of, or are true of, its objects; but what can we say, guided by the *general* concept of truth, about what it is for this to be the case? My suggestion is not, here, that a specific relation or kind of relation between words and objects would have to be specified or determined, quite independently of a specific or general idea of truth, in order for Davidson's solution to the problem of predication to be successful. Indeed, Davidson has given us good reason to think that there is no such relation to be found. Nor is the point that, in order for any specific Tarskian truth-theory for a particular language to be verified as holding of that language (as it is actually spoken), we would somehow need access to the word-object relations of that particular language (access which, as Davidson has successfully argued, we cannot generally have) independently of our interpretation of its distinctive pattern of truths.

The suggestion is, rather, that, even agreeing with Davidson that we have no access to the "satisfaction relation", in particular cases or in general, independently of our grasp of the pattern of truths, a transcendental idea of this relation nevertheless plays an essential role in producing the *general* form of solution to the problem of predication that Davidson draws from Tarski. And this idea of something's being *true of* something, to which Davidson's solution essentially appeals, needs further illumination in terms of this *transcendental* concept of truth if the solution is going to shed any significant light on the *nature* of predication (rather than just act as a structural placeholder for such an illumination). Here, it is in fact unavoidable that what must be appealed to in illuminating the nature of predication is indeed a *transcendental* conception of truth, rather than just the specific truth-predicate for a particular language. For it is, on Davidson's account, *this* idea which must ultimately be appealed to if we are to illuminate the nature of predication itself in general; and it is clearly this notion that is the one to which we must relate predication if we are to illuminate (what he treats as) the *general* structure of predication itself, across new cases and changes in language.

What, then, has Tarski actually shown us in showing that the idea of something being *true of* something, the general form of the "relation" of satisfaction, is the *central* idea which allows us to understand the structure of predication, in such a way as to avoid replicating the question-begging assumptions and vicious infinite regresses that vex the history of attempts to explain it? In fact, the outlines of a partial answer can be found in Heidegger's disclosive account of truth as founded on the most basic underlying "as" structure of interpretive understanding. In particular, if Heidegger is right, the phenomenon that is ultimately at the basis of the possibility of *any* linguistic predicates being "true of" their objects (as well as any other phenomenon of disclosure) is the phenomenon of unconcealment, itself founded on the existential-hermeneutic "as."

In a passage from *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, Heidegger specifies how the hermeneutic “as” can be understood as the underlying basis for the “is” of predication, and indeed for the structure of linguistic predication generally, in light of the general conception of truth as disclosure or (here) unveiling:

So far as the “is” in assertion is understood and spoken, it already signifies [bedeutet] intrinsically the being of a being which is asserted about *as unveiled* [*als enthülltes*]. In the uttering of the assertion, that is to say, in the uttering of exhibition [*der Aufzeigung*], this exhibition, as intentionally unveiling comportment, expresses itself [*spricht .. aus*] about that to which it refers. By its essential nature, that which is referred to is unveiled. So far as this unveiling comportment expresses itself about the entity it refers to and determines this being in its being, the unveiledness of that which is spoken of is *eo ipso* co-intended [*mitgemeint*]. The moment of unveiledness is implied in [*liegt im*] the concept of the being which is meant in the assertion [*des in der Aussage gemeinten Seins selbst*]. When I say “A is B,” I mean not only the being-B of A but also the being-B of A as unveiled. ...The extant [*vorhandene*] entity itself is in a certain way true, not as intrinsically [*an sich*] extant, but as what is uncovered in the assertion [*in der Aussage entdecktes*].⁵⁴

On Heidegger’s account, it is therefore the basic way in which an entity, in being uncovered, is shown *as* something that provides the ultimate phenomenological basis for the explicit “is” of predication, or indeed the inexplicit structure of predication when no form of the predicative “to be” is present in the sentence. It is thereby possible, as we have seen, to see the predicative structure as phenomenologically grounded in the more basic “as” structure, which is in a fundamental way *not* relational or synthetic with respect to the matters unveiled, but rather exhibitiv of them. On the one hand this can be seen as providing a concrete basis for the claim, basic to Davidson’s account of the most important reason why Tarski’s account of predication succeeds where all others have failed, namely that it (almost uniquely) refuses to treat the structure of a simple predicative sentence logically as the synthesis of two or more separate and individually referential elements. On the other, it extends the non-synthetic form of the solution to the deeper underlying structure of all (truth-evaluable) phenomena of disclosure, whether or not they yield explicit, linguistic assertions.

Returning to the explicit form of the solution that Davidson finds in Tarski, what kind of illumination of the notion of being “true of” does this provide? As we have seen, it illuminates the conditions for the possible availability of entities to be *understood*, conditions that must be seen as aspects of their sense. And it is plausibly requisite to any full picture of predication that we give some such account; otherwise it would be just mysterious how we should conceive of entities as *becoming* possible subjects for true or false predication, or what ‘transcendental’ conditions must be met in order for them to be able to be the subject of true or false assertions by the speakers of a particular language. These are issues on which Davidson’s account of the basis of predication, as far as it goes, is simply silent. Heidegger’s picture, by contrast, gives a phenomenologically motivated basic clarification of both. In so doing, it *a fortiori* also speaks to other questions about predication that are not and cannot be answered by

⁵⁴ GA 24, pp. 311-312.

Tarski's structure of language-specific truth-definitions alone, such as questions about diachronic changes and the extensibility of the notion of truth across *all* languages with a minimal kind of predicative structure.

II

If such a twofold conception of the foundations of truth is to be defended, it will be necessary first to overcome the persistent impression that its two main elements – the “semantic” foundation for the structure of linguistic truth in terms of Tarski's apparatus and the “ontological” foundation for the givenness of entities in terms of Heidegger's conception of truth as unconcealment – are simply and irreconcilably opposed to one another. Contemporary commentary on Heidegger has often, though, made just this suggestion. On the one hand, some recent scholarship has emphasized the ways in which Heidegger's own commitments about truth appear to embody a critical position with respect to mainstream analytic theories. For example, Daniel Dahlstrom has recently argued that a major basis for Heidegger's positive views is his critique of a “logical prejudice” which is both historically dominant and also broadly characteristic, according to Dahlstrom, of the analytic tradition of Frege, Quine and Davidson. The prejudice is that the assertoric or declarative proposition or sentence is the basic *locus* or most characteristic bearer of truth.⁵⁵ But on the other hand, from a position methodologically influenced by the “language-analytic” tradition, Ernst Tugendhat in the 1960s articulated a much-discussed critique of Heidegger's conception of truth in his *Habilitation, Der Wahrheitsbegriff bei Husserl und Heidegger*, and in a related shorter article, “Heidegger's Idea of Truth.”⁵⁶ In both pieces, Tugendhat argues that Heidegger's conception cannot account for important specific features of the phenomenon of truth, among them the basic difference between truth and falsity itself, and suggests that *only* a conception that takes the truth of sentences or sentence-like structures as basic can account for truth in its close connection to predication.⁵⁷ In this section, I will consider both of these impressions of incompatibility, and argue that they can be overcome in the context of a more comprehensive

⁵⁵ Dahlstrom (2001), p. 17.

⁵⁶ Tugendhat (1964) and Tugendhat (1967).

⁵⁷ Tugendhat's critique of Heidegger's concept of truth has been widely discussed in secondary literature on Heidegger, wherein many possible responses have also been assayed. Several commentators have objected that Tugendhat appears simply to presuppose that truth just is primarily or basically propositional, and thereby has missed the specific point of this analysis of propositional truth as grounded in unconcealment, or has simply assumed that the significant features of propositional truth, including bivalence, cannot be maintained in the context of an analysis such as Heidegger's: see, e.g., Wrathall (1999), Wrathall (2011, pp. 34-39), Carman (2003, pp. 259-61), and Dahlstrom (2001, p. 398-409). For a critical response to this kind of position upholding (in part) Tugendhat's critique, see Lafont (2000), pp. 115-124. For a helpful overview of the whole discussion also partially upholding the trenchency of Tugendhat's critique, see Smith (2007). Some commentators have suggested that Heidegger responds to Tugendhat's 1964 lecture with what appears to be his own disavowal of the identification of *aletheia* with truth in “The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking,” (GA 14) (also delivered in 1964) wherein Heidegger says that “...it was immaterial and therefore misleading to call *aletheia*, in the sense of clearing, ‘truth’.” I do not evaluate the merits of this suggestion here. I also do not here consider, as some commentators have, the (vexed) question of whether an account of truth in terms of unconcealment can adequately formulate or involve any of the various senses in which truth is, or is thought to be, “normative.”

conception of transcendental truth of the kind I have suggested. In particular, in such a conception, neither the disclosure of objects or the truth of sentences a simple priority, but rather both kinds of priority are seen as equally real and significant, although articulable along different dimensions.

In considering the relationship of Heidegger's views to the analytic tradition, it is important first to note that the "traditional conception" that Heidegger himself repeatedly criticizes fits many analytic (sentential or propositional) conceptions of truth only poorly. First, Heidegger generally characterizes the traditional conception as one on which the "assertion" [*Aussage*] or "act of judgment" is accorded primacy; but because of the anti-psychologistic basis of the sentential accounts of truth that originate with Frege and gain prominence in the analytic tradition, these accounts generally distinguish sharply (as Husserl himself did as well) between individual, datable acts of assertion, judgment or utterance and their contents, and so do not accord primacy to any individual linguistic *act* of assertion or psychological *event* of judging. Even in the context of a picture like Davidson's, where the interpretation of meaning is the interpretation of the utterances of the speakers of a language or the speaker of an idiolect, these utterances are seen as having a significant logical structure of contents, shown in the recursive structure of the axiomatized T-theory, which independent of (and productive of) these actual utterances.

Second, Davidson's account and at least some other analytic accounts (including, as we have seen in chapter 1, above, Frege's) combine a sentential conception of the *locus* of truth with a *non-correspondence* conception of its nature. In fact, in critically considering the "logical" tradition, Heidegger does not generally argue against just this kind of view. Rather, his own discussions typically *identify* sentential theories with correspondence theories under the unified heading of the "traditional" conception of truth. As we have seen, in *Being and Time*, Heidegger discusses the "traditional" conception as committed *both* to the claim that the primary locus of truth is assertion or judgment, *and* the claim that truth consists in 'agreement', adequation, or correspondence.⁵⁸ Heidegger does distinguish between these two components of what he sees as the "traditional" account of truth, but throughout *Being and Time* and in other texts dating from both before and after its composition, Heidegger repeatedly assumes that these two components *must* go together.⁵⁹ In fact, Davidson and other philosophers in the analytic tradition have indeed often adopted a view of truth that holds that it is primarily sentential while clearly *rejecting* a correspondence account of (sentential) truth.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ GA 2, p. 214.

⁵⁹ Other places where Heidegger appears to make this assumption include: GA 19 (1924-25), pp. 23-28; GA 21 (1925), pp. 127-28; GA 24 (1927), pp. 294-95; GA 26 (1928), pp. 154-58; GA 34 (1931), pp. 2-4. Heidegger's explicit concern with what he takes to be the roots of the "traditional" view in interpretations of Aristotle seems to have entered his thought as early as 1921; see Kiesel, T. (1995) *The Genesis of Heidegger's Being and Time* (Berkeley: U. of California Press), p. 230ff.

⁶⁰ Thus, whereas the scholastic motto which Heidegger most often mentions in discussing the "traditional" conception of truth, according to which truth is the *adequatio intellectus et rei*, calls on its face for correspondence or "adequation" between the *intellect* and a *thing* or *object (rei)*, and so does not immediately suggest any account of (specifically) *sentential* truth at all, on the other hand the conceptions of those twentieth-century philosophers who have held a propositional conception of truth can often be separated from the idea of truth as correspondence or adequation, and indeed in many cases involve conceptually devastating critiques of this idea.

This suggests that accounts of the sort that Davidson gives, which (as we saw above) decisively rejects any type of correspondence or any other ontic relation as the basis of truth while maintaining the primarily sentential form of truth, may capture important features of the phenomenon of truth that neither the “traditional conception” nor Heidegger’s own picture can capture as adequately. This suggestion is, at least in part, the basis of Tugendhat’s critique of Heidegger’s own views. At the heart of Tugendhat’s argument in the shorter article “Heidegger’s Idea of Truth” is the suggestion that Heidegger’s account of truth as unconcealment in section 44 of *Being and Time* fails to account for the central difference that all theories of truth must account for, if they are to be considered adequate at all: that between truth and falsity itself. For in reducing truth to the unitary phenomenon of unconcealment, Heidegger can consider it only as an event that either occurs or does not, and cannot therefore provide any basis for a distinction between true and false unconcealments. In particular, Tugendhat suggests, it is reasonable to suppose that we understand the claim that something is true only if we are also able to understand, as well, the claim that it is false: that is, if we have the actual concept of truth in view, it must include, as part of its basic structure *both* the possibilities of truth and falsehood. However, on the view that Heidegger argues for, the truth of an assertion consists in its disclosure or uncovering of an entity; it is this uncovering or disclosure that deserves the name “truth” in the *primary* sense.⁶¹ This “being-uncovered” (*Entdeckend-sein*) of the entity or entities thus appears to be simply something that either *happens* or *does not* happen.⁶² As Tugendhat argues, if Heidegger indeed considers truth to consist in uncovering, then he must apparently consider *all* uncovering to be in itself “true,” and thus must consider even a false proposition to depend on the uncovering of the entities involved in it.⁶³ Indeed, Heidegger himself says that in a *false* assertion “the entity” is “already in a certain way uncovered.”⁶⁴ But if this is right, and the concept of uncoveredness does not include or support a bivalent distinction between truth and falsehood, then it is also clearly insufficient to account for the bivalence of propositions, one of the key defining features of propositions on any reasonable view.

Heidegger’s formulation at the beginning of section 44b, that “Being true (truth) means being-uncovered” [“Wahrsein (Wahrheit) besagt entdeckend-sein”] is therefore, Tugendhat concludes, inadequate. Tugendhat suggests that Heidegger can reach this formulation, in fact, only through a crucial equivocation. In section 44a, he has moved from the claims that an assertion is true when it “uncovers the entity as it is in itself” to the simple claim that the assertion’s truth is simply its “uncovering” of the entity (full stop).⁶⁵ With the first claim, we still have a bivalent distinction between truth and falsity; for an assertion can presumably disclose an entity (or perhaps, as Tugendhat suggests, a state of affairs) as it is in itself *or otherwise*; in the first case, it will be true, and in the second, false. But with the slide to the third claim, we have lost the possibility of any such distinction; uncovering either occurs or it does not, and we no longer have any ground to distinguish between a “true” and a “false” kind of uncovering. In failing to draw this distinction, according to Tugendhat, Heidegger has in

⁶¹ GA 2, pp. 217-19.

⁶² Tugendhat (1964), p. 253.

⁶³ Tugendhat (1964) pp. 253-54; Tugendhat (1967), p. 333.

⁶⁴ GA 2, p. 222.

⁶⁵ GA 2, p. 218.

fact equivocated between two concepts of “uncovering” or pointing out; according to the broader of the two, “uncovering” means pointing out or indicating entities in general, and includes true as well as false instances, while according to the second, narrower concept, it is limited to cases of truth and a false assertion is, instead, a case of covering-up or concealing. Thus, although Heidegger has (quite rightly, on Tugendhat’s account) further developed the central strand of Husserl’s thought, already in fact hinted at by Plato and Aristotle, according to which truth is at bottom to be understood in terms of the phenomenon of givenness, he has nevertheless continued it in such a way that the particular differentiation that makes for a specific concept of truth as such becomes unavailable.

In *Der Wahrheitsbegriff*, Tugendhat offers several more specific articulations of the underlying objection that Heidegger’s identification of truth with disclosedness *tout court* must fail to account for the specific difference between the truth and falsehood of assertions. First, since Heidegger wishes to identify truth with what transpires in *acts* of disclosure or unconcealment rather than the *contents* of these acts, he essentially makes truth into the result of an (factual and “ontic”) *event*. But this results in seemingly implausible consequences about truth itself, including its *ontic* relativity to human acts of inquiry and discovery. For example, Heidegger says near the beginning of section 44c that Newton’s laws, like other truths including the “principle of contradiction,” “are true only as long as Dasein *is*”, and that “through Newton [his] laws became true...” while with them entities [Seiendes] became accessible to Dasein.⁶⁶ This suggests, according to Tugendhat, that according to Heidegger a being can *become* ‘true’ when and if it is factually indicated or pointed out. But:

If a state of affairs, so long as it is not generally known, is not true, then it would indeed seem appropriate to say as a consequence of this that it ceases being true when it is no longer observed by anyone, and that its truth grows greater the more people recognize it.⁶⁷

Similarly, according to Tugendhat, Heidegger’s identification of truth with acts or events of disclosure leaves mysterious the status of a sentence or proposition that is understood but not yet verified; such a sentence would seem indeed to disclose the entities treated by it, but would not by that token seem to be automatically characterizable as true. More generally, Tugendhat suggests, with the statement that “‘There ‘is’ truth only insofar and as long as Dasein is”:

Insofar as one can assume that Heidegger indeed has in mind [here] the specific sense of truth, the ontical and ontological levels are simply confused: on the ground of the indubitable ontological relativity of truth as such to the Dasein, the ontic independence of the occurring [*jeweiligen*] truth from its factually being known [*Erkanntwerden*] is denied.⁶⁸

Second, Tugendhat suggests that when Heidegger *does* characterize the truth of assertions, “the assertions of which Heidegger is thinking are primarily simple predications of individual objects ... Only here is the talk of indication, uncovering and concealing clear without further ado.”⁶⁹ That is, if the truth

⁶⁶ GA 2, pp. 226-227.

⁶⁷ Tugendhat (1967), p. 344.

⁶⁸ Tugendhat (1967), p. 345.

⁶⁹ Tugendhat (1967), p. 342.

of assertions is itself to be characterized in terms of the uncovering of *entities*, it is not immediately clear *which* entities should be thought of as uncovered (or discovered, disclosed, etc.) in any case but that of the attribution of a single property to a distinct individual. For example, it is not at all clear from this account what we are to do with even a simple relational sentence such as “Socrates is older than Plato.” Should we think of the truth of this as grounded in the disclosure only of Socrates (since he is the grammatical subject)? But then we must think of his being disclosed in terms of a relational property (being older than Plato) as his being disclosed as he is in himself. This would threaten to make all relations into internal properties of an individual, and since each object is related somehow or other to all others, it would imply that the full disclosure of an individual object also discloses the whole universe. Or should we think of the relevant disclosure here as that of Socrates and Plato jointly, as they are in themselves? But this too is inadequate, since in addition to the disclosure of Socrates, and that of Plato, we evidently need the disclosure of the *relationship* between them as well, which can hardly be attributed to either one of the “things” just as they are “in themselves.”

Third and finally, as Tugendhat suggests in passing, an even harder case is that of (true) negative judgments of existence, for instance the judgment “Santa Claus does not exist” or “there are no unicorns.”⁷⁰ It is not at all clear how the truth of these judgments can be grounded in the “disclosure” (uncovering, etc.) of the entities mentioned, since these entities do not even exist. Here, as Tugendhat suggests, it is accordingly unclear what it could mean to speak of the “thing itself” or of the true proposition as disclosing it as it itself is.

Can Heidegger’s picture be defended or supplemented without modifying its basic structure, but in such a way as to respond adequately to Tugendhat’s objections? I shall now argue that it can, and that the defense indeed points the way to a reconciled, more comprehensive picture that can accommodate the best features of Heidegger’s “transcendental” position with respect to the givenness of entities *as well as* those of sentential theories such as Davidson’s.

To a large extent, such a defense can be formulated by considering the implications of Heidegger’s development of the hermeneutically basic “existential-hermeneutic” “as-structure,” which, as we have seen, Heidegger treats as the most basic structure underlying any possible understanding and unconcealment. The structure and implications of this basic “existential-hermeneutic as” are sketched only quickly in *Being and Time*; but Heidegger gives a much more detailed account in the 1925-26 course “Logic: The Question of Truth”. Here, Heidegger pursues a detailed analysis of the basis of the structure of the assertoric *logos* in Aristotle, including importantly the possibility of a *logos* being *false*.⁷¹ According to Aristotle in *Metaphysics* IX 10, in particular, the truth or falsity of sentences presupposes the *necessary* existence of certain non-composite beings about which falsehood and deception are impossible; these beings, the *eide*, are “always already in every being that is there [*im jedem vorhandenen Seienden, sofern dieses ist, immer schon im vorhinein ist*]” and thus are “constitutive for all beings” in determining “all beings in their being [*alles Seienden in seinem Sein*].”⁷² Thus Aristotle

⁷⁰ Tugendhat (1967), p. 345.

⁷¹ GA 21, section 13.

⁷² GA 21, p. 179.

determines the possibility of truth and falsehood only on the basis of a privileged determination of the *aei on* – the beings that always are – and the possibility of a mode of uncovering that has no opposite. In this special kind of uncovering, “the being is present [vorhanden] simply in itself and ‘as’ itself”.⁷³ (p. 152) In this sense, for Aristotle (as Heidegger reads him), an ultimate basis for assertoric truth and falsehood is to be found in the phenomenon of a privileged disclosure which itself does not admit of any possibility of falsehood, and thus does not provide an ultimate basis for the bivalence of assertoric truth. By contrast with this, Heidegger aims to show that the apparently synthetic structure of the logos has real ontological and hermeneutic basis in the primary structure of the “existential-hermeneutic as,” which *cannot* be basically characterized as any synthesis of already existing entities.⁷⁴

This more general hermeneutic “as” structure is, Heidegger argues, the actual *foundation* of the more specific possibility of the kind of synthesis that occurs, according to Aristotle, in the explicit *logos*. It conditions the specific possibility of falsehood, as Heidegger goes on to say, through three structural conditions that it has as inherent aspects. First, there is a basic “tendency toward the uncovering of something” which amounts to a prior “meaning and having” of the subject matter [*das Woruber*], or an “always already prior disclosure of world”. Second, “within” this comportment of uncovering, there is a letting-be-seen [*Sehenlassen*] of the subject matter “from another;” it is on the basis of this moment, that there arises the “possibility of something’s giving itself out as something”. Third and finally, the encountering of something through the basic “as” structure always involves a possibility of the “togetherness” [*Beisammen*] of something with something; this possibility is itself always determined by the context of a particular “range of indications” that constrain what possibly *can* appear in a particular environment.

These three constitutive structures are precisely repeated, albeit more briefly and without explicit connection to the possibility of falsehood, as the three structural moments of *fore-having* [*Vorhabe*], *fore-sight* [*Vorsicht*] and *fore-conception* [*Vorgriff*] in *Being and Time*; there, as we have seen, they form the basic structure of interpretive understanding that is presupposed in any disclosure and in sense as such. Here, Heidegger argues that it is through this threefold structure that the possibility of error and illusion first arises, even in cases that do not involve anything like explicit assertion, as Heidegger illustrates by considering a simple case of mistaking a bush for a deer while walking in a dark forest. In this case, the first condition is fulfilled in that I indeed have something coming before me that I regard in some way; the second is fulfilled in that I encounter something *as* something (indeed, in this case, as a

⁷³ GA 21, p. 180 (transl. slightly modified).

⁷⁴ “This synthetic showing [*synthetische Sehenlassen*] is a showing on the basis of, and is preformed within, a focus on something else [*aus und in der Hinblicknahme auf anderes*] ... The act of showing something [*Sehenlassen*] by focusing on something else that has the character of possible being-together-with... is what we have already characterized as the speaking about something as something [*Besprechen von etwas als etwas*] – *logos* as a determining assertion. This brings to light an inner connection between the ontological structure of synthesis [*Seinsstruktur des Beisammen*] and the as-structure, which we earlier characterized [*angezeigt*] as the basic hermeneutical structure.” GA 21, pp. 186-87 (transl. slightly modified).

deer); and the third is fulfilled in that I understand in advance that something like “a deer” *can* indeed be present in this environment.⁷⁵

As so articulated, the underlying hermeneutic “as”-structure has several logically significant features. First, as we have seen, although the structure underlies the possibility of sentential predication, it is more *general* and basic (in one sense of “basic”) than the structure of predication itself. In particular, it is operative already in *various* kinds of circumstances of uncovering that possess a dimension of “veridicality” or truth-evaluability, including perception and engaged practice, whether or not there is any explicit conceptual articulation of a judgment or linguistic articulation of a sentence. Second, the structure is nevertheless fully (and irreducibly) ‘intensional’. That is, if, in accordance with the structure, an item is uncovered as having a certain trait or characteristic, this does not generally imply that the substitution of co-referential terms would preserve the truth of the statement that the item is thus uncovered (for instance, if a particular apparent celestial object is uncovered as the morning star, there is no implication that it is thereby also uncovered as the planet Venus). In this sense, what is unconcealed through the basic “as” structure is always “under” a “mode of presentation,” though we should not think of this as equivalent to being “under a conception” (since there need not be any *explicit* conception at all).⁷⁶ Third, the structure is irreducibly *holistic*: the uncovering of a particular entity as being a particular way in general depends on the whole surrounding structure of its relations of significance to other entities. This irreducible holism is captured, in particular, in the “fore-having” that amounts, according to Heidegger, in an “always already prior disclosure of world.”

With this, we are now in a position to see how Heidegger’s development of the underlying “as-“ structure provides at least the elements for satisfactory responses to each of Tugendhat’s objections to the general picture of truth as unconcealment. First, Heidegger’s account of the way that the possibility of falsehood is involved in this basic structure through the three fore-structures confirms that the distinction between truth and falsehood is itself a basic and irreducible feature of *any* unconcealment, on this account; in particular, the essential difference between something’s being uncovered *as* it is and

⁷⁵ GA 21, pp. 187-190.

⁷⁶ This feature of the basic hermeneutic “as” structure, through which anything that is intelligible is first “given,” should help to underscore that the sense in which phenomena are “given” for Heidegger does not involve a problematic “Myth of the Given” in the sense of Sellars (1956). In particular, there is no suggestion in Heidegger that entities (or anything else) are ever given from (in the language of McDowell (1994)) “outside content” or outside the possibility of their (fully intensional) description. On the other hand this does not mean that it is not the entities *themselves* which are thereby given (as if to say that they were not given from “outside content” meant that they could only be given in a conceptually mediated or represented form). The impression evident in some discussions of Sellars’ dilemma that an account of the form that Heidegger gives (whereby entities are themselves given, but *as* characterized in an irreducibly intensional way) may arise from the prior assumption that *only* mediation of given “contents” in terms of or by (linguistic) concepts can endow them with intensional structure; or it may (alternatively or conjointly) arise from a particular way of envisioning the internal relationship of what are seen as subjective perceptual or “receptive” capacities with more rational or “spontaneous” ones. But the effect of Heidegger’s emphasis on non-linguistic situations of comportment is to challenge much of the basis of the first assumption. And the second can be challenged within a broader conception of the concept a subjective “capacity” and in particular of the relationship of (what Kant envisages as) “spontaneity” and “receptivity” in characterizing them, on the basis of a renewed investigation of the relationship of the givenness of time to the “realm” of contents (or the “space of reasons”) itself. (See chapter 6, below).

its being uncovered otherwise is always coherently grounded, through the fore-structures, whenever it is possible to speak of a thing's being uncovered at all. To say, as Heidegger does, that the apparently synthetic structure of the proposition depends ontologically upon the more basic and *non*-synthetic phenomenon of unconcealment is not to deny that a distinction between truth and falsehood is coherent and characteristic even at this more basic and non-synthetic level. In particular, since the basic structure of disclosure always is the structure of "something *as* something" the possibility of something's being uncovered *as it (actually) is* or *otherwise* always characterizes it in a basic way. In this respect, *all* levels of the specific phenomenon of truth, whether propositional or non-, retain the basic feature of bivalence for Heidegger.⁷⁷

It is also possible, on this basis, to respond to the more specific objections formulated in Tugendhat's *Der Wahrheitsbegriff*. While it is true that, as Tugendhat suggests, the formulation that a truthful disclosure discloses something "as it is in itself" applies most directly only to cases wherein only one entity is obviously in question and one feature or property attributed to it, the broader hermeneutic "as" structure is nevertheless sufficiently general and structurally articulated to handle more complex cases of predication, as well as relational and multi-part predicates. In a case such as that of the relational "Socrates is older than Plato," for example, the disclosure involved, if true, will be, in an obvious sense, characteristic of the beings involved, not necessarily "as they are in themselves" but nevertheless "as they are" (full stop). And since there is always a significant contextual and holistic dimension involved in every instance of the "as"-structure and thus in every disclosure, there is no problem with considering such a disclosure to be significantly co-determined by the relevant broader context, up to and including the "fore-having" of a world in which relations take place and are articulated. In other cases, for instance that of Newton's laws and other universally quantified statements, it will not necessarily even be clear that there *are* specific entities involved; but because of the holistic dimensions of the fore-having of world and the fore-conception which involves the availability of a *totality* of indications, these cases too can be treated at the level of the specific kind of generality they possess. The case of negative existentials, while difficult on anyone's account, might be handled the same way or similarly. In fact, the cases are logically identical, since negative existentials ('there does not exist...') are, within a quantificational language, equivalent to universally quantified negative statements ('for all x, x is not a...'). This case, like each of the other initially problematic cases is thus readily handled within the (narrower) context of a specific natural language by the quantificational apparatus that comes along with a Tarskian truth-theory, once the finitely many axioms which give basic satisfaction relations are provided. If we can indeed see Heidegger's general account of truth in terms of the basic structure of unconcealment as clarifying the basis of this provision in a phenomenologically motivated way, there is no obvious obstacle to seeing it as co-articulating the structural possibilities of truth that emerge from such a language as it holistically characterizes entities and changes and develops over time.

⁷⁷ It is true that the formulation at the beginning of 44b, according to which "Wahrsein (Wahrheit) besagt entdeckend-sein" is from this perspective somewhat elliptical, and omits the necessary qualification. But this does not mean it represents an equivocation.

Finally, it is now possible to turn to the objection that Heidegger makes truth an “ontic” event, and hence must deny the actual independence of a truth from the factual occurrence of its becoming known? On the basis of the objection, Tugendhat suggested that it would be necessary for Heidegger to hold, absurdly, that a truth grows more true when more people recognize it, or that something that is true can become false when everyone forgets it (despite Heidegger’s more or less explicit denial of the latter), were he not “protected” from these consequences by his vague use of the *singulare tantum* “Dasein”. Significantly, the objection in this form is just the one brought by Davidson against epistemic theories of truth: if truth is directly dependent upon acts of discovery or verification, it must be possible for it to wax and wane, and in particular for truths, once established, to be lost.

If Heidegger should be seen as an opponent of epistemic theories, as I have argued on the basis of his claims about the structural dependence of Dasein’s kind of being *on* truth rather than vice-versa, then his position should also not be interpreted as falling prey to this objection. In particular, it is essential to remember here the grounding of all unconcealment in the *structure* of the hermeneutic-existential “as”, and the further indication that this *structure* points to an ontologically deeper and more complex underlying temporality than that of individual, “ontic” events. We will take up the question of this temporality in more detail in part II of this work, where the specific question of the form of temporality characteristic of what is thinkable as such is taken up, with mathematical knowledge and truth as a leading and decisive example. For now, it is helpful simply to note that the dependence of concrete disclosure upon the broader structure of the hermeneutic “as” verifies that, on Heidegger’s account, any actual event of disclosure has several temporally *distinct* elements (including the “always already” availability of the world as such) and so cannot simply, in any case, be identified with a specific, datable factual *event*. Moreover, since the structure is explicitly one that essentially involves beings in their being, it is never *simply* an “ontic” or ontologically specifiable one, but one that is always ontic-ontological. Indeed, more broadly, as Heidegger emphasizes, in this it shares or even exemplifies the characteristic twofold ontic-ontological “priority” of Dasein, and is to be traced ultimately to Dasein as a formally indicated structure.⁷⁸

What, then, of the broader motivational dispute that gives Tugendhat’s criticisms their conceptual and motivational point? Here it is important to consider that, as Heidegger himself suggests with respect to judgment, assertoric or sentential truth may be a phenomenon with “more than one kind of foundation”.⁷⁹ In particular, it is not at all obvious that an *ontological* foundation in disclosure and in the more ultimate structure of the “as”, which is indeed, as we have seen, a structure characteristic of the “being of entities,” is not compatible with a different kind of structural *semantic* foundation for the truth of sentences in a language, one that comes into view much more clearly through structural accounts such as Davidson’s. It is sufficient to note the obvious sense in which, on the one hand, the truth or falsity of sentences can be seen as dependent upon the ways of *being* of the entities involved in them, whereas, on the other, particular entities are only intelligibly available, even in unthematic *praxis* and everyday dealing, through and (partially) because of a language which yields terms for their consideration and description.

⁷⁸ I am indebted to Iain Thomson for discussion on this point.

⁷⁹ GA 2, p. 34.

IV

I have argued for a hybrid understanding of transcendental truth on which it is understood both in terms of a linguistic-hermeneutic dimension that is articulated through the development of Tarskian truth-theories and in terms of an ontological-hermeneutic dimension that is articulated as disclosure. In this last section, I shall briefly develop some implications of this understanding for two questions: the first is the question of the structure and existence of *senses*, understood (following Frege) as modes of presentation, and the second is about the semantical behavior of languages (such as English) which contain both their own truth-predicate and the general possibility of forming names for their own sentences by means of quotation or some similar device.

Frege often describes the sense of an expression, whether it be a name, a concept-term, or a sentence, as a “mode of presentation” (*Art des Gegebenseins*) of a referent. His most basic reason for doing so is the same as his reason for introducing the distinction between sense and referent to begin with: the need to account for the informativeness of judgments of identity.⁸⁰ On the conception, it is necessary in order to account for this informativeness that the same referent (e.g. a triangle or the planet Venus) can be presented or given in any of various different ways, and that it *is* the same object may not be evident from these presentations alone. The sense of a name is thus to be understood as a way in which its referent is presented or given, and analogously the sense of a sentence is understood as a way of presenting its truth-value.

As commentators have noted, this conception of senses as modes of presentation is in some tension with another picture Frege sometimes employs, particularly with respect to sentential senses: namely that of senses as non-physical *entities* of a special kind, capable of being grasped in thought, and possibly existing in a “third realm” beyond those of the spatiotemporal and the individual-subjective.⁸¹ One particular place in which the tension shows up is in Frege’s own account of indirect discourse or *oratio obliqua*. On Frege’s account, a sentence in oblique discourse (such as “The planetary orbits are circles” as it figures in “Copernicus asserts that the planetary orbits are circles”) has an oblique or “indirect” referent which is not its ordinary one (i.e. a truth-value) but rather its (ordinary) sense.⁸² In terms of Frege’s overarching picture of the distinction between concepts and objects, this means that senses, in oblique contexts, are treated as particular kinds of objects. But it is not clear how to individuate or distinguish senses if we treat them as objects in this way. In particular, senses cannot be distinguished simply by the words used to express them; for it might be correct to describe Copernicus (for instance) as having the same belief even though he never spoke English. On the other hand, we also cannot identify the senses of two terms, even if their referents are *necessarily* identical (e.g. we cannot identify the sense of “equilateral triangle” with that of “equiangular triangle”), since the judgment of identity may still, in this case, be informative.

⁸⁰ The *locus classicus* of the argument is, of course, Frege (1892).

⁸¹ For the figure of the “third realm”, see especially Frege (1918).

⁸² Frege (1892), p. 28.

In *Meaning and Necessity*, Carnap argues that Frege's treatment of sense, reference, and indirect discourse points toward a more general antinomy which arises for any theory that treats the various types of expressions composing a sentence as each having a distinct sense and reference.⁸³ In particular, if we allow the general substitution of extensionally equivalent or even just necessarily co-referential terms into sentential contexts, including sentences containing oblique contexts, the result will be contradictions in the truth-values assigned to some of these sentences.⁸⁴ Frege's device of ascribing as the reference of a sentence in *oratio obliqua* its (ordinary) sense can be seen as a way of avoiding the antinomy, but it leads, as Carnap notes, to a kind of infinite proliferation of entities. In particular, if a particular sentence is used obliquely, its sense is thereby named; but the name must be conceived as different from the sentence in its usual use (which, instead, names a truth-value). This name then has a further sense, which itself must have a further name, and so forth. The treatment of senses as possible objects of reference, which Frege introduces to attempt to deal with the special problems of indirect discourse, thus necessarily introduces an infinite series of names and special objects for each sentence that can appear embedded in such discourse.

As an alternative, Carnap develops a "method of extension and intension" on which intensions are defined by the semantic rules laid down in advance for "the use of corresponding expressions in language systems to be constructed" and substitution of co-referring terms is not generally permitted into intensional contexts.⁸⁵ Carnap observes that any picture committed to treating linguistic expressions generally as names (or as always having referents, in Frege's terminology) will lead to the antinomy of the name relation and invite, by invoking senses (or intensions) themselves which must be nameable, something like the infinite proliferation of names and entities that Frege's picture involves. What Carnap does not point out is that his own method of extension and intension, while prohibiting the substitution of coreferring terms in intensional contexts internal to a language, nevertheless leads to a formally similar problem on the level of the determination of a language itself. For Carnap, the rules which determine the analytic truths (or L-truths) of a language and its logical equivalences (or L-equivalences) are to be stipulated in advance in such a way as to explicate the pre-existing notion of necessity or analyticity.⁸⁶

To begin with, it is not clear that actually solves the problem which Frege's invocation of the sense/reference distinction was originally meant to answer, since Carnap *does* permit the substitution of L-equivalent expressions in *all* (intensional as well as extensional) contexts. If, for instance, the axioms of geometry are considered to be among the semantic rules definitive of the linguistic system, then Carnap's system will allow "X believes the triangular figure is equilateral" to be substituted with "X believes the triangular figure is equiangular," and the informativeness of the identity judgment "an equilateral triangle is equiangular" is not explained.⁸⁷ More generally, if the semantic rules determining L-truth and L-equivalence are themselves conceived as explicating pre-existing determinations of

⁸³ Carnap (1947), sections 28-32.

⁸⁴ Russell appears to have been the first to point this out (in Russell (1905)).

⁸⁵ Carnap (1947), p. 8; pp. 142-44.

⁸⁶ Carnap (1947), p. 8.

⁸⁷ See Hanzel (2006), pp. 243-244 for a version of this point.

analyticity and logical equivalence in a natural language, the question arises: on what basis can these pre-existing determinations themselves be justified? The stipulation of semantic rules *explicative* of analyticity in a natural language as spoken would thus seem to presuppose a further explicit stipulation of the rules already *constitutive* of the natural language in question. But it is impossible to suppose that this stipulation of rules could take place, unless the rules in question were already in place. The argument is made explicitly by Quine in “Truth by convention,” and formulated somewhat differently in the classic “Two Dogmas of Empiricism”. It appears to affect any picture on which the intensional structure of a language is considered capable of being wholly and uniquely described from outside that language itself, whether the object of description is understood as a corpus of explicitly stated rules, conventions of usage, or even just regularities implicit in practice. The aporia that results is, in the context of the present discussion, a direct consequence of treating the intensional structure of a language as capable of objective description from without, and so may be understood as a consequence of “treating senses as objects” (in a suitably extended sense of “sense” and “object”). With respect to the origin and constitution of natural (historical) languages, it appears to demonstrate the untenability of any conception of their intensional structure as conventionally or stipulatively instituted, and point to a deeper problematic of their historicity.⁸⁸

At any rate, there are good reasons to think that Frege’s own motivations in introducing the sense/reference distinction to begin with should have led him to try to avoid these interrelated problems, even if he was not completely successful in doing so. According to Dummett, the common complaint that Frege does not tell us much about what constitutes senses or how to individuate them is only partly justified; for Frege has, after all, specified the sense of an expression as “the manner in which we determine its reference,” and has furthermore said much about the different kinds of referents of different types of expressions.⁸⁹ Nevertheless, Dummett admits that Frege’s usual way of indicating the senses of words and symbols is not to describe these senses directly, but rather just to state the reference. The reason for this procedure, according to Dummett, is that, since the sense of an expression is just the mode of presentation of a referent, we cannot expect to be able, in general, directly to specify senses, for instance by a pronouncement of the form “The sense is...”. Thus, at least on the “healthier” of the two strands of Frege’s notion of sense (Dummett means, here, the strand according to which senses are modes of presentation rather than ideal objects) “the sense of a proper name is the way we arrive at the object, but not conceived as a means to a separable end;” sense is thus “better understood as the manner in which we pick out the object than as the route we take to it.”⁹⁰ Instead of describing senses directly, which we thus cannot do in general, according to Dummett, when we wish to convey or stipulate a sense we may adopt the procedure that Frege does adopt, which is to “choose that means of stating what the referent is which displays the sense.” Dummett here appeals, in particular, to the early Wittgenstein’s distinction between saying and showing, suggesting that in thus *saying* what the referent of a word is (in a particular way) we may succeed in *showing* its sense.

⁸⁸ Cf. Livingston (2008), chapter 5, and Livingston (2012), chapter 2.

⁸⁹ Dummett (1973), p. 227.

⁹⁰ Dummett (1981), p.132.

As Dummett acknowledges, however, this leaves open the question of what is actually known in knowing the sense of an expression of a certain type.⁹¹ The distinction between sense and reference was introduced, after all, to track salient distinctions in knowledge, and in particular to account for the possibility of gaining knowledge of the truth of a statement of identity, so it seems reasonable to ask this further question. One possibility that Dummett considers is that “to know the sense of a proper name is to have a criterion for deciding, for any given object, whether or not it is the bearer (referent) of that name” and similarly that to know the sense of a predicate or relational expression is to have a criterion for deciding “for any given object[s]” whether the predicate or relational expression applies to them.⁹² On this sort of view, to grasp a word’s sense is thus to possess a kind of ability to determine the truth-conditions of sentences involving it, and this ability is further to be understood, in the case of names, as the ability to recognize the requisite objects (or recognize whatever counts as establishing that the name applies to a particular object).

The trouble with this, as Dummett in fact notes, is that it is not in fact legitimate, in the context of a full picture of sense, simply to characterize the knowledge of sense as a matter of the ability to recognize “a given object.” For:

In understanding a proper name or predicate, I am supposed to be able to recognize something as establishing that a given object is the referent of the name or that the predicate applies to it: but *what* is it that I recognize to be established? That such-and-such a name stands for the object, or that such-and-such a predicate applies to the object – indeed: but *which* object? The given object, of course: but here we have a right to ask, ‘How was it given?’⁹³ (pp. 231-232)

In fact, as Dummett points out, the conception of knowledge of sense as simply consisting an ability to recognize objects cannot succeed, since an object cannot be recognized at all unless it is first presented in some specific way or other, and this already involves (in terms of the conceptions of senses as modes of presentation) that they are presented by means of some sense or other. “We are,” Dummett concludes in a parallel discussion, “never given an object, complete in itself; we can think about it, speak of it or apprehend it only as presented to us in some particular way...” (IFP, p. 132) Thus the conception of knowledge of senses as consisting in the ability to recognize objects as the bearers of names, or as falling under predicates, cannot succeed, except perhaps in the context of a much broader conception of sense, one inclusive of the observation that the grasping a sense (for instance) of a proper name must include the ability to grasp objects as of a type or category, including grasping general “criteria of identity” for objects of that type.⁹⁴ For instance, even the use of a proper name in connection with a demonstrative gesture in expressing a judgment of recognition (“This is Fido”) already involves the availability of sortal criteria for objects of the type (e.g. “dog”) that are not wholly given in the recognitional judgment itself.

⁹¹ Dummett (1973), p. 229.

⁹² Dummett (1973), p. 229.

⁹³ Dummett (1973), pp. 231-32.

⁹⁴ Dummett (1973), p. 233.

It is here that we may appeal to Heidegger's specific disclosive conception of truth as providing an appropriate conception of sense as mode of presentation that has undergone the requisite broadening with respect to Frege's own conception. As we have seen, Heidegger's conception of truth as disclosure is ontologically grounded in the primary structure of the hermeneutic-existential "as", or the disclosure of something *as* something. This structure, according to Heidegger, characterizes what it is for anything to be presented (whether in explicit assertion, perceptual consciousness, engaged practice or just everyday inexplicit, circumspective concern) in any way at all, and the articulation indicated by the "as" is here, as Heidegger says, structurally basic and unavoidable. Sense is itself, for Heidegger, grounded in the "projective" phenomenon of interpretation characterized by the "as" structure, and so it is, on this conception, nothing other than "mode of presentation" in a generalized sense. As we have seen (above), the underlying existential/hermeneutic "as" structure is inherently intensional and plausibly *preconditions* (without being reducible to) narrower intensional and "intentional" phenomena such as propositional and intentional attitudes by pointing toward the general hermeneutic conditions for *any* intentional "accessibility." On Heidegger's picture, it is thus possible to agree with Dummett's point, that we can recognize, speak about, or apprehend objects "only as presented in some particular way" (i.e. including that they are presented as being of some particular type) and, as well, to give an expanded and phenomenologically motivated account of how this presentation occurs. This account, understood as a suitable generalization of Frege's narrower conception of sense as mode of presentation in language, connects the conception back to the phenomenological and ontological ground of possible givenness of objects that must plausibly *underlie* any account (such as Frege and Dummett attempt to give) of how linguistic signs can function to express senses that are themselves conceived as modes of presentation of objects.⁹⁵ Most significantly, however, the supplementation of the broad picture of truth with the Heideggerian conception of truth as disclosure allows for an ontological clarification of the

⁹⁵ There are other precedents for generalizing Frege's notion of modes of presentation in this way. In 1969, Dagfinn Føllesdal argued that Husserl's notion of noema or noematic sense can be seen as a generalization of Frege's notion of sense as mode of presentation (Føllesdal 1969). On the suggested generalization, the noematic sense is that ideal component or aspect of an intentional act by means of which it achieves an intentional connection to a particular object or objectivity; the generalization results from relaxing Frege's restriction of the notion to the case of language and allowing it to characterize the structure of intentional acts of consciousness generally (thus Husserl can speak of the particular noemata of acts of perception, memory, imagination, etc.) Noematic senses, on Føllesdal's reading, thus generalize the notion of modes of presentation or of givenness beyond the linguistic cases that Frege considers to encompass all of the non-linguistic modes of givenness to individual consciousness that Husserl himself describes phenomenologically. Of course, the conception of givenness that Heidegger develops in his discussions of sense and truth itself develops from Husserl's picture and is in some ways a generalization of it; in particular, it results (as we have seen above) from considering that givenness "to consciousness" is in fact rooted in the deeper and more original phenomenon of Dasein's being-in-the-world, and by further generalizing the modes of possible givenness of objects beyond the sphere of subjective consciousness. If Føllesdal's suggested generalization of Frege's original notion is itself justified, then all that is needed in order to further broaden the notion to coincide with Heidegger's conception is to include those forms of givenness (for instance to circumspective concern or practical comportment) that do not depend on givenness within consciousness at all. This allows the expanded conception to capture, in particular, those forms of givenness implicated in the structure of Dasein's factual life that, while avowedly in many cases emergent only along with the articulation implied by the existence of a shared language, nevertheless are *equally* dependent on the particular ways in which the relevant entities are thereby presented in their being.

status of sense (conceived as mode of presentation in a broad sense) that indicates the actual ontological reasons for the “antinomy of the name-relation” and the related aporias that arise for pictures that treat senses as objects to which reference can be made. As we have seen, on the Heideggerian picture, sense, in accordance with the underlying hermeneutic-existential “as”, is always related to presentation in a suitably broadened sense, and presentation is as such constitutively linked to being in that the underlying “as” structure always reveals beings in their being or otherwise. It is thus that sense, while it typically and primarily characterizes beings, is also always structurally linked to their being, and also to their unconcealment within the ontic-ontological structure of Dasein. A general reason for concluding that modes of presentation cannot be treated as objects, then, can be found in the observation that sense is always characterized by a twofold reference, not only to beings but to their being; and owing to the ontological difference, being itself is not a being. Modes of presentation, in Heidegger’s sense, cannot therefore be characterized simply as entities, and cannot be accounted for (as we have already seen in connection with Davidson) in terms of the merely ontic relationship between two or more beings. More specifically, to treat any mode of presentation *as* a separable and distinct object of reference would be, in Heidegger’s framework, to suppose that the phenomenon of sense and presentation in general could be described as a structure or event *purely* on the ontic level; and this, as we have seen, runs counter to the whole thrust of Heidegger’s inquiry.

With this in mind, it is possible to consider the implications of Heidegger’s broadened picture for the narrower issue specifically treated by Frege, that of the senses of linguistic expressions as modes of presentation (of referents). From the broadened Heideggerian perspective, as we have seen, linguistic senses can still be treated, as Frege does treat them, as given by whatever allows *truth-conditions* for the sentences of a language as a whole to be determined. But this determination must, in addition to the linguistic-structural determination of the truth-values of sentences from “primitive” relations of satisfaction in accordance with a Tarskian truth theory, *also* include whatever determines the presentation of beings (such as they *could* plausibly figure in relations of satisfaction or other reference-like relations to begin with). Dummett actually grasps this point, at least in a negative way, as is evident in his recognition of the need to address the ways in which objects are given as part of a general theory of sense. But although he also recognizes that modes of presentation cannot be treated as separable objects of reference, on pain of aporia and infinite regress, he is led by the apparent demand to explain what knowledge of a linguistic sense consists in to attempt to countenance such knowledge as possession of an ability to recognize objects, or more broadly to use linguistic terms meaningfully in specific, epistemically characterizable ways.

The attempt to describe knowledge of senses in terms of recognitional abilities does not succeed, since as Dummett also recognizes, the description of knowledge of sense in terms of abilities to recognize objects itself presupposes the availability of the senses it is supposed to explain. But while recognizing this failure in the case of the narrow recognitional theory, Dummett nevertheless persists in supposing that it *must* be possible to characterize the knowledge involved in knowing a linguistic sense non-circularly in terms of *some* notion of epistemic ability, ultimately at the basis of our ability to identify something *as* being the case when it is. This is what yields Dummett’s attempts to describe knowledge of sense in terms of such formulas as the “grasping of a rule,” the possession of a specifiable ability,

adoption of a method, the possession of specifiable criteria, or the knowledge of a means of “picking out” something from among others. But as we have seen, if it must (on pain of aporia) be impossible to treat senses in general as separable objects of reference, then it appears likely that these attempts to characterize sense non-circularly in terms of some prior methodological means must fail as well. Moreover, to introduce them as figuring centrally in explanations of what it is to grasp a sense, as Dummett does, is effectively to locate epistemic notions at the heart of the systematic theory of sense and truth, a strategy which is (as Dummett himself recognizes) in substantial tension with Frege’s own realist approach, and which we have good reason to think (see above) cannot succeed in capturing the specific sense of truth, in any case.⁹⁶

On the recommended Heideggerian alternative, there is no requirement, in general, for the knowledge involved in grasping the sense of an expression to be portrayed as consisting in the possession of any ability, adherence to any practice, or any relation of the individual subject to any other (ontic) event, object or process. This negative point is just the obverse of the positive recognition that sense as a *phenomenon* can only be described in terms that are ontological as well as ontic, and that this ontic-ontological double structure (itself inherent to the structure of Dasein) is essential to the specific phenomenon of truth itself. Significantly, this allows for a generalized discussion of linguistic sense that situates it as a specific phenomenon within the broader context of the ontological concept of presence and presentation as such, and thereby allows a broadened discussion, as well, of the *temporal* determinants of the possibility of presence in the broad as well as the narrower (i.e. linguistic) sense, a discussion in which the temporality of *language* is, necessarily, equally at issue. From this perspective, the picture of an already-constituted language, determined and fixed as a total structure, coming to bear on the world simply by confronting a world already constituted as a totality of determinate objects bearing determinate properties, is a complete fiction. Rather, it must be acknowledged that objects and their determinate properties and relations emerge, in a temporally *complicated* sense, only with the development of a language and the specific possibilities of expression and presentation that its structure, at any given point of its development, make possible. That fictional picture is, however, the one that ultimately motivates conceptions, such as Carnap’s, on which a language can be conventionally

⁹⁶ Dummett recognizes the general issue: “If I am wrong...and there is some non-circular account of the notion of knowing what it is for something to be the case, not construed as verbalizable knowledge (on pain of circularity in the course of explaining what it is to understand words), nor appealing to the recognition of its being the case, then the general form of the model of sense we have been considering can be preserved while the whole model is recast in terms of this notion. What we are interested in in the present context is, after all, this general form, the structure of a model of sense, and not the question how far epistemological notions can legitimately be employed within such a model. But, despite the fact that Frege was undoubtedly highly realist in his whole philosophical outlook, that for him sense was related to truth rather than to the recognition of truth, and despite his constant inveighing against the intrusion of psychological notions into logic (more properly, into the theory of meaning), it is far from apparent that he would have rejected an account of the form we have been considering, on the grounds of the present objection [viz., that the model in terms of recognition “invokes epistemological considerations where they are relevant.”]” (Dummett 1981, pp. 239-240). Dummett goes on to argue that the notion of sense for Frege is, after all, connected to “cognitive notions” involved in the advance from a thought to a truth-value, and that this suggests that it is wrong to hold that “Frege wanted to extrude everything epistemological from logic or from theory of meaning...”. While it is true that the idea of “cognitive value” to which Frege appeals in introducing the concept of sense is, at least partly, an epistemic notion, though, this does not suffice to establish that Frege would be willing to accept any general epistemic constraint, of the sort Dummett imagines, on the nature of sense.

instituted or stipulated as a whole simply by fixing its semantic rules; it is also the picture which may be thought to motivate Tarski's original idea of truth-predicates for artificial languages as definable in terms of "primitive" relations of satisfaction, though not (or at any rate, not in the same way) Davidson's modified picture of the interpretation of natural languages, which is inherently holistic and reconstructs satisfaction from truth rather than vice-versa. Recognizing that such fictional pictures of the "language-world" relation must cede to one that takes seriously the thought that linguistic sense itself is co-constituted along with the articulation and constitution of the world on which it bears, including the determinate presentation of its objects and phenomena, we can, at any rate, begin to see a phenomenological basis for challenging the Fregean assumption that senses must themselves be timeless or eternal existences whose own temporality is quite independent of the temporality of the specific phenomenon they are actually invoked to explain, that of the presentation of objects. This is to open, in other words, the question of the underlying temporality of sense as (in the Heideggerian jargon) the question of the *being* of language, including the question of its temporal constitution, continued existence, and possibilities of gradual or radical transformation or change in co-articulation with those of the world it discloses.

I turn, now, to another issue about linguistic truth upon which the suggested Heideggerian extension of the concept of truth has specific bearing. This is the question of the structure of a language which contains, as natural languages generally do, its own truth-predicate (e.g. the English predicate "true", as characterizing sentences in English). In "The Semantic Conception of Truth," Tarski famously argued that any language which includes its own truth-predicate along with devices for forming arbitrary names for its own sentences (such as the device of naming sentences by quoting them, or some other suitable device), would, in connection with the structure of T-sentences, necessarily involve a contradiction.⁹⁷ For it is possible in any such language to construct a "liar" sentence of the form

L: L is not true

and, assuming the relevant truth-predicate is in the language under discussion, the T-schema for L produces the contradiction

"L is not true" is true iff L is not true

i.e.

L is true iff L is not true.

Tarski accordingly suggested that no language that contains its own truth-predicate could be formally characterized in accordance with the T-schema; it was thus necessary to discuss and define the truth-predicate for each language under consideration in a *different* language which contains all the sentences of the original language (or translations of them) as a proper part. Given this, it is impossible to formulate the liar sentence, and the contradiction is avoided.

⁹⁷ Tarski (1944).

The procedure has some plausibility in the case of formal languages, for which there is a stronger metalanguage (such as English) readily available. But even in this case, one can reasonably wonder how the notion of truth in the metalanguage itself is defined or definable; here, the general application of Tarski's solution would involve the postulation of an indefinite open hierarchy of metalanguages, each stronger than the last, in which truth for each language is definable only by the next higher one. And if we are interested primarily in natural languages rather than formal ones, the device of defining truth in a metalanguage is of no use to begin with. For these languages plausibly contain their own truth-predicates, and there is not, in general, a "stronger" metalanguage available which can express everything the initial language can express and more. Indeed, it is plausible, as Tarski himself recognized, that every natural language has (as such) "universal" expressive power, and is therefore not to be modeled without contradiction by the T-schema. Tarski himself concludes that it is therefore hopeless to attempt to use the T-schema to characterize the structure of the truth-predicates of natural languages, and accordingly that these languages are, in a basic sense, unformalizable.

More recently, though, some philosophers have considered how the structure of truth can be formally treated in accordance with the T-schema even for those languages which, like English, contain their own truth-predicates (as well as the resources to make descriptive reference to their own sentences). In his influential "Outline of a Theory of Truth," Kripke notes that Tarski's hierarchical approach cannot handle situations that occur routinely in natural languages where the truth of sentences is discussed, such as the situation in which Dean says, "Most of Nixon's statements are false" and Nixon says, "Most of Dean's statements are false."⁹⁸ As Kripke notes, there need not be any actual contradiction here, since both Dean's statement and Nixon's statement can be true without producing a contradiction; but Tarski's hierarchical device implies both that the truth-predicate which Dean uses in describing Nixon's remarks must be at a higher linguistic level than the one Nixon uses and that (conversely) Nixon's must be at a higher level than Dean's. Kripke suggests, accordingly, that Tarski's account in terms of a hierarchy of languages and different truth-predicates should be replaced by one on which sentences, rather than being assigned to fixed levels of a linguistic hierarchy, are allowed to "find their own levels" within a language conceived as unitary. In particular, given an initial partial interpretation which assigns truth-values to some of the language's sentences, sentences involving ascribing the truth-predicate to other sentences can be assigned truth-values at a higher level than the sentences discussed. The hierarchical construction can be iterated arbitrarily and even through transfinite ordinal levels. Kripke shows that, within the iteration, there will be certain *fixed points* at which some sentences attain a stable value (such that, if true at that level, they will be true at all subsequent levels of the hierarchy, or if false there, they will always subsequently be false), and these can then be treated as determinately true or false. Nevertheless, there will still be some sentences (such as the liar sentence itself) that never attain a stable truth-value on any level; these are treated as "ungrounded" and as exhibiting truth-value gaps, i.e. being neither true nor false.

Drawing on Kripke's "fixed-point" construction but modifying its intuitive basis, Gupta and Belnap have proposed a "revision theory" of truth which attempts to explicate the concept of truth as a *circularly* defined one. In particular, whereas Kripke understands the levels of the hierarchical construction as

⁹⁸ Kripke (1975).

iterated interpretations of a language at ever-higher inductive levels, Gupta and Belnap understand the Tarski biconditionals as pointing toward an underlying concept of truth that is circular in the sense that the *definiendum* (truth) is in some cases contained in the *definiens*.⁹⁹ Such a definition, as Gupta and Belnap note, does not permit the determination of the extension of the definiendum non-circularly, but it does give a rule according to which we can determine the final extension of the definiendum given an initial hypothesis about its extension.¹⁰⁰ The re-interpretations of the truth-predicate that occur on different levels of the hierarchical construction, including fixed points, are thus interpreted as *revisions* of a truth-predicate that is defined, in itself, circularly. This kind of circularity is, Gupta and Belnap hold, at the root of both the irremediably paradoxical behavior of some sentences (such as the Liar sentence) and the fact that others eventually attain stability at some fixed points.

Against both pictures (and others), Graham Priest (2006) has argued that taking seriously the Tarskian T-schema in application to the truth-predicates of natural languages such as English requires recognizing that the concept of truth that they formulate is inherently contradictory in the sense that such a language will contain true contradictions.¹⁰¹ Attempts to avoid a contradictory semantics while preserving the Tarskian schema, such as Tarski's own as well as those of Kripke, Gupta, and Belnap, are therefore to be rejected. Priest's main argument against theories such as Kripke's, which invoke truth-value gaps and deny the general applicability of the law of the excluded middle, is that no such solution can, in fact, avoid contradiction. For instance, for a sentence, *a*, that turns out to be ungrounded in Kripke's sense and is thus treated as lacking a truth-value, "*a* is not true" is nevertheless itself true (since sentences that lack a truth value are not true). Thus we can consider the "extended" liar paradox

S: S is not (stably) true.

If S is true, it is not (by the T-schema) and if it is false *or* valueless (for instance if it is "ungrounded" in Kripke's sense), then it is true. Accordingly, even the hierarchical construction in terms of stable truths at fixed points fails to achieve an unparadoxical classification of sentences across the language as a whole.

As Priest shows, it is a consequence of the liar phenomenon in its extended version that a Davidsonian truth theory for a natural language containing a truth predicate cannot be consistently decidable, or even finitely axiomatized, *even if* paradoxical sentences are excluded from it as meaningless (in that they lack truth-values) and hence beyond the scope of the applicability of the T-schema to produce true T-sentences.¹⁰² For even in this case, on the assumption that there is a recursively enumerable (hence finitely axiomatizable) theory which can prove (all and only) the T-sentences for *meaningful* sentences, it is possible to derive a contradiction of the "extended liar" type. In particular, it is possible to formulate a sentence β saying of itself that it is *either* not true *or* not meaningful. Supposing this sentence is meaningful, the T-schema must hold for it; thus if it is meaningful, it is true iff it is either not true or not meaningful. Thus it is not meaningful. Therefore it is not meaningful or not true, i.e. β . But if β is true,

⁹⁹ Gupta and Belnap (1993), pp. 113-118.

¹⁰⁰ Gupta and Belnap (1993), pp. 118-119.

¹⁰¹ Priest (1987), p. 12.

¹⁰² Priest (1987), p. 135.

then it is meaningful (since all true sentences are meaningful). This is a contradiction, and so it follows that the initial assumption is false: there can be no recursively enumerable theory of this type. Priest concludes that it is impossible to block the paradoxes by excluding contradictory sentences from a truth theory while maintaining its finite axiomatizability. Any theory of meaning for a language containing its own truth-predicate (and the minimal expressive resources needed to express Peano arithmetic) will thus be either contradictory or incapable of finite axiomatization, or both.¹⁰³

Priest gives a further argument against Gupta and Belnap's revision theory specifically, this time bearing on the structure of the underlying basis of the "conventions" that provide for the definition of truth, on their account.¹⁰⁴ As Priest notes, since the revision theory identifies the truth-value of sentences with their truth-values on stabilized interpretations, it can regard the T-scheme as holding only for stably true or false sentences, rejecting its applicability to paradoxical sentences (such as the liar). But Priest questions what this is supposed to show: in particular, how does the elaborate formal construction involved in the distinction between stable and unstable sentences actually relate to the semantics of English as spoken? The construction involves, after all, a hierarchy of interpretations that must be continued not only through finite but also through transfinite ordinal levels. If this hierarchy of interpretations is supposed to explicate the meaning of the truth predicate of an actually spoken language such as English, it is thus apparently necessary to attribute to the speakers of the language at least an implicit grasp of the (highly complex) notions of a transfinite ordinal, of transfinite induction, etc.; but that ordinary speakers of English generally grasp these notions in using the ordinary notion of truth seems highly implausible. Similarly, Priest questions how the successive stages of revision are actually to be interpreted: it seems inappropriate to interpret them as actually temporally or chronologically ordered (so that the extension of the truth-predicate would be revised periodically, perhaps every week or every month), but it is unclear how else to interpret the claim that truth is successively "revised," as Gupta and Belnap claim.¹⁰⁵ Finally, even if we follow Gupta and Belnap in taking sentences to have the semantical properties they do when the revisions finally stabilize, there will still be the possibility of generating paradoxes of the "extended liar" type anyway.¹⁰⁶

All of these constructions and interpretations of the significance of the paradoxes are relevant in the current context because they attempt formally to explicate what I have here called the "transcendental" concept of truth, which is plausibly the concept underlying truth-predicates of languages such as English that contain their own truth-predicate and that possess "universal" expressive power in Tarski's sense. As we have seen, any attempt seriously to consider the structure of this transcendental concept of truth requires rejecting Tarski's hierarchical structure of languages with distinct truth-predicates, since none of these captures the target notion under consideration. The transcendental concept of truth, as I have discussed it here, is itself intended to capture explicitly the *phenomenon* of truth, which is not restricted to any particular language or even to contexts in which sentences are formed and uttered at all. But

¹⁰³ I shall consider some further consequences of the undecidability of sense that is implied by this in chapter 6, below.

¹⁰⁴ Priest (1987), p. 21 (Priest explicitly addresses earlier versions of the revision theory given by Gupta alone and by Herzberger).

¹⁰⁵ Priest (1987), pp. 21-22.

¹⁰⁶ Priest (1987), pp. 22-23.

since it is also highly plausible, as I have argued, that Tarski's T-schema essentially captures the formal-linguistic aspect of this phenomenon as it figures in the structure of natural languages, the necessary existence and implications of the semantic paradoxes within these languages must also be considered relevant here, and might reasonably be considered to characterize in a significant sense the semantic structure of *any* language capable of discussing the truth-values of its own sentences. Thus each of the formal interpretations that make sense of the implications of the paradoxes for the overall semantic structure of a language is, at least, potentially suggestive of the formally indicated features of the broad phenomenon of (transcendental) truth.

Certain aspects of these constructions can also be linked in more specific ways to features of the transcendental phenomenon of truth in the sense that I have described. For example, the circularity in the definition of linguistic truth to which Gupta and Belnap advert can be motivated, in the broadened context of a disclosive understanding of transcendental truth, by recalling the well-known circularity in the hermeneutic basis of the unconcealment of beings to which Heidegger points in *Being and Time*. According to Heidegger, because of the necessary involvement of the fore-structures (see above) in any interpretive understanding of the world, all possible interpretive unconcealment is itself situated within a circle, grounded in the structure of Dasein itself, in which Being-in-the-world must first be understood as a whole, albeit in a vague and inexplicit way, in order that it can subsequently be made explicit.¹⁰⁷ In this sense, "Any interpretation which is to contribute understanding, must already have understood what is to be interpreted."¹⁰⁸ The circular structure is, according to Heidegger, characteristic of the kind of understanding that is requisite to grasping the present-at-hand as well as other modalities of beings and is "formal-indicatively disclosed" by Dasein's understanding projection itself.¹⁰⁹ The circularity of the interpretive foundations of truth is thus a necessary feature of the phenomenon, according to Heidegger, and it is thus reasonable to think that any explicit conceptual grasp of it would include this circularity. In particular, since assertion is, for Heidegger, a type of uncovering, itself grounded in the broader disclosive structure of Dasein, it is reasonable to suppose that when we restrict our attention to assertoric truth (as all the philosophers who follow in the tradition of Tarski do), we will find the same circular structure. Here, the fact that the circular structure of the truth-predicate for a natural language can be shown to be a consequence of the uniform applicability of the T-schema is itself an important independent confirmation of a result that could also have been predicted on phenomenological-existential grounds.

From the perspective of the Heideggerian picture, the circular structure that Gupta and Belnap discover in the concept of truth may thus be thought to reflect the fact that, due to the kind of objectification

¹⁰⁷ "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*.... [The] circle of understanding is not an orbit in which any random kind of knowledge may move; it is the expression of the existential *fore-structure* of Dasein itself... In the circle is hidden a positive possibility of the most primordial kind of knowing. To be sure, we genuinely take hold of this possibility only when, in our interpretation, we have understood that our first, last, and constant task is never to allow our fore-having, fore-sight and fore-conception to be presented to us by fancies and popular conceptions, but rather to make the scientific theme secure by working out these fore-structures in terms of the things themselves." GA 2, pp. 152-53.

¹⁰⁸ GA 2, p. 152.

¹⁰⁹ GA 2, p. 153; p. 315.

that language makes possible and its own inherent reflexivity, itself grounded in the reflexivity that is structurally characteristic of Dasein, sentences of a language are themselves continually uncovered *as* true or false and thereby become entities that can be discussed in terms of their own semantic status. In the course of inquiry, the extension of the truth-predicate will then pass through various stages of revision in which the status of various sentences or sentence-types as true or false is itself taken into consideration and used as a guide to the revision. This might even reasonably be thought to include moments of “infinitary” reflection involving the consideration of infinite sets of sentences of a particular type or characterizing a certain subject matter; these are the moments modeled, in Gupta and Belnap’s construction, by the “limit” stages of the procession to, and through, transfinite ordinals. In chapter – of this work, we will see how a certain idea of passage to the infinite, which can be modeled by appeal to Cantor’s transfinite hierarchy, can itself be motivated by a phenomenological consideration of the reflexivity of Dasein in a way that is nevertheless not inconsistent with Dasein’s essential structural finitude. For now, it is sufficient to note the possibility of this phenomenological motivation and to point out how it could be reflected in the narrower dynamics of the behavior of the truth-predicate of a language over time.

What, then, of Priest’s second argument against the revision theory, the argument concerning the relation of the theory to the actual knowledge and practice of speakers? As we have seen in connection with Dummett, the phenomenon of transcendental truth itself does not need to be seen (and should not be seen) as necessarily grounded in the capacities, abilities, or practices of individual knowers in order to be explicated phenomenologically. It is, rather, to be seen as grounded in a structure which, though it is *formally indicated* in the structure of Dasein’s facticity, also does not have to be (and generally is not) explicitly present in the conscious awareness of any individual subject. Moreover, the formal indication is itself understood as involving important aspects of formalization and interpretive articulation, so that it may turn out on interpretation to have essential structural moments that are not at first apparent from the facts about linguistic usage or conscious mastery alone. Though the existence of elaborate formal structures such as the transfinite construction of Gupta and Belnap’s picture would admittedly have to be positively demonstrated in relation to the underlying phenomenon of truth, it is thus not inconsistent with this conception that it exist and characterize, more narrowly, the meaning and behavior of the truth-predicate as it is actually employed in linguistic practice. Priest’s second objection to the revision theory is thus to be rejected in this context. Similarly, to see the phenomenon of revision as actual and having a real temporal significance, it is not necessary to assume that the revision happens periodically or in a regular chronological fashion, but only that it can occur at particular moments of holistic transition such as those in which a formerly guiding conception is re-evaluated or a new holistic interpretation of a broad range of phenomena becomes available.¹¹⁰

Nevertheless, Priest’s first objection – that the revision theory and Kripke’s theory do not in fact eliminate paradox, but only relocate it – remains legitimate, and in fact *also* can be seen as pointing to significant features of the underlying phenomenon of transcendental truth. As Priest argues in detail, it is plausible that *any* theory that eliminates the semantic paradoxes and the closely related set-theoretical ones from a particular language will do so only by *limiting* the expressive resources of the

¹¹⁰ I will consider the kind of temporality involved in this kind of transition in more detail in chapter 6, below.

language in question. It is this limitation, for example, that saves the consistency of each language within the Tarskian hierarchy by stipulating that none of the languages in question can capture their *own* notion of truth. The choice between consistency and expressive completeness is, then, a fundamental one, and it appears to be unavoidable that any theory that attempts to characterize a language as a whole must choose for one or the other.¹¹¹ Thus if we consider the language in question to have *full* expressive resources, as characterized by the unlimited applicability of the T-schema, we must also accept that there will always be paradoxes and contradictions that characterize the very structure of truth.

Should we see truth, as illuminated by the Heideggerian picture, as structurally circular *or* as essentially contradictory, then? The answer is, “both”. The inherent reflexivity of any language that discusses truth, itself a structural outcome of the hermeneutic circularity of Dasein, means that the semantic structure of any existing language can *either* be viewed as containing a circular truth predicate that is, at any moment, incomplete, and as undergoing ongoing revision as the semantic consequences of existing theories are themselves considered and reflected upon. The process is, under this aspect, never complete (even at fixed points), and will always leave some sentences in the category of paradox or instability. But it is equally possible, with a shift of perspective, to characterize the truth-predicate of a language as already embodying the general phenomenon of truth *as a whole*, and thereby to see the actual phenomenological basis for the necessary structural existence of contradiction and paradox. The two perspectives – that of consistency with incompleteness and that of inconsistency with completeness – cannot be occupied simultaneously; but if the structural features of truth are indeed phenomenologically characterized as I have suggested here, it must essentially be seen as describable only in terms of this irreducible duality.¹¹² The inherent circularity *and* contradictoriness that thereby emerge as essential structural features of the concept of truth would be a problem, in an obvious sense, for any theory that wishes to *define* truth consistently and non-circularly. But where the goal is not the fixing of definitions but rather phenomenological and formal indication of an underlying problematic structure that is and must be presupposed, it is not unreasonable to see the structure as bearing these features essentially.

In closing, it is worth noting that although the two issues I have discussed in this final section -- namely, the issue of the status of linguistic senses as “modes of presentation” and the issue of the structure of truth-predicates in natural languages – are not the same, there is nevertheless a suggestive formal homology between them. In both cases, what is phenomenologically at issue is the way in which sentences reflect, in the narrowed context of linguistic assertion, the broader phenomenon of truth characterized in terms of presentation and presence. In both cases, as well, this reflection produces

¹¹¹ It is plausible that this kind of duality already appears as a direct consequence of Russell’s paradox and the related limit-paradoxes that establish (given certain auxiliary assumptions) that the assumption of a total set or a set of all sets is inconsistent. Both Priest and Gupta and Belnap mention the close formal connections between the issues of consistency and completeness that arise in considering the T-structure and the set theoretical paradoxes. For more discussion of these connections, see also Livingston (2012), chapter 1.

¹¹² In chapters 4, 5, and 6, I will further develop this implications of this duality of consistent incompleteness or inconsistent completeness, with close reference to the guiding idea of consistency that appears in the force of the “law of noncontradiction,” and with a view to its consequences for the structure of fundamental temporality.

irreducible structures of circularity and contradiction within language itself. The apparent inevitability of these structures plausibly demonstrates, in both cases, the impossibility of characterizing the functioning of meaningful language wholly in syntactic terms, or of any clean divide between the syntax of language and the semantics of truth. Rather, in light of the broadened consideration of the phenomenological conditions of assertoric truth, the paradoxical and aporetic results (such as Tarski's) that have appeared to demand this separation within the ambit of the assumption that truth is simply characteristic of assertion actually show it to be untenable once the broader phenomenological phenomenon of presentation is taken in view as a necessary component of the specific concept of truth. The aporias and paradoxes can then emerge as formal indications, within the structure of language more narrowly conceived, of the phenomenization of phenomena, the presentation of presence itse

