Negation, Non-Being, and Nothingness

(Chapter 4 of Draft MS: *The Logic of Being: Heidegger, Truth, and Time*)

In this chapter, I investigate the prospects for a contemporary understanding of the interrelated structures of logical *negation*, non-being, illusion and falsehood as grounded in the ontological problematic of the meaning and truth of being. One aim is to clarify these phenomena in their relationship to the problems involved in the "ontological difference" between being and entities. Another is to clarify the relationship of these problems to those involved in "analytic" considerations of the structure of logical negation (such as Frege's and Wittgenstein's) and in particular those of the specific structural relationships among the phenomena of negation, contradiction, sense, illusion and truth.

A particular and privileged indicative *nexus* of this complex logical relationship is the principle or law of *non-contradiction*, which has long been assumed and held in force (though in various non-equivalent forms) as a maximally fundamental regulative or 'normative' basis for logical and rational thought. With the ontological inquiry, it is possible, as I shall argue, to expose this principle to motivated grounds of its immanent critique. The aim of the critique, here, is not to depose the principle or challenge (for instance in irrationalist or anti-rationalist fashion) its force or authority over thinking, language, or reason, but only to clarify ontologically the basis and character of this force and authority. The idea of such a critical ontological analysis that operates as a clarifying critique of logical laws is often suggested by Heidegger, and is a key component of his more general critical consideration of the "logical" tradition and the history it determines. But although Heidegger carried out detailed critical ontological analyses of such general and traditionally regulative logical-ontological principles as the principle of sufficient reason and the "law of identity," there is no parallel sustained investigation anywhere in his *corpus* of the principle of non-contradiction.[1] Here, I do not speculate as to why this is so, beyond simply to note the obvious fact that Heidegger seldom engages specifically with Fregean logic or its consequences, and so may have missed the chance to clarify substantially the basis of the principle as it is formulated within this logic.[2] Despite this absence, however, such an investigation can be carried out; and it significantly illuminates, as we shall see, the problem of the relationship of force and content as it appears in Frege's conception, ultimately thereby shedding light as well on the more basic problem of the temporality of logical thought itself.

One source of contemporary questioning of the law of noncontradiction is recent logical work that has demonstrated the possibility and coherence of *paraconsistent* logics, or logical calculi in which contradictions can be stated without involving (as they do in classical logic) the (presumably unpalatable) consequence that every claim follows from them. The availability of these logics provides

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[1] For the first, see GA 10 (1955-56); for the second, see "The Principle of Identity" in GA 79 (1957).
[2] In the first of the 1957 Freiburg Lectures in which Heidegger discusses the "basic principles" of thinking, he gives the "principle of contradiction" as: "A ≠ not A" and goes on to call it "the negative form of the positive principle of identity, A = A". (GA 79, p. 81) The formulation (which may, it seems, derive from Hegel or Schelling) is clearly substantially different from the one usually given in terms of Fregean and post-Fregean logic (i..e., ~(A . ~A), where 'A' is a sentence, rather than object, variable.

support for dialetheism, or the position that there are at least some contradictions – claims of the form A . ~A, that are true. In *Doubt Truth to be a Liar*, Graham Priest examines, from such a perspective, the arguments that Aristotle gives for the law in book IV of the *Metaphysics* after stating it and describing it as the "most certain of all principles."[3] Priest finds that these arguments are mostly circular, and can (for the most part) be accepted by a dialetheist anyway. Relatedly, Aristotle's formulations of the law in the *Metaphysics* already appear equivocal between ontological, logical, and psychological prohibitions (whereby contradictory *objects* or *states of affairs*, contradictory *propositions* or *truths*, or contradictory *beliefs* are, respectively and variously, prohibited or proscribed) and this ambiguity appears to persist in contemporary formulations.[4]

Although the aim of this investigation is not directly to argue for or defend dialetheism or replace "classical" negation with any of the alternative structures that can be defined in light of contemporary logic, I nevertheless take it that a critical investigation into the basis for the force of the principle of non-contradiction also stands significantly to illuminate the character of negation, including its status as a (psychological, logical, or ontological) activity, function, operation, or "operator." Gaining clarity in this way requires consideration of a conception of negation that gains dominance early on and remains decisive for the "logical" tradition, that of (what I shall call) *topo-logical* negation. A topo-logical picture of negation, as I shall use the term here, is any that sees negation as the drawing of a delimitative line of demarcation between two regions within an *already determinate and total* space of concepts or contents.[5] It is as posing such a picture that we should understand, for instance, Spinoza's *omni*s *determinatio est negatio*, as well as Hegel's use of this principle to produce the idea of a dialectic of determinate negation.[6] But it is equally apparent in (the early) Wittgenstein's conception of negation in the *Tractatus,* according to which the totality of "positive" and "negative" facts jointly articulate reality and the world as a whole within "logical space," and a contradictory proposition says nothing since it

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[3] Priest (2006), chapter 1. The law is stated at *Metaphysics* IV (Γ), 1005b19-20 as the principle that "...the same attribute cannot at the same time belong and not belong to the same subject in the same respect..."

[4] Grim (2004, pp. 51-54), for example, gives some 19 different and non-equivalent statements of the nature of contradictions from classical and contemporary literature, distinguishable (among other differences) according to whether they treat it as a matter of contradictory propositions, logical forms, assertions and denials, or states of affairs. One can also compare Heidegger's brief statement in *Introduction to Metaphysics*: "The old disputed question of whether the principle of contradiction has an 'ontological' or a 'logical' meaning in Aristotle is wrongly posed, because for Aristotle there is neither 'ontology' nor 'logic'. Both come about only on the basis of Aristotelian philosophy. Rather, the principle of contradiction has 'ontological' meaning because it is a fundamental law of logos, a 'logical' principle." (GA 40, p. 143).

[5] In introducing the terminology, I do not wish to invite possible confusion with what Jeff Malpas, in an insightful analysis of the role of place in Heidegger's thought, terms Heidegger's own "topology" of being. (Malpas 2006, pp. 27-37). Malpas draws the term itself in part from a late retrospective remark of Heidegger's, from the Le Thor seminar in 1969 (GA 15, p. 344) in which he appears to indicate a transition from the earlier questions of the meaning and truth of being to a final question concerning the "place or location [*Ortschaft*] of being". As Malpas argues, the remark in fact points to a deeper and longstanding series of developments of the idea of place, in connection with ideas of placing, presence, boundaries, and transition, in Heidegger's thought generally. Here, I also do not wish to contest the claim that the idea of place has this kind of significance for Heidegger, but only to indicate how Heidegger's inquiry into the notion of place and its associated notions can further be connected to an ontological and metalogical inquiry into contradiction and negation.

[6] For an illuminating discussion of the (very different) uses of the principle in Spinoza, Kant, and Hegel, see Melamed (2012).

"admits" [*zulässt*] no possible situation.[7] With the topo-logical picture of negation, the negation of the attribution of a property to a thing or of a 'positive' proposition is pictured as complementary and exterior to it, an indication of what is *other to it* or *different from it* in general within the totality of a coherent and enclosed (finite or infinite) space of concepts or contents. Understood in this way, the topo-logical picture of negation has a historical and conceptual origin in the Visitor's solution to Parmenides' problem of non-being, according to which to say that something is non-X is to mark its difference from everything that is X, and non-being itself is assertible or predicable only on the basis of the superior mixing of the "great type" of difference with being and the other great types. The formal or ontological basis of negation is thus the differentiation of contents within a logical space whose internal consistency and correspondence to the totality of objects and phenomena is presumed in advance. The conception is subsequently consolidated and entrenched in Aristotle's conception of logic and categorical meaning, according to which the logical structure of judgment is understood as that of *synthesis* and *diaeresis*, or the combination and separation of pre-existing meaningful elements, and the total space of possible judgments is structured in advance by means of the total system of categories or genera, and their specific differences.[8] In picturing this total space as in itself total, consistent, and correspondent to the meaningful possibilities of things, the topo-logical picture presupposes it as a field of coherent and ultimately consistent presence in general.

But as we shall see, the ontological or metalogical analysis of the foundation of this presence ultimately reveals another, very different structural origin of contradiction and negation. It does so, in particular, by verifying the necessary precedence to this space, and inherence within it, of a more basic structure of paradoxes at the limit and incompleteness with respect to what ultimately determines it. For this reason, Heidegger's own thought of ontological difference, in its development as the interpretation of the history of metaphysics, finally points to the recurrent determination of a totality of "beings as such and as a whole" that is also paradoxical with respect to its own determining and exemplary paradigms, and necessarily incomplete with respect to 'being itself.' These essential structures of the determination of the successive historical epochs of the being of entities, as we shall see, confirm the relationship of

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[7] *TLP* 2.06, 2.063, 4.462. Cf. *TLP* 4.0641: "One could say that negation [*Verneinung*] must be related to the logical place determined by the negated proposition.
The negating proposition determines a logical place *different* [*einen anderen logischen Ort*] from that of the negated proposition. The negating proposition determines a logical place with the help of the logical place of the negated proposition. For it describes it as lying outside of the latter's logical place."

[8] At *De Interpretatione* 16a12-13, in the course of a discussion of the nature of the *logos* or sentence, Aristotle says (somewhat cryptically) that "falsity and truth have to do with combination and separation." *One* possible interpretation of this and the remarks following it is that whereas an affirmative judgment combines what is said by the subject term with what is said by the predicate term, a negative judgment separates them. However, this interpretation does not appear to be established definitively on the basis of Aristotle's text. For some discussion of the issue, see the opening pages of Husserl's *Experience and Judgment*, and compare also Heidegger from *Being and Time:* "In the logos an entity is manifest, and with a view to this entity, the words are put together in *one* verbal whole. Aristotle saw this more radically: every *logos* is both *synthesis* and *diairesis*, not just the one – for instance as 'affirmative judgment' -- or the other -- as 'negative judgment'. Rather, every assertion, whether it affirms or denies, whether it is true or false, is *synthesis* and *diaeresis* equiprimordially. To exhibit anything is to take it together and take it apart. It is true, of course, that Aristotle did not pursue the analytical question as far as the problem of which phenomenon within the structure of the *logos* is the one that permits and indeed obliges us to characterize every statement as *synthesis* and *diaeresis*." (GA 2, p. 159; transl. slightly modified).

the problematic metalogical ideas of incompleteness and inconsistency with the ontological difference, or with the clearing/concealing structure of being itself. They point to the way that the trace of this difference is manifest in the necessary withdrawal that is shown, in a different metalogical context, by the necessary noncorrespondence of intension and extension that henceforth problematizes any principle of harmonious and total correspondence between thought and reality.

From its beginning, the prohibition of what cannot be said or thought operates, within topo-logical negation, in the overdetermined fashion of the enjoinder of what is anyway impossible, or the avowed incoherence of what is to be positively ruled out. This overdetermined gesture appears first in Parmenides, as the prohibition of the speaking or thinking of the way of "what is not," and again later (for instance), in Wittgenstein, as the enjoinder of speaking beyond the domain of the sayable, there where we "must" be silent.[9] Within topo-logical negation, the prohibitive force of the law of noncontradiction is itself overdetermined in this way, as the prohibition against the speaking, thinking or being of the contradiction, which is anyway impossible (since wholly lacking content). With this, there is also characteristic ambiguity of the domain of the principle's prohibitive force: is it a principle of psychology (regulating actual thought or belief), logic (regulating what *can* be thought), or metaphysics (regulating what *is* or *can be*)? As I shall argue here, both the overdetermination and the ambiguity are the signs of a more profound ontological situation. In particular, both the overdetermined prohibition of the impossible and the positive force of logic that it allows depend on the suppression of a set of original paradoxes of the relationship of being to entities, or of the ontological determination of the relationship of thought or speech to beings in general. What has been suppressed in Parmenides is once again brought out, in a certain way by Plato, who exposes the underlying structure of the paradoxes already involved in the Parmenidean prohibition of non-being along with difference, change, multiplicity and time. The *Parmenides* itself is something like a catalogue of these paradoxes, as they compose and decompose the Greek figure of the original identity of being and the one. But if the Eleatic Visitor of the *Sophist* offers what may seem to be a straightforward solution to Parmenides' problem by resurrecting difference as a superior type capable of 'mixing' with all the others, this solution is only possible by means of an even more thorough dissimulation of the underlying structure of paradox which characterizes the logos in its underlying structure, insofar as this structure manifests and co-implies ontological difference. Contemporary ontological and metalogical research offer the dual condition under which this underlying paradoxical structure can once again be unearthed and seen in the full breadth of its consequences.

I

In various middle-period and late dialogues, Plato responds to the challenge posed by Parmenides' problem about non-being, according to which it is apparently impossible to say or think what is not. As we have seen (chapter 1), above, Heidegger reads Plato, in the *Sophist*, as responding to this challenge with the Visitor's theory of a series of interlinked dynamic *koinonia* or "commons" that ensure the

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[9] Cf. Livingston (2012), chapter 5.

correspondence of logical and psychological thinking with the properties of entities in themselves. This series, is, on Heidegger's reading, ultimately unified by the single logical *koinonia* that allows for the regulated mixing of the great "genres" or types: being, *stasis*, *kinesis*, sameness and difference. Here, the relationships, and particularly the possibilities of mixing, between the great types ultimately account for the most general structures of thought itself in relation to being and becoming. If this solution is to be successful in answering Parmenides' challenge and pointing to the actual reality of the sophist as the characteristic producer of falsehood, it will accordingly have to extend to the actuality of non-being itself: that is, there must be a way in which, as the Visitor says, non-being itself becomes manifest through the ultimately logical mixing of types.

According to Heidegger, Plato's insight into the structure of the *logos*, as formulated especially in the *Sophist*, represents "a remarkable innovation" over earlier Greek inquiries into the nature of Being.[10] While Parmenides, in particular, "speaks of Being only in general and in an undetermined way," with Plato, by contrast, "the ground upon which rests the question of the meaning of Being now becomes concrete."[11] An exemplary sign of this greater concretion, Heidegger says, is Plato's acknowledgment of, and questioning of, the being of non-beings in the *Sophist*. This questioning forges ahead with the inquiry into the beings themselves in their "most immediate and original way of being encountered," which is just one leading aspect of "the question of the meaning of beings" or the "question of Being" itself.[12] Nevertheless, despite his success in raising this question on the basis of his interpretation of the *logos*, Plato's inquiry, like Parmenides', remains determined by the assumption that "something can be settled about beings with regard to their Being only insofar as the beings are present [*sofern das Seiende da ist*]…"[13] More broadly, Heidegger here develops the interpretation of Plato's mode of questioning along the guideline of the fundamental insight that Greek philosophy universally interprets the meaning of Being as presence, hence privileging the (temporal) present over other dimensions of time, and understands it on the model of things that are *Vorhanden* or "present at hand."[14] This interpretation, Heidegger holds, itself brings about the Greek development of the theme of *logos* and logic culminating in Aristotle. For the Greeks draw "the basic character of Being … from the context [*Zussamenhang*] of *logos* itself" in that beings are understood, in a privileged sense, as *on legomenon*, beings that can become themes for a *logos*.[15] In this sense, the "irruption of *logos*" in Greek philosophy is thoroughly motivated "by the fact that *on,* the Being of beings itself, is primarily interpreted as presence [*Anwesenheit*], and *logos* is the primary way in which one presentifies [*vergegenwärtige*] something, namely that which is under discussion."[16]

Even given that Plato, like Greek philosophy generally, thus interprets the nature of being as well as the possibility of non-being under the overarching guideline of the specific structure of the *logos*, there still

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[10] GA 19, p. 204.
[11] GA 19, p. 205.
[12] GA 19, p. 205.
[13] GA 19, p. 205.
[14] Kisiel (1993), p. 230, summarizing Otto Pöggeler, suggests that this crucial insight was reached in "the years 1922/23"; Heidegger himself, though much later, seems to have given the date as "1923". ((Kisiel 1993, p. 534).
[15] GA 19, p. 224.
[16] GA 19, p. 225.

remains the perplexity captured in Parmenides' thesis of the unsayability of non-being. Seen in terms of the question of actual existence of the sophist as a producer of illusion and falsehood, this is, Heidegger suggests, the problem of the possibility of the *psuedos logos*, a *logos* which does not "uncover the being as it is" but rather distorts it.[17] Such a *logos* will only be possible if "non-beings can be" in some sense, even if only the sense in which they "are" in a false sentence about them, and accordingly, if the *pseudos logos* is to be shown to be possible, Parmenides' statement as to the impossibility of saying non-being must be defeated, or at least shown to be limited. Indeed, with respect to Parmenides, Plato now faces a fundamental choice, according to Heidegger. Either he may maintain "complicity with the well-established dogma of the school of Parmenides that non-beings are not [das Nichtseiende ist nicht]" or he "can acknowledge the factual existence of the sophist [*den Tatbestand des Vorhandenseins des Sophisten*] and accordingly of *me on*, of the *psuedos*, and take the factual existence of deception, distortion, and misrepresentation as it is and so transform the theory of Being."[18]

It is in the renewed discussion of *images* at 240a-c that Heidegger sees the Visitor as providing first beginnings of the "ontological" solution to the problem. The image, or *eidolon*, of course exists in a certain way – as the image that it is. Nevertheless, in a certain way it is not; in particular, it "poses" as what is not and therefore manifests non-being in a certain way. This recognition of the peculiar character of the image means, Theaetetus suggests at 240c, that in it non-being is in a certain way "woven together" with being – here, Heidegger says, "non-beings can enter into a *symploke*" – an "entwining" -- with beings.[19] This is the first suggestion of what the Visitor will ultimately offer as his solution to the "logical" problem of non-being, the suggestion of a combination or *koinonia* of types, such that the type *being* can, through its combination with the type *difference*, also enter into a certain unity with non-being. According to Heidegger, the key to this specific *koinonia*, and hence to the whole problem of the entry of non-being into what is, is the peculiar structure of the *logos*, the addressing of something *as* something.[20] Only through this structure and with its discernment does it become possible to see that something which is not, i.e. a non-being, can nevertheless be addressed *as* something that is.

At 257b, the Visitor summarizes the discussion so far by suggesting that the "me on" means, not something contrary to being (or what is) but rather "only something different from it." As Heidegger suggests, this points to the way in which the "me on" is structurally an aspect of the *pros ti* (or "toward-something") relation of any *logos* to its subject matter. Thus: "Putting it sharply, the Being of the "not" (the "non-") [des "nicht"], the *me*, is nothing else than the *dunamis* of the *pros ti*, the presence of the Being-in-relation-to [*die Anwesenheit des Seins-zu*]."[21] He goes on to emphasize, on behalf of "phenomenological research," that negation itself has a disclosive meaning with respect to the structure of the *pros ti*:

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[17] GA 19, p. 410.
[18] GA 19, p. 411.
[19] GA 19, p. 430.
[20] GA 19, p. 431.
[21] GA 19, p. 558.

Phenomenological research itself accords negation an eminent position: negation as something carried out [*vollzogen wird*] within the prior acquisition and disclosure of some substantive content *[innerhalb der vorgängigen Aneigung und Aufdeckung eines Sachbestandes.]* This is what is peculiarly systematic in phenomenology, that, provided it is practiced authentically, phenomenology always involves an antecedent *seeing* of the matters themselves. What is systematic is not some sort of contrived nexus of concepts, taking its orientation from some construct or system. On the contrary, the systematic is grounded in the previous disclosure of the matters themselves [*den vorherigen Erschließung der Sachen sebst*], on the basis of which negation then attains the positive accomplishment of making possible the conceptuality of what is seen [*die Begrifflichkeit des Gesehenen zu ermöglichen*].

Furthermore, it is only on the basis of this productive negation, which Plato has at least surmised here, even if he has not pursued it in its proper substantive consequences, that we can clarify a difficult problem of logic, a problem residing in the copula of the proposition or judgment: the meaning of the "is" or "is not" in the propositions "A is B," "A is not B. The meaning of this "not," in the context of judgments about beings, has long caused difficulties for logic, and it has not been properly clarified even now."[22]

Thus, according to Heidegger, negation as involving such a seeing must be accorded, on the basis of its structural relationship to the general *pros ti* (or "toward something") structure of the *logos* and thereby to the possible "conceptuality" [Begrifflichkeit] of what is disclosed, phenomenological priority over "bare negation" or mere denial.[23] In fact, according to Heidegger, even the "empty exclusion" which already characterizes the sense of negation for Parmenides must itself be understood as disclosive because of its basic relationship to the structure of *legein* and *noein*:

Phenomenologically, this can be clarified very briefly. Every "not," in every saying of "not," whether explicitly expressed or implicit, has, as a speaking about something, the character of exhibition [*hat als Sprechen von … den Charackter des Aufzeigens*]. Even the empty "not," the mere exclusion of something over and against something arbitrary, shows, but it dimly shows that on which the negation is founded, thus what, in saying "not", is delimited against the nothing. This empty negation places discernment [*das Vermeinen*], legein and noein, prior to the nothing; it lets nothing be seen as that which is founded by the negated [*es läst nichts sehen als das, was das Negierte fundiert*]. That is the meaning of negation in Parmenides. This negation, placed prior to the nothing and purely exclusionary, has thus been uncovered for the first time in the history of the development of our logic, in our grasp of *logos*.[24]

This merely exclusionary sense of negation has its ontological basis, according to Heidegger, in Parmenides' own "over-hasty…theory of Being," whereby "the ontological meaning of Being" is

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[22] GA 19, pp. 560-61 (transl. slightly modified).
[23] GA 19, p. 560.
[24] GA 19, pp. 570-71 (transl. slightly modified).

identified with the "ontical totality of beings," and as a result, "for every 'no'-saying, there remained left over only the nothing, since indeed nothing is other than the *en* as *on* [*da ja nichts anderes ist als das en als on.*]"[25]

Nevertheless, according to Heidegger, although this logical sense of a purely exclusionary negation is historically the first to be discovered, we should not conclude that it is the "most immediate and primary one carried out in *legein.*" This more primary logical negation is, rather, the one discovered by Plato in the *Sophist*, with the specific conception of the *me on* as what is not *something*, that is as what is thereby set over against something with a specific character. This is the sense in which Heidegger takes Plato to have "acquired, on the basis of the new insight into the *on* of *me on*, a new basis for the interpretation of *logos*" and thus accomplished a fundamental "advance in the determination and clarification of beings" corresponding to this new and "radical" conception of the *logos*.[26] This new insight into the logical nature of negation and non-being is significant for Heidegger, most of all, in showing how logical negation is itself inherent to the structure of disclosure in which the logical *pros ti* ultimately consists. For Plato himself, though, this inherency and the logical structure it points to can only be understood in terms of the framework of the ideas or *eide* and relative to the *koinonia* structure of the great types. Specifically, with Plato's discovery of the productive sense of negation, according to Heidegger, the *me on* becomes:

> …itself something properly "visible" among beings, it can be co-seen in all beings as such, and, as this autonomous eidos enarithmon, "counted" among the multiplicity of the *eide*, occurent within the *koinonia* of beings. This *enarithmon*, this "counted", relates explicitly to the "five" anticipated in the earlier *hypothesis*. Here, number represents nothing else than the completeness and thoroughness of relations within a determinate, thematically posited *koinonia*, namely the *koinonia* of *on, kinesis, statasis, tauton*, under which the *heteron* arose as *eidos en*.[27]

Heidegger's interpretation of the Visitor's argument thus takes it to establish, over against Parmenides' own undifferentiated sense of bare and exclusionary negation, a sense of negation in which it depends on and allows the disclosure of the phenomenon of *me on* itself, the actuality or "presence" of "non-being." In the context of the *Sophist*, however, this remains a *logical* sense of negation, one which can only be specified in terms of the specific structure of the articulate *logos* which the Visitor points out, and thereby as well in terms of the existence of the great types and their possibilities of communicating within an ultimately logical *koinonia*, and one which, accordingly, already partially obscures the more basic phenomenological connection between negation and the ontological basis for the truth and disclosure of beings.

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[25] GA 19, p. 571 (transl. slightly modified).
[26] GA 19, pp. 571-72.
[27] GA 19, pp. 566-67; cf. *Sophist* 258d.

By contrast with this, the idea of an intimate connection between the disclosure at the root of the truth of beings and the specific phenomenon of a "nothing"-- one which is, however, explicitly prior to, and at the foundation of, "logical" negation -- figures prominently in Heidegger's 1929 Freiburg inaugural address, "What is Metaphysics?"[28] The centerpiece of the address, in particular, is Heidegger's claim for the possibility of a disclosure of "the nothing" in the fundamental mood or attunement [*Stimmung*] of *Angst*, and its relation as so disclosed with the possibility of a questioning about what is [*das Seiende*] in order to "recover" it for comprehension "as such and as a whole" [*um es [das Seiende] als ein solches und im Ganzen für das Begreifen zurückzuerhalten*].[29] The lecture begins by posing a question about the "nothing" that lies beyond the scope of scientific inquiry into beings, or beyond our pursuit of beings in science and the determinate orientation to research and to the existence of the world as a whole that characterizes this pursuit. This nothing, Heidegger argues, can in fact be made manifest in the attunement of *Angst*, in which "all things and we ourselves sink into indifference."[30] In this attunement, "beings as a whole [das Seiende im Ganzen] slip away" and it is thereby possible for the nothing to become manifest as such a "slipping away of the whole."[31] Such a manifestation itself allows, according to Heidegger, "the original openness of beings as such" [*die ursprüngliche Offenheit des Seienden als eines solchen*] to arise; here one grasps in particular that "there they are beings – and not nothing" [*daβ es Seiendes ist – und nicht Nichts*].[32] This "nothing" is, Heidegger emphasizes, thus no superfluous addition, but points to an original ground for the manifestation of beings as such and as a whole. Dasein's ability to "hold itself out into the nothing" in this manifestation is described as its specific structure of "transcendence," whereby Dasein is "in each case already beyond beings as a whole [*je schon über das Seiende im Ganzen hinaus*]."[33]

Heidegger goes on to argue that this possible manifestness of the nothing precedes and founds the "bare negation" that figures in logic as an act of the intellect, rather than the other way around:

> What testifies to the constant and widespread though distorted [*verstellte*] manifestness of the nothing [*Offenbarkeit des Nichts*] in our Dasein more compellingly than negation [*die Verneinung*]? But negation does not conjure the not [*das Nicht*] out of itself as a means for making distinctions and oppositions to what is given [*zum Gegebenen*], in order, as it were, to insert itself in between it [*um es gleichsam dazwischenzuschieben*]. How could negation muster the not [*das Nicht*] from itself when it can negate only [*nur verneinen kann*] when something negatable is already pre-given [*vorgegeben*] to it? But how could the negatable and what is to be negated [*ein … Zu-verneinendes*] be able to be viewed as something susceptible to the not [*als ein Nichthaftes*] unless all thinking as such already has caught sight of the not? But the not can become manifest only [*kann nur offenbar werden*] if its origin, the nihilation of the nothing in general [*das Nichten des Nicths überhaupt*], and therewith the nothing itself, is extracted

[28] GA 9, pp. 103-122.
[29] GA 9, p. 118 (transl. modified).
[30] GA 9, p. 111.
[31] GA 9, p. 112, p. 113.
[32] GA 9, p. 114.
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from concealment. The not does not originate through negation; rather, negation grounds itself in the not that springs from the nihilating of the nothing [*das dem Nichten des Nichts entspringt*].[34]

Thus, while "the nothing" can be defined in its "common," "obvious," and "anemic" sense as "the complete negation of the totality of beings [*die Vollständige Verneinung der Allheit des Seienden*], it is conversely the disclosure of this "nothing" in the positive phenomenon of its "nihilating" that first makes possible a disclosure of "beings as a whole."[35]

Heidegger draws on this conclusion to raise questions about the treatment of negation within what he calls the "reigning and never-challenged doctrine of 'logic'" [der herrschenden und nie angetasten Lehre der 'Logik']. According to this doctrine, Heidegger says, "negation is a specific act of the intellect [eine spezifische Verstandeshandlung.] However, if negation, as an activity or accomplishment, indeed has a prior ontological basis in the phenomenon of the nothing, this "logical" doctrine must be questioned: far from producing the phenomenon of the nothing, negation as an intellectual activity is itself "somehow" dependent on and based in this phenomenon, as it is shown in a more penetrating questioning. In this questioning, Heidegger suggests, even the "commonly cited ground rule of thinking in general," the law of non-contradiction as the "principle that contradiction is to be avoided [der Satz vom zu vermeidenden Widerspruch]" itself must be open to question.[36] For if the application of this principle to the question "What is the Nothing?" threatens to "lay low" the question – specifically, by showing the contradiction inherent in *any* answer, according to which the nothing would have to be specified as *being* something or in some way – then the possibility of the questioning itself and the more original phenomenon it elicits themselves put into question the absolute authority or force of this rule.

Heidegger's conception of the actual presentation of the nothing in "What is Metaphysics?" sharpens and deepens the conception he finds in Plato by exposing in detail the structural connection (only, at best) implicit in Plato's own discussion, between the phenomenon of the nothing as such and the underlying structure of the *pros ti* or intentionality, and thereby to the broader phenomenon of the disclosure of beings. This relationship is itself, as we have seen, essentially grounded for Heidegger in the possibility of a disclosive relationship to the totality of beings "as such and as a whole." Plato's partitive and topo-logical conception of the distinction between being and non-being with respect to individual properties or traits *within* the broader space of the logical *koinonia* as a whole is thus replaced with Heidegger's picture of the nothing as set off against the *totality* of beings and as *thereby* providing an original foundation and broader horizon for negation and its force. This deepening of Plato's picture results ultimately from Heidegger's insistence on the implications of the ontological difference between beings and being, in terms of which, as set off against the totality of entities, the specific phenomenon of the nothing provides an indication of the form of their possible disclosure "as such and as a whole," and thereby of their being itself.

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[34] GA 9, pp. 116-117 (transl. modified).
[35] GA 9, p. 109; p. 117.
[36] GA 9, p. 107.

II

In an obvious sense, Frege's conception of negation is not the one that Heidegger attributes to the "reigning and never-challenged doctrine of 'logic.'" For on that conception as Heidegger describes it, "negation is a specific act of the intellect." In the 1918-19 article "Negation," however, as usual throughout his writings, Frege distinguishes sharply between acts, for instance of judging or asserting, and the *contents* that are (for instance) judged or asserted.[37] The latter are not, for Frege, acts or activities of the intellect or any other actor; rather they are, in Frege's terminology, "thoughts," and can essentially be grasped *as* one and the same thought by different thinkers at different times. On Frege's account, it must be possible to entertain or grasp thoughts prior to judging them true or false; indeed, the whole process of inquiry largely consists in the advance from the grasp of a thought to this judgment. In particular, a propositional *question* (such as "Is the sun bigger than the moon?") contains a "demand that we should either acknowledge the truth of a thought, or reject it as false."[38] It must thus be possible to recognize the thought as such, prior to the determination, and it must be possible to grasp a thought even if it is false. Frege accordingly argues that it is incorrect to hold that the "being" of a thought consists in its truth; for false thoughts must also be available to be grasped in order for propositional inquiry to be possible. Accordingly, "The very nature of a question demands a separation between the acts of grasping a sense and of judging."[39]

As Frege acknowledges, one might recognize the distinction and still think of negation as a kind of act, negatively correlative to judging. But the recognition of thoughts as contents that can in principle be judged either true *or* false itself shows that this conception of negation is wrong, or at least limited. For the negation of a thought is true if and only if the thought is false, and vice-versa; but it must be possible to have both a thought *and* its negation available to one before either is judged to be true *or* false. Similarly, what is added to a sentence by the word "not" or by other linguistic markers of negation cannot be understood as an activity (for example an activity of denial, negatively correlative to (positive) assertion or judgment), for then its inclusion in a sentence would have to express a special kind of force, correlative to assertion but negative. But it must be possible to express a negative sentence (for instance as the antecedent of a conditional) which includes the word "not" without, thereby, affirming or denying anything.[40] Thus "not" (and other verbal indicators of negation) cannot indicate a particular kind of force, either of assertion or denial. These considerations lead Frege to the view that the negation expressed in language by "not" and similar expressions is not a kind of judgment, assertion, denial, or indeed any kind of act. Rather, what is expressed by the "not" is a "possible component of a

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[37] Frege (1919), pp. 362-78. The distinction, in the modern form in which it influenced Frege and Husserl, goes back at least to Bolzano and was subsequently employed by Lotze. It has earlier roots in the Stoic conception of the *lekton*, or the content of a proposition or term.

[38] Frege (1919), p. 362.

[39] Frege (1919), p. 364.

[40] The consideration is parallel to the consideration that it must be possible to use a positive sentence without (positively) asserting it; the point is just that it follows from this that, just as "It is true that …" does not express assertoric force, "it is false that…" or "it is not the case that…" cannot express a different kind of force (compare chapter 1, above).

thought [*möglichen Bestandteil des Gedankens*],” and is not to be identified with anything exterior to this content.[41]

As we have seen (chapter 1, above), for Frege the special connection of thoughts to truth and falsity shows that they exhibit a particular kind of unity, not to be identified *simply* with the aggregative or synthetic unity of several constituents *separately* bearing individually representable contents. This unity provides the basis for his further argument, in “Negation,” that negating a thought is not to be understood as an activity of separating or dissolving. The negation of a thought is still a thought, and still bears the specific kind of unity characteristic of thoughts; negation itself is accordingly not to be understood as a separation or division of what is supposed to be united or composed in a “positive” thought. This contrasts with the conception articulated by Plato’s Eleatic Visitor in the *Sophist*, and further suggested by Aristotle, on which, as we have seen, a positive sentence, as composing a name for a subject and a verb which is conceived as the name of a property or “action”, is thought of as such a compositional unity, and a negative sentence is thought of as a differentiation or separation of what is named in the subject term from what is named in the predicate. In fact, both traditional claims – that a “positive” sentence is a compositional unity of separately referential parts and that its negation results from the separation of what is thereby composed – are to be rejected, according to Frege, on the basis of the specific unity of the thought as a possible bearer of truth or falsity.

How, then, is what is expressed by “not” “contained in the thought” for Frege? The analogy that Frege draws explicitly here, is, as usual, that between the structure of a thought and the sentence that expresses it: thus “The world of thoughts has a model [*hat ihr Abbild*] in the world of sentences, expressions, words, signs” and “To the structure of the thought [*Dem Aufbau des Gedankens*] there corresponds the compounding of words into a sentence, and here the order is in general not indifferent.”[42] However, with respect to the question of what is specifically expressed by the word “not” in English, the analogy is, at best, strained; for on Frege’s own admission, one and the same thought may be expressed by two sentences, one which involves “not” and one which does not (e.g. “Jesus was not mortal”; “Jesus was immortal”). In particular, the unity of both “positively” and “negatively” expressed thoughts which verifies that negation is not to be opposed to assertion, judgment, or composition as a correlative but negative act, also involves that it is not generally possible to recognize a distinctive range of thoughts as *individually* including any constituent corresponding to the “not” or to negation. All that can be said is that for each thought there is an “opposite,” i.e. a thought which is related to it in such a way that if the first thought is true, the second is false, and vice-versa.

This conception of negation underlies the (later) designation of negation as a “truth-function,” though the sense of “function” here must not be that of any kind of act, process, or occurrence. Rather, because of the separation of negation and the other “truth-functions” from any such act or activity and because of the unitary possibility of *any* propositional contents figuring in the logical relationships they allow, they are not conceived as having *any* representational meaning, but are rather structurally

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[41] Frege (1918), p. 372.
[42] Frege (1918), p. 367.

characteristic of the system of possible contents and their rational relations as a whole. Accordingly, on this picture, negation and the other truth-functions are characteristic of the constitutive structural and logical relations of the domain of (judgeable) contents as a whole, without themselves naming, designating or referring to any content, act, or object; they characterize, in the structural relations they introduce, the structure of what can be asserted *using* the referential and quantificational devices of (Fregean) logic, without themselves referring or quantifying.   Frege's picture is in this respect already well on the way to Wittgenstein's atomistic theory in the *Tractatus*, whose fundamental insight is, as Wittgenstein says, that the truth-functional "connectives" do not represent.[43] Rather, they characterize structurally the inherent logical relationships among possible contents, here conceived as those that can be expressed by means of names, variables and predicative terms along with the truth-functions in a quantificational language.

This leaves entirely open, however, the questions of the *actual constitution* of the realm of contents itself. As we have seen (chapters 1 and 3), Frege's metaphorization of the realm of senses as a timeless "third realm" beyond those of the physical and the individual-subjective does not significantly clarify the question of its temporal basis or ontological genesis. Rather, it simply ignores these questions or substitutes for an answer what must be seen, from a perspective of ontological questioning, as a mythology. This is not to deny the point of the metaphor on the level of what it intends to capture: namely, the specifically *logical* character of the relations relevant to truth that exist among the contents expressed by sentences in a language, and the distinction of this character from any empirical or purely ontic relationships. It is part of drawing the distinction that what is expressed by a sign of negation, as well as by the other truth-functional signs, must rigorously be distinguished from any type of act, process, or indeed any ontic event. Nevertheless, maintaining the distinction by itself does not fully illuminate what is meant by "logical" structure itself, and it is with this questions in mind that we can now return to the question about the relative priority of "logical" negation and non-being or nothingness.

On the Fregean conception, the possibility of negation characterizes the domain of logically judgeable contents or of thoughts in a basic, structural sense. Here, in particular, negation is a kind of reversibility of such contents, such that the negation of a content is understood to reverse its truth value. The universality of this possibility throughout the whole domain of judgable contents is an aspect of the basic connection of such contents to the possibility of being true *or* false and results immediately from the general intelligibility of propositional questions which may have a "yes" or "no" answer.   Negation is thus a characteristic structurally grounded possibility with respect to the *totality* of judgeable contents, and as such plausibly constitutively *linked* to the constitution of this totality itself. In this way, Frege's picture of the logical nature and force of negation thus organically involves an implicit and requisite reference to the *totality* of contents, a reference which itself is given no further positive *ontological* explanation in Frege's account. There is, it is true, the "model" provided by the compositional structure of a language, but the totality of contents that is involved in the idea of logical negation is not identifiable with the totality of sentences of any natural language, and it must be part of Frege's

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[43] Cf. *TLP* 4.0312.

conception that the individual contents that comprise it exist prior to and independent of the creation and existence of any such language.

Moreover, given Frege's distinction between sense and reference, this requisite involvement of the totality of contents in the idea of negation also involves an equally essential reference to the totality of *objects* of possible predication, the referents of the expressions whose composition into sentences produces sentential expressions of thoughts. After articulating the distinction between sense and reference in the 1890s, Frege generally holds that the referent of a complex expression is determined by the referents of its constitutive terms; this implies that the truth value of a sentence is determined by the referents of the concept- and object-terms composing it. There are questions to be raised here about the nature of the referents of concept-terms, as well as about the apparent tension between this principle of compositionality and the contextualism implicit in Frege's notorious context principle (which appears, when applied to referents, to suggest conversely that the referents of parts of sentences are determined by the referents, i.e. the truth-values, of these sentences as wholes).[44] But in the present context what is important to note is just that the picture of negation outlined in "Negation" involves that sentential senses be situated within a broader totality in which each one has a negation with an opposite truth-value, and that this involves that the realm of referents also be structured in such a way as not to permit the (true) attribution to a single referent of contradictory properties, or to several of contradictory relations. With this, the total realm of (sentential) senses is coordinated with the totality of referents in such a way as to assure that each sentence has exactly one truth-value, and the universal applicability of the law of non-contradiction to entities is assured. But both the coordination and the assurance are possible only on the assumption of the pre-givenness of both domains, that of the totality of senses partitioned into truths and falsehoods and the totality of referents determined in such a way as to allow just this partitioning.[45]

Within a context of a reflection on the implications of the Fregean structure of truth-functions and quantification, there are further, related considerations that can be added to this one and which also point to the necessary presupposition of a totality of entities correlative to the total possibilities of sense. For instance, although the application of the Fregean quantifiers does not by itself demand any specification of the particular domain over which the variables involved are considered to range, it is standard to construe universal generalizations of the form "All A's are B's" as quantified conditionals (of the form: for all x, if x is an A, it is a B). This has sometimes been taken as suggesting that it is impossible or meaningless to state claims with *full* generality, or which are considered to range over all objects or

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[44] For discussion of these tensions, see Beaney (1997), pp. 17-18 and Dummett (1981), chapter 15.

[45] In a broader (non-Fregean) context of reflection, there is, of course, also the question of failures of linguistic reference, and of the possibility of truth-value gaps which appears to follow, on the level of sentences, from it. Since Frege himself considered his logical discoveries to apply primarily to well-formed languages in which failures of reference do not occur, the issue and possibility do not arise directly for him. Nevertheless they are closely examined by Dummett in the course of the latter's reflections on the possible bases and motivations for the application of an intuitionist logic or one that does not allow the general affirmation of the law of the excluded middle. Whereas in this chapter I restrict myself to examining the implications of Frege's own conception for the law of noncontradiction and do not take up the status of the LEM, see chapter 5 for some considerations deriving from the ontological problematic which bear against Dummett's anti-realist program.

possible variable values (for instance: "Everything is physical"). However, the possibility and meaningfulness of claims of this sort in ordinary language cannot be gainsaid; nor is it plausibly possible (or desirable) to avoid all negative existential claims (e.g. "There are no unicorns"), which themselves have the form of universally quantified negative claims ("for all x, x is not a unicorn"). The establishment of the truth value of such claims is, after all, a central goal of scientific inquiry (among other pursuits) into the existence and reality of objects and phenomena. But this establishment itself requires that both the question and the answer be posed by means of quantification with a universal scope, and thereby appears to presuppose the intelligibility of the *totality* of entities over which such quantification ranges.

This consideration cannot be avoided by stipulating (as is sometimes done) that a particular "domain of quantification" or "universe of discourse" must be specified in advance before any meaningful application of the quantifiers can be made. For in an obvious sense, the specification of such a domain itself presupposes the prior availability of a broader domain from *within* which *it* can be specified. Since it is plausible that any such specification will itself involve truth-evaluable claims, it is reasonable, as well, to maintain that the application of the quantifiers must range over the further domain thus required.   Thus, even if it is considered to be impossible or meaningless to apply quantification without first specifying a domain, the iteration of the question of the possibility of this specification will obviously tend, at the limit, to elicit the necessity of a prior possibility or presupposition of coherent quantification over the totality of what is, or beings as a whole. Here, indeed, what appears to be necessarily presupposed is not just a general or vague reference to "whatever is," but indeed a determinate conception of this totality in terms of its overall logical and categorial structure, insofar as it must be the presupposed basis for any *further* delimitation of specific domains of beings or entities.

Frege's picture of logic, sense, and negation thus presupposes, for several reasons, the coherence and prior availability both of a total realm of possible contents and a total realm of entities correlated to it. Although Frege does not do so, it is possible to use the structure of logical negation to inquire ontologically about how these totalities are constituted and given, in both cases. Here, because what is in question is the specific basis for the applicability of the central logical "possibility" or "operation" of negation *tout court* and hence that of the constitution of a domain of possibly true or false judgeable contents "governed" by logical principles and characterized by their structure, the question is not one simply of further *logical* conditions but also of the broader *meta*-logical or *ontological* preconditions whose elaboration (however construed) must be grounded in clarification of the structure of truth. This clarification, however, is just what, as we have seen, Heidegger's account gestures to; in particular, in situating the question of truth in the constitutive context of the ontological difference between being and entities, Heidegger points to the way the specific phenomenon of truth as disclosure irreducibly manifests this difference. The account in "What is Metaphysics?" further develops this conception of truth as involving the possibility of *recovering* a conceptually explicit understanding of being *as* an understanding of the totality of entities as such, in and through what he refers to here as "the Nothing". If this conception of the ontological difference can indeed be considered basically illuminating with respect to the structure of the specific phenomenon of truth, it is also plausible that it stands to illuminate the *logical* structure of the totality of truth-evaluable contents which is the domain of Frege's

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conception of the scope of quantificational logic. In particular, the structural interconnections that appear in the logical interrelations of the particular contents thereby involved themselves point to, if considered as characterizing the whole domain of possible content, the broad possibility of a constitutive even if not explicit reference to the totality, and thus by themselves pose the question of the position from which such a reference might be possible, either implicitly or explicitly. Heidegger's picture addresses this question by pointing to the ontic-*ontological* structure of Dasein as the structure of truth as (ontic-ontological) disclosure, and as capable of gaining the position for an explicit retrieval of the implicit grasp of beings as a whole that is always already presupposed in factical life, through the fundamental possibility of an attunement to what is set over against this totality, the nothing that first emerges phenomenologically in the "totalizing" attitude of *Angst*.

This is also the basis on which it is possible to respond to a commonly formulated critical response to Heidegger's position, on which it cannot be maintained that "the nothing" is the basis for negation, since Heidegger's apparently nominative reference to "the nothing" is itself nonsensical or logically incoherent. On the position suggested by this response, it is rather supposed to be clear that negation is, rather, the foundation for "nothing," in that "nothing" always has the meaning of "not any thing", and demands completion, within a sentence, by binding the quantifier apparently involved and specifying its domain of application. For example, on this view, "nothing" has significance in contexts such as "There is nothing in the box" or "I found nothing to speak of", but requires in these contexts such additional auxiliaries in order to make sense, and even there cannot have the significance of a noun or noun phrase.[46]

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[46] The influential *locus classicus* of this objection is of course Carnap's criticism of Heidegger, based primarily on his critical reading of Heidegger's "Das Nichts selbst nichtet," in the 1932 article "The Elimination of Metaphysics through Logical Analysis of Language" (Carnap 1932). For a similar set of objections to Heidegger's apparently nominative use of "the nothing," albeit from a position more broadly sympathetic to Heidegger's project in general, see Tugendhat (1970). The episode of Carnap's attack on Heidegger has been widely discussed, in part because it has seemed to many commentators to capture the differing philosophical styles or methods broadly characteristic of the "divide" between continental and analytic philosophy. For readings in this vein, see, e.g., Friedman (2000), Stone (2006), Gregory (2001), and Conant (2001). From the current perspective, these readings are indeed helpful in that they do point to large-scale methodological currents and divergences – for instance between the "rigorous" criteriological analysis of logical/linguistic structures, on one hand, and the phenomenological demonstration or elicitation of broad existential characterizations of the nature of our existential situation, on the other – between projects under the banner of which many have marched in later twentieth-century philosophy. However, if it is possible to integrate Heidegger's distinctive methods of hermeneutic interpretation with some of those characteristic of logical and meta-logical reflection in the analytic tradition in something like the way I have indicated in the last chapter and this one, it is more helpful in the current context to consider how Heidegger's striking turns of phrase here may indeed be seen as having a foundation in phenomena that are also independently indicated through reflection on logical structure and its own ontological basis. It is also worth noting in this connection that Heidegger's own statements in "What is Metaphysics?" about the dissolution of the "idea of 'logic'" in a more basic questioning (GA 9, p. 117) and the prospect of challenging the reign of "logic" over metaphysics (p. 120) always name "logic" in scare quotes and point only to (as Heidegger clarifies in marginal notes) the "traditional" or metaphysical conception of it, and so appear to bear no direct implications for Fregean or post-Fregean logics themselves.

We have already seen that it is implausible from the perspective of normal usage that existential and universal quantification can *only* be employed in restricted or previously delimited domains of quantification; what speaks against this is not only ordinary claims about the totality of things and negative existential judgments, but also the way that any such specification of domain presupposes, at least implicitly, a larger domain from within which *it* could intelligibly be carried out. So even if the meaning of "nothing" must indeed be logically connected with that of "not any thing," it appears possible and trenchant to consider that at least in some cases this "not any thing" can be considered to have essentially unlimited scope, or at any rate to range over, and hence involve the intelligibility of, the totality of things or beings. From this perspective, the kind of "totalizing" experience involved in *Angst* as Heidegger describes it indeed might naturally be put as the experience that (for instance) "there is nothing", i.e. there are really (in the most basic sense of "being" or "existence") no beings. It is then certainly possible to nominalize what appears or becomes phenomenologically manifest in this kind of experience or phenomenon; and it is certainly not unreasonable to suppose that just this is what Heidegger himself has taken himself to have done with his nominative references to "the Nothing." As Heidegger himself notes, the nominalization should not be taken as construing the Nothing "as an object", since to do so would be to convert it "into something and not nothing". But this is no reason to maintain that it is generally impossible, or that sentences involving the nominalized form may not be phenomenologically illuminating and ontologically indicative.

The situation is more closely analogous to Frege's own usage in distinguishing between concept and object as logical types; drawing the distinction itself necessarily involves that concepts are referred to, at least in general, which violates the strict delimitation which Frege places on the logical functioning of concept- and object-words, according to which concept-words can only predicate and can never refer to objects. As Frege himself recognizes, such a usage is in fact necessary owing to the structure of language and indispensable in indicating logical distinctions. Here, ordinary language thus already, in a certain way, points beyond the domain of its constitutive strictures to provide the possibility of phenomenologically or ontologically indicating the basis of their logical force and application. In relation to this, the internal dynamics of specifically logical negation and logical contradiction with respect to the totality of reference here become significant, both as characterizing the problems to be solved and as, themselves, indicators of the broader ontological (and, as we shall see, ultimately temporal) situation.

Both Frege and Heidegger in 1929 thus move decisively beyond the topo-logical picture of negation characteristic of much of the tradition since Plato to indicate a logical or ontological structure of negation grounded in, and correlative to, the availability of a total realm of entities correlative to the total possibility of their structured sense (or disclosure). In both pictures, it is no longer the sense of negation to draw a determinate line, in any particular case, between two regions within a broader total space of contents or beings already given; rather, the sense of negation is to be understood only as correlative to and dependent on the availability of a position *outside* the totality of beings, from which the total structure of their sense can be determined and assessed. Of course, for neither philosopher can this "outside" be a simple exteriority. For the total basis of sense must also be seen as surveyable only from a position that is within the totality of beings itself. For Heidegger in 1929, this requirement yields the suggestion of a structural "transcendence" of Dasein, rooted in its irreducibly dual ontic-

ontological structure, through which it is able to attain an explicit grasp of the totality of beings from its own position within this totality. Although Frege, as we have seen, does not generally thematize the issue of the position from which the force and total application of logical principles is evident – generally speaking only of a mysterious relation of "grasping" with respect to thoughts which is itself, as we have seen, to be rigorously distinguished from any operation of assertoric, negative, or other force -- his conception of the realm of sense also requires the intelligibility of such a position for thought, which must be able to assay, at least in general outline, the total realm of sentential senses or thoughts, the totality of entities or referents, and the coordination between the two which is assured by the univocal application of the principle of noncontradiction.

Given this relationship of totality and sense which underlies the structure of logical negation in both cases, it is possible to investigate further the question of this position, from which thought must be able to assay the whole and comprehend the basis of its logical sense, while nevertheless taking place *within* the totality of beings itself. It is in terms of this question that we can see, at least in one of its aspects, the ontological significance of the most notorious problem which historically arose for, and vitiated, Frege's logicist project, the problem posed by the contradiction discovered by Russell in 1901. As is well known, Frege's attempt to ground arithmetic on logic and naïve set theory in the *Grundgesetze der Arithmetik* involved his formulation of five axioms or basic laws, the fifth of which – Basic Law V – required (when restricted to concepts) that two concepts, F and G, have the same extension just in case they apply to exactly the same objects. In the context of related assumptions also central to Frege's project – including the assumption that every function must be defined for *all* objects and the assumption of a *universal* comprehension principle, whereby every linguistically defined concept picks out an extension – this produces the antinomy of (in set-theoretical language) the set of all sets that are not self-membered; such a set is a member of itself if it is not, and is not if it is.

The paradox turns centrally on the combination of reflexivity (in that the Russell set is formulable only in terms of *self-membership*) totality (in that it involves the constitutive possibility of reference to a total set, or set of all sets), and negation (in the definition of the Russell set as the set containing all element that are *not* self-membered). Because of the way these ideas combine to produce contradiction in the paradox, theorists including Russell and Frege himself began to consider principles for constraining the scope of these ideas within set theory so as to rule out the formation of the Russell set and other totalities which threaten to produce paradox. One of the first of these was the "Vicious Circle" principle suggested by Russell in the 1908 article "Mathematical Logic as Based on a Theory of Types", which holds that no totality can contain elements which can be defined only in terms of that totality itself.[47] On the basis of the principle, Russell proposed a *theory of types* according to which sets can only be formed or defined at discrete types or levels, and each set must be composed of sets only at levels lower than itself. This ensures that no set is self-membered and that there is no total set, or set of all sets.

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[47] Russell (1908).

Along partially similar lines, the now-standard axiom system of Zermelo-Fraenkel set theory disallows self-membered sets and the total set by replacing Frege's assumption of universal comprehension with two axioms: one of "separation" or *limited* comprehension which requires that a set may be formed only by separating it out of another, already-formed one, and an axiom of foundation which rules out self-membered sets. More generally, as the subsequent development of thought about Russell's paradox and the related ones has witnessed, it can be blocked from arising within formal theories, either by restricting comprehension to *predicative* concepts – i.e. those that do not violate Russell's "Vicious Circle" principle – or disallowing the formation of "too large" sets (such as the set of all sets or that of all ordinals), or both. However, from the perspective of ordinary language or a neutral accounting for its sense, both types of devices are eminently questionable. For the logic of the concepts routinely expressed in ordinary language are not only massively impredicative – very often involving phenomena of self-reference or circular definition, or applying to objects which themselves presuppose or refer to them – but also, as we have seen, such as to involve a constitutive idea of totality, inherent in the functioning of quantification or generality and implicit in the operation of specifying any domain of meaning or reference to begin with.

How, then, should we see the actual semantic and ontological significance of Russell's paradox, viewing it not as a dangerous aporia to be avoided at all cost by the means of the introduction of regulative strictures in the course of the construction of technical theories, but as a positive and indicative structure in its own right? As we have seen, Frege's conception of negation requires the intelligibility of a total domain of thoughts or sentential senses, a total domain of referents whose properties and relations determine the truth and falsity of these senses, and a correspondence between the two such that no sense is simultaneously true and false and no object bears contradictory properties or relations. That there must be such a correspondence between these totalities does not mean, of course, that sentential senses individually must represent or double particular objects or configurations thereof – Frege has, as we have seen, rejected any such assumption on the basis of his more general anti-representationalism – but only that the properties and relations of objects must be co-determinable with the truth and falsity of sentential senses in such a way as never to produce a contradiction. But it is the assumption of such a non-contradictory correspondence between the two totalities that Russell's paradox and the related paradoxes most directly undermines. In particular, given the paradox, it is no longer possible to suppose that the coherent sentences whose truth or falsity must be intelligible – including eminently those involving "impredicative" terms such as "language," "truth," "sentence," or "proposition" and the reflexivity they exhibit – can always be determined as true *or* false on the basis of the referents they involve without producing the contradiction. This is because, as soon as the relevant concepts are considered as having determinate extensions at all, they cannot be insulated from the paradoxical effects of their impredicativity, and devices of prohibition or regimentation (such as type theories) do not resolve the problem but only prevent it from appearing.[48] Metalogically speaking,

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[48] Compare Beaney's illuminating statement of the general issue here: "But Frege's error, we might say, lay not in contextual definitions as such, but in the supposition that the extensions of concepts thereby defined were already members of the domain over which the concepts themselves were defined. For if the extensions so defined are taken to constitute a separate, high-level domain, then the contradiction will not arise (since the possibility of their falling under the concepts whose extensions they are is ruled out). But if extensions should be seen as a *different*

there is thus always an inherent structural *disharmony* of intension with extension: the general assumption of the coherence of impredicative concepts leads inherently to the excess by which, given the determinate extensions which this coherence implies, there is always already something that is both, inconsistently, both within and without them.[49] Seen this way, impredicative concepts bear witness, more generally, to the *inherently paradoxical* situation of thought in reference to a totality that must include itself insofar as thought (or language, or the formation of sentences, *etc.*) takes place within the world at all. This situation of paradox is then evident as the more original meta-logical (or structural) basis for the availability of the totality of senses and intelligible beings which Frege's picture of negation, as well as Heidegger's, presupposes.

The implication is relevant not only to the local question of what is shown by Russell's paradox itself but to the broader question of the ontological *meaning* of contradiction – and hence to the force of the law of non-contradiction which prohibits it in general – as well. To see this, it is helpful to note that Russell's paradox structurally provides the principle of an *origin of contradiction in the world* that owes nothing to any psychological or linguistic basis or source (for instance in the formation of two contradictory beliefs or the inscription of contradictory sentences). All that is necessary for the paradox to be generated is the assumption of a universe as a whole and a relationship of set membership, or conceptual instantiation, which is able to take itself up in its own scope. Given these elements, there will inevitably be real contradictions of the Russell type. It is not even necessary, here, to assume that concepts or senses themselves exist "as objects" (cf. the discussion in chapter 3, above): all that is necessary is what is assumed in Frege's basic law V, namely that concepts in general have determinate and actually existent *extensions*. Given this, the assumption of a structural basis for the existence of thought within the totality it thinks (quite apart from any actual activity of thinking, speaking, judging, etc.) is sufficient, by way of the Russellian structure, to produce the reality of contradiction in the world as such.

If viewed in terms of this deeper ontological indication, then, Russell's paradox is not simply one instance of contradiction, among others, to be avoided or prohibited along with the others by means of regulative or delimitative strictures. Rather, it provides a clue to the underlying ontological structure of contradiction itself, and hence to the basis of the force of its prohibition (as formulated in the law of non-contradiction) in general. The historical basis of this prohibition, as we have seen, is the topo-logical picture of negation and its inexplicit assumption of a pre-given totality of entities and contents, both complete and consistent in themselves, within which negation operates as a delimitative or partitive activity. But as soon as the real structure of the idea of totality which is there presupposed is rather recovered explicitly for ontological and meta-logical analysis (as it is both by Frege and

kind of object from those in the initial domain, then in what sense are they 'real' or objective? Frege naïvely assumed that there is such a thing as the domain of *all* objects, but if we allow that there are different kinds of objects, falling in different domains, some objects dependent on others, then where exactly are we to draw the boundaries and how is any hierarchy to be structured? These are the questions that Frege's work has bequeathed." (Beaney 1997, pp. 19-20).

[49] In fact, as has often been pointed out, this is already implicit in Cantor's theorem, which he proved using a variety of the general method known as "diagonalization:" the theorem, which establishes that for any set containing n elements there are 2^n subsets, is sufficient to establish the contradictoriness of any set of 'all' objects (which must therefore, contradictorily, have more elements than it does). (Cf. Beaney (1997), p. 20, and Grim ()).

Heidegger), the force of the law can only be seen as founded in the very structure of original paradox which it attempts to prohibit.

III

Both Heidegger in 1929 and Frege in his conception of negation, sense, and truth both thus indicate the way in which the functioning of logical negation presupposes the givenness of the totality of beings to meaningful thought. Nevertheless, as we have seen, Heidegger already goes further by specifying the position of this possible givenness ontologically as that of Dasein, which attains by virtue of its structural "transcendence" the possibility of an explicit relation to the nothing and thereby of making explicit the basis in itself for the disclosure of beings as a whole. That Heidegger in 1929 understands this disclosure as occurring on the basis of the "mood" or attunement of Angst should not convince us, as we have seen, that he here seeks to ground it in a psychological instance of feeling, or in any purely ontic phenomenon or "experience" in general. Rather, the specific positional site thereby indicated is ontologically clarified in terms of its structural relationship to the sense or meaning of beings as a whole, and thereby rooted in the ontological difference itself. Heidegger's picture in 1929, then, invokes Dasein as the being which is uniquely structured in such a way as to inhabit this site, and points to the phenomenon of Angst as a privileged indicative moment *within* Dasein's structure, as so situated, capable of pointing to this structural transcendence. But as the development of Heidegger's thought in the 1930s witnesses, it is not obviously sufficient to conceive Dasein, in this way, simply as the entity which occupies the "between" of being and beings, without first clarifying more deeply the topographical or ontological structure of this "between" itself.   In the 1930s, as we shall see, the radicalization that Heidegger undertakes of the question of the sense of being into the question of its "truth" leads him to deepen the ontological problematic, and the meaning of the ontological difference itself, in such a way that he finally thinks the basis for the given totality of beings not as the simple positive presence of Dasein, but instead as the ultimately ontological/structural determining "instance" that he terms *Ereignis*.

With this radicalization, there is no longer a single site for the unitary determination of the being of beings, but rather a temporally variable and discrete *series* of epochal determinations, recurrently produced in or by *Ereignis* itself.   The basis for these determinations is an original difference that can now not simply be specified as the (static) difference "between" being and beings but rather arises from Ereignis as the event of the "truth" of being, or the production of successive principles for the intelligibility of beings as a whole, while meanwhile being itself retreats progressively into obscurity under the cover of the ontic determination of these principles. The formal/ontological indication of this more original difference, as I shall argue here, thus articulates the site at which thought recurrently, and its original structure, poses the principles of its possible correspondence with beings, thereby also recurrently posing (without resolving) the problem of its own existence among the total field of beings thus outlined. Here, in other words, ontological difference converges with metalogical difference as the ultimate and ultimately paradoxical basis for the positive structure of sense, and the structure of

Ereignis as originary difference verifies the structural suggestion of inherent paradox and its dynamism already implicit in the set-theoretical and metalogical paradoxes of totality themselves. As Heidegger suggests, it thereby becomes the basis for a temporal and historical understanding of the meta-logical implications of negation and contradiction in relation to the sense of beings. This leads to the possibility of seeing the "negating" and the "not" of the historical progression of nihilism as positively grounded in the historical process of Being's withdrawal, and thereby to the ontologically and metalogically posed question of the implications of the development of this progression to its own final or completed point.

In the 1935 Freiburg lecture course *Introduction to Metaphysics*, Heidegger returns to the question posed at the very end of the 1929 "What is Metaphysics?", the question "Why are there beings at all, rather than nothing? [Warum ist überhaupt Seiendes und nicht vielmehr Nichts?" This question, which inherently brings into question the ground of "beings as a whole," and "as such," is here treated as the "fundamental question of metaphysics [metaphysiche Grundfrage]" and thereby as at "the center and core that determines all philosophy [die bestimmende Mitte und den Kern aller Philosophie]."[50] Nevertheless, Heidegger distinguishes it from a second, deeper question which he intends the course to pose, this time a question which is not about "beings" in the sense of "what is" [das Seiendes] or indeed about the nothing at all but rather "about Being as such [nach dem Sein als solchem]."[51]

Although even the questioning of *Being and* Time still suggested (though, Heidegger says, misleadingly) the first question, in particular with its talk of Dasein's structural transcendence, the second question has, he says, "a different essence and a different provenance" such that with respect to it the first, "metaphysical" question can only be, at best, an initial guideline.[52] In particular, if the question "Why are there beings at all rather than nothing?" is posed with respect to beings alone, one then seeks a highest or most basic ground *among beings* for their being: here we are "beginning directly with beings as unquestionably given [*fraglos vorgegeben*]" and are thereby already presupposing the basis that we are supposedly seeking.[53] Instead of posing the question with the accent on its first part, "Why are there beings at all?", Heidegger suggests, we should accordingly emphasize the second part, "...rather than nothing," and especially the "rather than" that links the question's two substantive moments. If we emphasize the "rather than" [...und nicht vielmehr...] in this way, instead of seeking a ground among beings for beings, we rather question "the ground for the decision for beings over against Nothing," or, "more precisely...the ground for the wavering of the beings that sustains us and unbinds us [das uns trägt und uns löst], half in being, half not in being [*halb seind, hald nichtseiend*]."[54] With this, our questioning about beings is thrown back, Heidegger suggests, to a still prior question presupposed in this and any question about why anything is, including any questioning of the being or selfhood of

[50] GA 40, p. 13.
[51] GA 40, p. 14.
[52] GA 40, p. 14.
[53] GA 40, p. 21.
[54] GA 40, p. 22.

Dasein (which, Heidegger says, is "*itself* by virtue of its essential *relation to* Being in general.")[55] This prior question is the question of "how it stands" with Being ["Wie steht es um das Sein?"] itself.[56]

In the *Beiträge zur Philosophie: vom Ereignis* composed between 1936 and 1938, Heidegger further specifies this radicalization of questioning as the development from the "guiding question" of the "being of beings" to the "grounding question" of the *truth* of being itself. Early in the *Beiträge*, Heidegger announces, in connection with a thinking from and toward the essential happening of being, or *Ereignis*, this new question of the "truth of beyng" [*Wahrheit des Seyns*] in contrast to the "previous question of philosophy," which has asked only about beings:

> The question of being [Die Seinsfrage] is the question of the truth of beyng. When grasped and worked out historically, it becomes the grounding question [*Grundfrage*], as opposed to the previous question of philosophy, the question about beings (the guiding question [Leitfrage]).[57]

This question of the "truth of beyng" is further understood as the question of an "openness for essential occurrence [*Wesung*] as such" (p. 60/76) and as the question of the ultimate ground for anything existent to be.[58] Thus thought as the ground of all possible appearance, this "essential swaying" of beyng [Wesung des Seyns selbst] is designated as *Ereignis* and a preliminary and transitional "thoughtful speaking" of, and from, it is attempted.[59] This attempt at thinking and speaking is, according to Heidegger, to be understood as a "directive" [Weisung] that indicates the "necessity" of the "sheltering of the truth of beyng within beings" [der Bergung der Wahrheit des Seyns in das Seiende] on the way to a possible "leap" from the previous question of beings to the new question of the truth of beyng in itself, without reference to beings.[60] Nevertheless, the task toward which it is directed remains, as in *Being and Time*, related to the specific question of the grounding of domains of beings, including that of beings as a whole. Here, for example, this task is specified as that of the "retrieval of beings out of the truth of beyng. [*Die Wiederbringung des Seienden aus der Wahrheit des Seyns*]."[61] In particular, this "task" is carried out by means of a distinctive questioning about "sense" [Sinn] as "the grounding of the projected domain"

> The question of 'sense,' i.e., according to the elucidations in *Being and Time*, the question of the grounding of the projected domain [des Entwurfsbereichs], or, in short, the question of the *truth of beyng*, is and remains *my* question and is my *unique* question, for at issue in it is indeed what is *most unique* [den sie gilt ja dem *Einzigsten*] …

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[55] GA 40, p. 22.
[56] GA 40, p. 25.
[57] GA 65, p. 6.
[58] GA 65, p. 76, p. 7.
[59] GA 65, p. 7.
[60] GA 65, p. 7 (transl. slightly modified).
[61] GA 65, p. 11.

The question of the 'sense of beyng' ["Sinn des Seyns"] is the question of all questions. In the development of its unfolding, the essence of what is here called "sense" determines itself, that within which the question as meditation [*Besinnung*] persists [sich hält], that which it opens up as a question: the openness for self-concealing, i.e. truth.[62]

The new "grounding" question of the truth of Beyng thus results from a historical and ontological deepening of the problematic of sense and truth already pursued in *Being and Time*. As we have seen, for Heidegger in *Being and Time*, sense is fundamentally Dasein's temporal projection of possibilities onto what are thereby constituted as intelligible entities; the possibility of this projection is itself closely related to that of disclosive truth in that both take place on the ground of Dasein's fundamental hermeneutical structure of interpretation, that of the "hermeneutic-existential" as. Here, Heidegger deepens the linked question of the basis of sense and truth into the question of the basis of projection itself, or of the kind of opening and concealing that is characteristic of Dasein as such. Dasein is itself, accordingly, no longer seen as a positive given phenomenon to be described or illuminated; rather, it is to be achieved or accomplished by way of a transformative *grounding* of Dasein itself in the truth of beyng. This is, in particular, to be achieved by way of a thoughtful meditation on this truth, which also has the significance of an "appropriation" of Dasein by, and into, Ereignis as beyng's event.

Despite the obvious differences in the tone of their metaphors, Frege's logical inquiry may be seen, along similar lines, as posing the question of the basis of sense by means of a radicalized inquiry into the structure of truth. Here, Frege's insistence, in "Negation," on the integrity and priority of the possibility of posing propositional *questions* prior to our knowing the truth of the propositions interrogated about should be seen as decisive, and as parallel to Heidegger's own privileging of questioning and the structure of the question in general as a structural basis for ontological inquiry. In particular, that it must be possible to pose questions in advance of performing any act of assertion, denial, or positive judgment means, for both philosophers, that sense must be able to be given in its original structure along with and in questioning itself. For this reason, it must precede and can possibly outstrip the sense of propositions, determined as univocally either true or false. In Frege's conception, this structure of the question as prior already points, as we have seen, to the structural basis of logical negation in the prior constitution of a total realm of thoughts. But the identification of this basis ultimately elicits, as we have seen, the constitutive structure of paradox and dissymmetry between thought and beings which is shown in Russell's paradox. To produce the paradox as a basic indication of the underlying structure of sense, it is in fact sufficient to insist upon the priority of the question that is developed by both Frege and Heidegger: in particular, it is sufficient to insist that questions about the totality of beings, or about truth, or about the basis of sense, *also* must have interrogative sense, even as they take themselves up within their own scope. With this, as we have seen, there is also indicated the specific structural basis of the sense of entities in general in the underlying structure of paradox whose prohibition has historically determined the topo-logical conception of the sense of beings as coherent and consistent in general. The indication thus provides a demonstrative basis on which this conception can be exposed as

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[62] GA 65, pp. 10-11 (transl. slightly modified).

incoherent, and thereby marks a specific limit of the regulative principle, formulated most directly as the law of non-contradiction, which has held it in force.

In the *Beiträge*, in developing the "grounding" question in contrast to the previous "guiding" question, Heidegger points toward a "leap" which prepares for an "other beginning", outside the ambit of the traditional interpretation of being in terms of beings which has determined its conception, according to Heidegger, from Plato to Nietzsche. Within this traditional determination, according to Heidegger, the question of being takes the form of a questioning of beings as beings (*on e on*) whose most general form is the question "what are beings? [was ist das Seiende?]" (*ti to on*) and whose answer is given by a determinate conception of the being of beings, for instance (in the most characteristic example) by Aristotle in determining the overarching categories of *ousia* or substance. In the scope of this traditional questioning, being, according to Heidegger, is always understood as "beingness", or as the most *general character* of beings as such.[63] Here (for Aristotle and the whole subsequent tradition up to Nietzsche), in particular, "being (as beingness) is always and only meant as the *koinon*, the common and thus what is common to every being."[64]

The traditional understanding of being as beingness, in other words, characteristically operates by looking to the specific characteristics of beings and locating them within a more general structure. This structure identifies their ultimate essence or most generally definitive characteristic as the basis for their unity within a *koinon* or "common" that ultimately encompasses all that is. The specific determination of this structure takes various historical forms, but in each case the overarching structure of logical and ontological characteristics is determined on the guideline of specific characteristics of beings in accordance with the "guiding" question about beings:

> For the guiding question, the *being* of beings, the determination of beingness (i.e. the providing of the "categories" for *ousia*) is the *answer*. The various realms of beings become important in various ways in later, post-Greek history. The number and the type of the categories as well as their "system" change, but the approach remains essentially the same, whether based immediately in *logos* as assertion or following determinate transformations in consciousness and in the absolute spirit. From the Greeks to Nietzsche, the *guiding question* determines the same mode of asking about "being" [dieselbe Weise der Frage nach dem "Sein"] The clearest and greatest example for this unity of the tradition is Hegel's *Logic*.[65]

By contrast, in the transition to the grounding question of the historical truth of beyng, what is sought is not the general character of beings but the deeper underlying conditions for the possibility of *any* appearance of beings whatsoever. Accordingly, for the grounding question as opposed to the guiding question, the "starting point" [Ansatz] is no longer "this or that being;" nor, indeed, is it "beings as such

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[63] GA 65, p. 75.

[64] GA 65, p. 75.

[65] GA 65, p. 76 (transl. slightly modified).

and as a whole."[66]   It is rather the possibility of a "leap" into truth as the "clearing and concealing" [Lichtung und Verbergung] of *beyng* itself.[67]   This questioning accordingly extends to the question of the underlying ground of *any* of the various historical *determinations* of what is seen, through shifting historical categorizations, *as* their total or general character, and of the more basic ground for *all* of these determinations in beyng itself. Thus, the kind of basic positionality recurrently involved in the traditional interpretation of the basic character of beings, which makes possible determinate conceptions of beings as a whole, is here subjected to a deeper historical questioning of the ground of *its* possibility. This historical questioning takes in the "entire history of the guiding question" [das Ganze der Leitfragengeschichte] on the ground of its more basic historical determination by beyng itself:

> The guiding question, unfolded in its structure, always allows the recognition of a *basic position* toward beings as such [eine Grundstellung zum Seienden als solchen], i.e., a position of the questioner (human being) on a ground which cannot as such be fathomed [nicht … er-gruündbar … ist] or known at all from out of the guiding question but which is brought into the open through the *grounding* question.[68]

In this way, the question of positionality that is implicit in the history of the guiding question and its determinate conceptions of the generality of beings, and implicitly answered in advance with each such conception, can only be unfolded explicitly with the leap to the deeper grounding question that asks after the underlying truth of beyng. The result of this unfolding is the historical *questioning* of the way being is determined as beingness in the context of each of these determinations of beingness as generality or *koinon*, and the correlative delimitation of the history of these determinations as a whole against the anticipation of the transition to the "other" beginning from *Ereignis*.

For this reason, the transition from the "guiding" to the "grounding" question itself implies a radicalization and partial overcoming of what was earlier thought as the "ontological difference" between being and beings. In particular, according to Heidegger, it is here necessary to understand the question of the being of beings as pointing toward the deeper, grounding question of the "truth of beyng" rather than as it has been understood within metaphysics, wherein it is answered in terms of beingness, generality and the *koinon*:

> In accord with the Platonic interpretation of beings as such as *eidos – idea* and of the *idea* as *koinon*, the being of beings overall [das Sein des Seiendenden überhaupt] becomes the *koinon*. To be the "most general" [Generellste] becomes *the* essential determination of being itself. The question of the *ti estin* ["what it is"] is always the *koinon*-question, and thereby is given for the entire thinking of beings as such the framework of the highest genus [oberster Gattung] (highest universality [höchster Allgemeinheit]) and *specification*. The main realms of *beings* are precisely sheer *specialia* of the universality [Allgemeinheit] of beings, i.e. of being. And in this way the

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[66] GA 65, pp. 75-76.
[67] GA 65, p. 76.
[68] GA 65, p. 77.

character of the guiding question is reflected in the distinction between *metaphysica generalis* and *metaphysica specialis.* Here, there is no longer any question about a possible coupling of *metaphysica generalis* and *metaphysica specialis*, since they are indeed coupled in the way just named, a way that is very external to beings and afortiori external to beyng [in der genannten, dem Seienden und erst recht dem Seyn sehr äuβerlichen Weise]. Utterly groundless pseudo-questions [Scheinfragen] arise here as long as the unrecognized basis of the guiding question and the distinction between the disciplines are from the start taken to be self-evident [*im Ansatz festgehalten warden*].

The confusion increases altogether if a solution to the question is sought with the help of the "ontological" difference developed in fundamental ontology. For this "*difference*" is indeed only a way of approach, not in the direction of the guiding question, [ist ja nur Ansatz nicht in Richtung auf die Leitfrage], but to the leap into the basic question [zum Sprung in die Grundfrage]. And it does so not in order to play vaguely with henceforth fixed terms (beings and being) but, rather, in order to go back to the question of the truth of the essential occurrence of beyng [der Wahrheit der Wesung des Seyns] and thus to grasp in a different way the relation between beyng and beings [den Bezug von Seyn und Seiendem], especially since also the interpretation of *beings* as such [das *Seiende* als solches]undergoes a transformed interpretation [eine verwandelte Auslegung … erfährt] (sheltering of the truth of the event) and no possibility any longer exists unexpectedly to smuggle "beings" [das Seiende] in as "represented objects," ["vorgestellten Gegenstand"] "things objectively present in themselves," ["Vorhandenes an sich"] or the like.[69]

For Heidegger in the *Beiträge*, the questioning attempted in *Being and Time* is itself at best "transitional," and can only prepare the way for a "grasping" of the "truth of beyng out of [its] *own* essence", namely, as Ereignis.[70] On the way to the posing of the more basic question of this truth, a thinking of the ontological difference is, according to Heidegger, both necessary *and* "disastrous" [verhängnisvoll].[71] In particular, because it itself arises from the inquiry into "beings as such" in their "beingness," it does not without further ado lead to the attainment of the question of beyng.[72] Indeed, Heidegger suggests, insofar as the ontological difference suggests an inquiry into the "unity" of its terms (being and beings), the question is quixotic and can never lead to the deeper position "from which it could be seen that the distinction no longer is primordial".[73] Foregoing this conception of unity, it is necessary instead, Heidegger suggests, to "leap over" the distinction and indeed over the "transcendence" that was earlier thought as the surpassing of beings by being in order to achieve the

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[69] GA 65, p. 207.
[70] GA 65, p. 250.
[71] GA 65, p. 250.
[72] GA 65, p. 250.
[73] GA 65, p. 250.

"creative grounding [Er-gründung] of the truth of beyng" which is the "leap into the event [*Ereignis*] of Da-sein".[74]

As we have seen (in chapter 1, above), in Plato's *Sophist* the debate between the materialists and friends of the forms over the mutual relationship between being and becoming, which forms the crux of the "gigantomachia" over being, is apparently resolved by the Eleatic visitor with his suggestion of the series of logical and structural *koinonia* that link the great types in the soul, in the articulate structure of the spoken *logos*, and in the overarching logical grammar that is seen as presiding over both. The specific problem of non-being, which is both logical and temporal, is resolved, in particular, by the suggestion of a phenomenalization of non-being in the person of the Sophist. This phenomenalization is itself made possible by the *koinon* or mixing of the great types, and in particular by the mixing of difference with being to produce non-being as differentiation from what is. On this conception, which itself prepares the way for Aristotle's conception of logical categorization as the structure of differentia of genus and species, the appearance of non-being, illusion, and falsehood is thus itself understood as a phenomenal *presencing* of non-being whose specific condition of possibility is the superior structure of the logical/ontological/psychological *koinon*. This then invites the question of the ground for the distinction between the true and the false *logos* by pointing to the structural correspondence or non-correspondence of *logoi* with the overarching structure of types and forms in their determinate possibilities of mixing or combination. The characteristic "ti estin" question of identity is thus answered in terms of the articulate structure of the logos and its correspondence to the superior grammar of types or forms. As we have seen, the solution depends ultimately on the necessary *a priori* existence of the types or forms with their determinate possibilities of mixing and combination, and it does not

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[74] GA 65, p. 251. In his doctoral dissertation (Thomson 1999), pp. 106-111, Iain Thomson draws on this passage to suggest that the ontological difference itself is ultimately split or overcome by Heidegger in identifying a substantially different structure , what he later sometimes calls simply "the difference" or "difference" rather than "ontological difference:" this structure is no longer that of the difference between entities and *their* being, but rather the difference of both from being (or beyng) thought in itself. On this picture, there is thus ultimately a three-fold distinction to be drawn: first, between i) beings and ii) their 'being' (as in Heidegger's earlier picture of ontological difference) in any given historical epoch, but also second, between both and iii) beyng itself as it determines the various epochs trans-historically.

However, without disputing the significance of the development that occurs when Heidegger recognizes in the early 1930s the possibility of a deepening of the inquiry into sense and truth to involve the consideration of beyng "in itself" and without primary relationship to beings – the deepening I have treated here, following Heidegger's suggestion, as that from the "guiding" question of the being of beings to the "grounding" question of the truth of beyng – I think there are many reasons to see the 'ultimate' difference at the heart of *Ereignis* as more a radicalization than an abandonment of ontological difference. One is that the problem of truth that it addresses is explicitly, according to Heidegger, to be understood as a *development* of the problem of sense as projection (see above) and not in terms of *its* abandonment. Another is that it appears to be ultimately implicit in the ontological difference *itself* – though Heidegger presumably did not recognize this prior to the 1930s – that any ultimate specification of it in terms of the opposition of "beings" or "what is" to what is nevertheless again relationally determined as "*their* being" must betray the real sense of the difference by reinscribing it as a difference between two positive terms (thus presupposing but leaving mysterious the "of" in "the being of beings" itself): the overcoming of this conception toward a radicalized one in which the difference is not specifiable is this way is thus at least *implicit* in the ontological difference (as originally specified) itself (which may be why Heidegger says here that in its original formulation it is not *only* "disastrous" but *also* "necessary"). I am indebted to Prof. Thomson for some discussion of the issue.

explain or account for this structure. Additionally, it fails ultimately to clarify, particularly in the case of non-being, the ultimate basis of the possibility of the requisite structural correspondence itself.

In the *Beiträge*, Heidegger further suggests that the determination of beings in terms of *identity* plays an early and essential historical role in the development of the relationship of thinking and being from the Pre-Socratics to the characteristic modern configuration of "lived experience" [Erlebnis] and "machination" [Machenschaft] or technology.[75] This determination is, according to Heidegger, simultaneous with a "collapse" of truth as *aletheia* into truth as "correctness" [Richtigkeit] which itself pre-determines the modern and contemporary interpretation of thinking as representation and truth as correspondence. This early development is marked, according to Heidegger, by the interpretation of *noein* as "*nous* of the *idein* of an *idea*" and "*koinon* and *logos* as *apophansis* ["assertion"] of the *kategoriai* ["categories"]."[76]   In this development, "thinking, as a faculty, falls prey to the 'psychological' –i.e. ontic – interpretation."[77] Here, the "relation already *prepared* by Plato between *psyche* and *aletheia (on)* as *zugon* [yoke]" becomes, as it does explicitly in Descartes, "the ever-sharper subject-object relation."[78] In this development, in particular, "Thinking becomes the I-think" and the unity of thinking and being becomes the unity of the unifying *function* of synthetic thought in the "transcendental unity of apperception" (as in Kant) or in the absolute self-identity of the self-positing "I" (as in Fichte).[79] In this way, "identity becomes the essential determination of beings as such."[80]

A particularly decisive early moment in this development, according to Heidegger, is Plato's determination of the *idea* on the basis of a mimetic or representational relationship between it and sensible particulars. Here, the *idea* is originally thought as the *look* of something in which it comes to presence and which supplies its constancy in presencing. This look is then understood as a "unifying One," as being itself (on) is thought as unifying, and "as a consequence" the idea is now interpreted as *koinon* and being itself as the "most general."[81]   The *idea* is now thought, with respect to individual beings, as having a *koinon* character, that of gathering them into unity, and accordingly as what best "satisfies the essence of beingness" and is therefore qualified, over against the many sensible entities, as the "ontos on" or "what is most eminently" [das Seiendste].[82] With this, whatever is individual or changeable is thought as *me on* or non-being, in that it does not fully satisfy this standard set by the pre-eminent being of the ideas.[83] This determination of beingness as *koinon* also has the implication that the many ideas themselves "can be only in the manner of the koinon", that is, in a *koinonia* among themselves.[84] This leads to the determination of the *gene* as supreme or highest unities, self-unifying

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[75] Cf. Livingston (2003).

[76] GA 65, p. 198.
[77] GA 65, p. 198.
[78] GA 65, p. 198.
[79] GA 65, pp 197-98.
[80] GA 65, p. 199.
[81] GA 65, p. 209.
[82] GA 65, p. 209.
[83] GA 65, p. 209
[84] GA 65, p. 209.

[sich einigende] and thereby generative [Her-künfte], which will later yield the Aristotelian system of categories.[8586]

In this determination of the idea as the *koinon,* according to Heidegger, we can also see the condition by which the *khorismos* or gap between thinking and being becomes "a sort of being"; here is to be found the origin of "'transcendence' in its various forms" as well as the specific sense of the representation of

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[85] GA 65, p. 209.

[86] A number of recent commentators (see, e.g., Figal (2000), Gonzalez (2009), and Ralkowski (2009)) have considered the implications of the apparent difference in Heidegger's tone and attitude toward Plato between his treatment in the *Sophist* lectures of 1924-25 – which is very often sympathetic to Plato and presents his methodology as in many ways congruent to Heidegger's own – and his apparently much less sympathetic treatment in such later texts as "The Essence of Truth" (GA 34, 1931) and "Plato's Doctrine of Truth" (GA 9, 1931-32), where the cave allegory of the *Republic* is rather treated as the fundamental moment of the decline of truth as *aletheia* into *homiosis* or correctness. As commentators have noted, a significant question to raise here is that of the basis of Heidegger's own generally negative attitude toward dialectic (which may underlie his describing the Platonic dialectic, in *Being and Time*, as a "genuine philosophical embarrassment" (GA 2, p. 25) and seeing Aristotle's abandonment of it as fundamental philosophical progress (see also Gonzalez (2002)). It may be suggested here, in particular, that there are grounds for a partial or substantial *rapprochement* to be found between Plato and Heidegger by emphasizing the *actual* methodological commitments underlying Heidegger's questioning about being, early and late, and Plato's dialectic, provided only that the overdetermining force of Heidegger's assumption that Plato *always and only* interpreted being as presence is modified or constrained on the basis of Plato's actual texts. (Thus, e.g., Figal (2000, p. 108) argues that by interpreting the sense of *dunamis* in the *Sophist* as meaning only presence, Heidegger "already … distances himself" from Platonic dialectic and that the reason for this distancing may ultimately be "that he is so committed to the notion that 'being', for the Greeks, means the same as 'presence'… that he always returns to it, even when his hermeneutical ingenium should know better." Along partially similar lines, Gonzalez (2009, pp. 105-106) sees in Heidegger's later treatment of Plato an avoidance of the essential dialogical and mythical elements which might have, if brought out, provided a counter-narrative to that of the "metaphysical" identification of being with presence and the fall of truth into correctness which Heidegger identifies here.

On the basis of the present reading, it is certainly not to be denied that there are many elements in Plato's dialogues which contain the germs or even the actual suggestion of an overcoming of the Platonic "metaphysics of presence" which might be seen as embodied in the "official" theory of ideas (most completely in its middle-period form). In particular, later dialogues such as the *Sophist*, the *Philebus* and (massively) the *Parmenides* point again and again to the irreducible inherence of unresolved paradoxes and aporeatic structures at the very heart of this (middle-period) theory, and we will develop some of the important implications of this for the contemporary *closure* and possible overcoming of the "metaphysics of presence" in part II of this work. On the other hand, though, it is important to note in the present context that finding these resources in the Platonic text, over against some of Heidegger's suggestions about the "metaphysical" character of *Platonism* (if not always of Plato himself), does not require that we see Heidegger as simply missing the real implications of Plato's dialectical or dramatic method, or of regressing in his Plato interpretation from the period of the *Sophist* lectures to the 1930s and 1940s. Instead, what is to be seen as decisive here, indeed for Plato as well as for Heidegger, is just the way in which the intrinsic problems of an interpretation of the force of *logic* and *logical* thought communicate with those of an *ontological* inquiry into the meaning of being and presence: thus Heidegger's interpretation of the *Sophist* already in 1924-25 can elicit these problems as limitations of the Visitor's official theory (whether or not it is actually to be identified with Plato's own views), while his later suggestion that the conception of the *idea* that comes to the fore in the Cave allegory marks an important development in the history of the interpretation of being as presence can itself be retained. It should be kept open, as well, whether there are or may be methodological virtues of Plato's dialectic, with respect to the posing and development of these problems, that Heidegger partially or completely misses (we will return to this question in chapter 7, below).

the *a priori*.[87] Subsequently, transcendence is understood in an "ontic" sense as the surpassing of one being over all others (as in Christianity), in an "ontological" sense whereby it refers to the surpassing that "resides in the *koinon* as such," namely in a system of categories "beyond" and "prior to" beings, or, finally, in the sense of the fundamental ontology of *Being and Time*, where it is understood as Da-sein's structural surpassing of itself on the basis of its prior understanding of being.[88] Through the conception there developed of understanding as "thrown projection", Heidegger says, transcendence as it is treated in *Being and Time* already indicates a standing of Dasein "in the truth of beyng" [im Offenen des Seienden]. Nevertheless, even that conception is here to be overcome, along with every sense of transcendence, in favor of a deeper consideration of the ultimate basis for projection itself in Da-sein's "enduring" of the "open realm of concealment." [das Offene der Verbergung].[89]

The history of the interpretation of being as presence which Heidegger describes as the history of the determination of being as beingness (and hence in terms of beings) is, by contrast, one in which beyng itself increasingly withdraws, obscures itself, or abandons beings. This abandonment [Verlassenheit] is nevertheless not, according to Heidegger, simply an indifferent occurrence with respect to beyng but rather determines its history in the sense of "Geschichte," what is elsewhere designated in Heidegger's *corpus* as the "history of being" itself.[90] In this progressive withdrawal, *alethethia* is understood as correctness and finally as universal representability, and thinking more and more takes on the character of uniform representation and availability for a total regime of "lived experience." This regime stands over against "machination" or the technological manipulation of beings as paired and mutually supplementary expressions of the contemporary understanding of the basic character of being.[91] In close connection with the contemporary dominance of a reign of "calculative thinking", "machination" is here specified, more basically, as the interpretation of all beings as "representable and represented" and as such "on the one hand, accessible in opinion and calculation [in Meinen und Rechnen], and, on the other hand, providable in production and implementation [vorbringbar in der Her-stellung und Durchführung]."[92] It correlates with, on the side of the experiencing subject, the comprehensiveness of a regime of "lived experience" understood as a "basic form of representation" which "promotes and entrenches" a humanist or "anthropological" way of thinking rooted in the conception of the human being as *animal rationale* and intimately connected to the dominance of the categories of "culture" and "worldview" as prevailing ways of thinking and representing beings.[93]

 In this way of thinking, all that counts as "being" [als "seiend"] is "what is or can be the object of a lived experience" [das Er-lebte und Er-lebbare] in being able to be brought before one in representation.[94] To

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[87] GA 65, pp. 216-17.
[88] GA 65, pp. 216-17.
[89] GA 65, p. 217.
[90] "What sort of happening, and of which history [Geschehnis welcher Geschichte] is this *abandonment*? Is there a history of beyng? And how seldom and how little does this history come to light in a veiled way [kommt sie verhüllt ans Licht?]" (GA 65, p. 116).
[91] GA 65, pp. 108-109.
[92] GA 65, pp. 108-109.
[93] GA 65, p. 129, p. 131; cf pp. 98-99.
[94] GA 65, p. 129.

this conception of being as what is representable corresponds the apparently *unlimited* representability of beings in machination; here, there is no limit to what can be given for representation, since there is "*nothing* that is, or could be, given" to representation "*as a limit*."[95] Instead, "everything is humanly possible [menschen-möglich], as long as everything is calculated [*in Rechnung gestellt*] in every respect and in advance and the conditions are provided."[96] This unlimited calculability means that "the incalculable is merely that which has not yet been mastered in calculation [das in der Berechnung noch nicht Bewältige] but is in itself also to be captured some day [an sich aber einst auch Einzufangende];" there is, accordingly "in no way …anything *outside all calculation* [also keineswegs das Auβerhalb jeder Rechnung]."[97] And because of the certainty about beings which this in-principle calculability of everything provides, "the question of the essence of truth" is itself "no longer needed".[98] Accordingly, "there is no problem that is not solvable, and the solution is merely a matter of number applied to time, space and force."[99] (p. 98)

This universal calculability is, according to Heidegger, an indicative aspect of the "abandonment by being" [Seinsverlassenheit] which is the "ground" and "more original" essential determination of what is grasped (though dimly) by Nietzsche as the world-historical process of nihilism.[100] What Nietzsche grasps under the heading of "nihilism" is now rejected and warded off, with increasing desperation, by the unlimited elevation of what were at first only means to goals into goals in themselves; for instance, the elevation of a *people*, their "cultural assets", and all "cultural politics" here become elevated to absolute ends.[101] This elevation, however, is itself "the most insidious form of nihilism and therefore its highest form."[102] Here, nihilisms of different forms battle with each other, as, for instance, Heidegger says, in the battle between the nihilism of Christianity and the "crude nihilism" of Bolshevism.[103] Nevertheless, the "abandonment by being" which the growth of nihilism, in all of its forms, at last expresses is itself the determining basis of a "unique era [einzigartiges Zeitalter] in the history of the truth of beyng."[104] In this era, "of long duration," "truth hesitates to put its essence into clarity" and "what is" [das Seiende], named as "the actual," [das "Wirkliche"] "life," or "values," is accordingly "disappropriated of beyng [des Seyns enteignet]."[105] The process culminates with Nietzsche's way of understanding truth; in it "truth deteriorates into a necessary illusion" and the "unavoidable stabilization introduced into beings themselves [das Seiende selbst]," determined as the will to power.[106] But although, in this culmination and end, the Western metaphysics of presence is "furthest from the question of the *truth* of beyng" it is, Heidegger says, nevertheless "closest" to it in that "it has

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[95] GA 65, p. 136.
[96] GA 65, p. 136.
[97] GA 65, p. 121 (transl. slightly modified).
[98] GA 65, p. 120.
[99] GA 65, p. 125.
[100] GA 65, p. 119
[101] GA 65, pp. 138-140.
[102] GA 65, p. 140.
[103] GA 65, pp. 139-140.
[104] GA 65, p. 120.
[105] GA 65, p. 120.
[106] GA 65, pp. 200-201.

prepared the transition to this question as [its] end."[107] In this final configuration, machination itself ultimately "withdraws" and tends to hide itself behind determinations such as "actuality," ["wirklichkeit"] objectivity and constancy.[108] Both this withdrawal and the actual dominance of machination that it obscures are, however, aspects of the ongoing withdrawal of beyng itself, and in bringing this withdrawal to completion, the linked configuration of machination and lived experience ultimately provide the condition under which it can finally reverse itself. Indeed, in its own withdrawal, the dominance of machination *is* the "essential occurrence of beyng [die Wesung des Seyns]".[109] In this sense, "Machination as the essential occurrence of beingness [als Wesung der Seiendheit] provides a first intimation of the truth of beyng itself [gibt einen ersten Wink in die Wahrheit des Seyns selbst]".[110]

IV

As we have seen, both Frege's and Heidegger's treatments of negation ultimate suggest fundamental grounds for the critique and overcoming of the topological picture, according to which negation amounts to an operation of bounding within an already determined space of phenomena or contents. For both provide grounds for the suggestion that this picture, if developed in terms of its ultimate logical and ontological presuppositions about the availability to thought of "beings as a whole and as such," must cede to a more basic and prior phenomenon of difference. In particular, both the radical paradox that Russell discovered in Frege's system and the ontological difference itself point to a necessary dissymmetry between what determines the totality of beings and that totality itself. Both thus point at once to the structural or ontological level on which the correspondence of possible sense with objects and states of affairs is ultimately maintained *and* to the structural necessity of an essential *non-correspondence,* there, between them. The claim here is not that the two kinds of difference (paradoxical or diagonal difference, on one hand, and ontological difference, on the other) are just the "same," but only that they mutually illuminate one another on the level of a reflective consideration, at once both "meta-logical" and "ontological," of what ultimately determines the total structure of sense and its comprehensive relationship to beings as a whole.   Grasping both kinds of difference, not as simply negative or limitative structures but actually as positive phenomena, in particular, allows us to see the actual foreclosed or suppressed basis of the topological picture which is already proposed by Plato's Eleatic Visitor in the *Sophist* and thereby to elicit the metalogical/ontological determinants of the "logical tradition" that arises from it.   This tradition subsequently takes more determinate shape in Aristotle, yielding his picture of syllogistic form, generic and specific difference, and (above all) the force of the law of noncontradiction as an ultimate and maximally basic principle of thought. The elicitation of paradoxical and ontological difference as the more basic and prior foundations for this picture then provides the basis for a critique of the force of this principle as it has been presupposed and historically maintained.

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[107] GA 65, p. 201 (transl. slightly modified).
[108] GA 65, p. 127.
[109] GA 65, p. 128.
[110] GA 65, p. 127.

The result of this critique, as we have seen, is not and cannot be to "overturn" or replace the either the legitimacy of rational thinking or the force of the law of noncontradiction (as governing it) itself. It is just to discover the deeper basis for this force in the underlying determination of the relationship of thought to being from which it arises. In the radicalized form in which Heidegger develops the ontological difference in the *Beiträge,* this relationship, in one of its forms, gains the significance of a *historical* trajectory, determined by and as the historical withdrawal of beyng along the trace of 'its' difference. This trajectory culminates in the contemporary correlation of unlimited machination – thought as the unlimited possibility of calculation – and the anthropological or humanist criterion of experienceability in lived experience. But this correlation itself simply develops the final consequences of the picture of correspondence between thought and being that is already suggested by Plato in conceiving of the *ideas*, in the form of the *koinon*, as the ultimate and pre-eminent beings and of their relationship to sensible particulars as one of identity or correspondence. As Heidegger often suggests and as we will confirm in part II of this work, the basis of the possibility of *counting* beings here bears a basic and illuminating significance for what ultimately determines the trajectory of beyng's history in its withdrawal. But as we have also seen, this significance can be understood *not only* from a being-historical position but also from a metalogical one, in which logic itself confronts and provides terms for understanding the basis of its own force, evincing an ultimate ground of the force of coherent reasoning in limit-contradiction and of the effectively decidable in the underlying undecidability of being.

What remains to be asked, though, is just the question of the *temporality* of this regulative basis itself. How is the effectiveness of logic in regulating thinking supported by or actually constituted on a temporal basis that is not that of eternal presence but rather rooted in the more complex (arche)-temporal structure of disclosure and truth?   As we shall see in more detail in part II, the interrogation of the being-historical basis for the contemporary configuration of the dominance of calculability and machination thus ultimately involves, in reading the history of this basis in the specific metalogical features of the metaphysical tradition back to Plato, uncovering the deep problematic of becoming-unlimited as it underlies the being of number. This also necessarily involves, as we shall see, considering in a basic way the structure of the unlimited and the infinite itself, as it is shown or evinced by using contemporary metalogical and formal methods, and also as it still appears as a kind of suppressed but dangerous remainder in Plato's texts, prior to its subsequent domestication in Aristotle's conception of potentiality. This domestication is itself strictly correspondent, in Aristotle, to the first definition of "logic" in terms of the syllogistic forms; but it forecloses a more original significance of the relationship of the *logos* and the form as idea, which is thought by Plato in terms of the capacity of the logos, before or beyond representation, to capture the real of "what is", of being in itself. The analytic up to this point has attempted to show how the nature and force of logic, as it thought from Plato to Frege, constitutively includes and structurally evinces a basic ontological problematic of truth with respect to which it operates both as putative solution and regulative delimitation. But is it possible to bring into view, on this basis, the more original relation of *logic* to *time*?