

The Logic of Being: Plato, Heidegger, Frege

(Chapter 1 of Draft MS: *The Logic of Being: Heidegger, Truth, and Time*)

In a passage in his late dialogue, *Sophist*, Plato articulates clearly the interlinked problematic of logic, truth, and time in which, as I shall argue, a continuation of the Heideggerian questioning of being and the legacy of the twentieth-century “analytic” philosophy of language today converge. The passage comes in the course of the Eleatic Visitor’s account of the views of his predecessors, amounting to what he calls a “battle of gods and giants” over the nature of being.¹ The battle is between those (the “giants”) who seek to “drag everything down to earth” and define being entirely “as the same as body” and those others (the “gods”) who “insist violently that true being is certain nonbodily forms that can be thought about.”² By contrast with this first group, who despise and refuse to listen to those who claim the existence of anything non-corporeal, the second group “takes the bodies of the other[s], and also what they call the truth, and they break them up verbally into little bits and call them a process of generation instead of being...”³ But even those who hold the materialist position, the Visitor argues, must accept the existence of mortal animals. To do so is to accept the existence of ensouled bodies, and thus to count the soul or *psuche* among what is.⁴ But as these “rough men” must also admit, souls differ in being just or unjust, intelligent or unintelligent. They must also admit that souls *become* just, or intelligent by the “having and presence” [*hexei kai parousia*] of justice or intelligence; and so it is necessary for even the materialists, if they are to admit souls at all, to admit the possibility of this possession and co-presence within them.

Thus even if the materialist continues to maintain that all that exists is to be understood in terms of its ability to affect bodies, he must be prepared to give a further account of this ability, capacity, or power itself. This account will point, ultimately, to what even those who recognize nothing other than becoming in being must nevertheless identify as the most basic underlying characteristic of whatever is:

Visitor: Then let’s go back to questioning [the materialists]. It’s enough if they admit that even a small part of *that which is* doesn’t have a body. They need to say something about what’s common to [*sumphues gegonos*] both it and the things that do have body, which they focus on when they say that they both *are*. Maybe that will raise some confusion for them. If it does, then think about whether they’d be willing to accept our suggestion that *that which is* [*to on*] is something like the following.

Theaetetus: Like what? Tell me and maybe we’ll know.

Visitor: I’m saying that a thing really is if it has any capacity [*dunamis*] at all, either by nature to do something to something else or to have even the smallest thing done to it by even the most

¹ Plato (1997), 246a.

² 245a-b.

³ 246c.

⁴ 246e.

trivial thing, even if it only happens once. I'll take it as a definition that *those which are [ta onta]* amount to nothing other than *capacity [dunamis]*.⁵

The position, which looks ahead, in one way, to Aristotle and, in another, to Nietzsche, identifies capacity, potentiality, possibility, or power as the underlying characteristic of all that actually is or exists. Such a position is, the Visitor suggests, obligatory for the materialists because of their own claim that all that exists is constantly becoming; in particular, once a partisan of the position admits the existence of living souls and *their* possibility of temporal becoming, it is necessary to admit the general existence of possibility or *dunamis* itself.

The discussion now turns to the interpretation of the contrasting position of the "friends of the forms," those who sharply distinguish generation (or coming-to-be) from being, holding that we "interact with" (*koinonein*) the former through the body and senses, but with the latter only through the *psuche* and logical reasoning (*logismon*).⁶ Both kinds of access, however, whether through the body or through the soul and logos, obviously involve a "dealing with" or having in common (*koinonein*) which must be clarified. As for the materialists, the solution of this difficulty for the "friend of forms," turns on the *actual life of the soul, or psuche*, capable of touching in thought and knowledge on the real of being in itself. In particular, the Visitor suggests, one possible position for the friend of the forms is the one just sketched from the position of the materialists: that the possibility of any such trafficking or dealing is based in the power or capacity of two things to come together and affect or be affected by one another (248c). On this position, the commerce of the soul with both generation and being is again rooted in *dunamis*: power, capacity, or possibility. As the Visitor notes, however, the friend of the forms will not initially agree with this definition. For separating being from generation as they do, they will hold that *only* generation (or coming-to-be) involves such a power of body and matter to affect or be affected; being, on the other hand, does not "fit" (*harmottein*) with it:

Visitor: In reply they [the 'friends of forms'] say that coming-to-be [*genesei*] has the capacity to do something or have something done to it [*men metesti tou paschein kai poiein dunameos*], but that this capacity doesn't fit with being.

Theaetetus: Is there anything to that?

Visitor: We have to reply that we need them to tell us more clearly whether they agree that the soul knows and also that *being [ousian]* is known.⁷

While admitting this last claim – that being is in some way known – the friend of the forms nevertheless still resists the suggestion that this knowing involves doing something, or something's being done to something. For neither can apply, on the view, to being itself, characterized as it is as changeless and immobile.

⁵ 247c-e.

⁶ 248e.

⁷ 248c-d.

It is here, though, that the Visitor invokes a consideration that will prove decisive in establishing the actual possibility of a *coexistence* of change and motion with being in itself, that of the actual basis of the understanding of being in the temporal *life* of the being that thinks:

Visitor: But for heaven's sake, are we going to be convinced that it's true that change, life, soul, and intelligence are not present (*me pareinai*) in absolute being (*to pantelos*), and that it neither lives nor thinks, but stays changeless, solemn, and holy, without any understanding?

Theaetetus: If we did, sir, we'd be admitting something frightening.

Visitor: But are we going to say it has understanding but doesn't have life?

Theaetetus: Of course not.

Visitor: But are we saying that it has both those things in it while denying that it has them in its soul?

Theaetetus: How else would it have them?

Visitor: And are we saying that it has intelligence, life, and soul, but that it's at rest and completely changeless even though it's alive?

Theaetetus: All that seems completely unreasonable.

Visitor: Then both *that which changes* and also *change* have to be admitted as being.

Theaetetus: Of course.⁸

Whether or not one can recognize in the position of the "friend of forms" the actual position of Plato himself, or perhaps some earlier version of it, it is clear that what is at issue in the Visitor's challenge is the deep temporal problem of what Plato elsewhere calls *methexis* or participation, the relationship between the always-changing objects of the senses and their timeless and unchanging but thinkable forms. Through the Visitor's argument, the friend of forms is forced to admit that there is some real relationship between the temporal realm of becoming and the static realm of thinkable beings in themselves, and that change and becoming must accordingly *also* be admitted as part of what ultimately is. The consideration that most directly demands this admission is that the living, dynamic soul nevertheless has the capacity to *know* or understand being itself. The problem of this capacity is thus the problem of the *temporal structure* of the *thought of being* as such, or of the possibility, capacity or potentiality by which a being irreducibly situated in time nevertheless grasps the timelessness of what is (on this position) most ultimately real.

On *both* of the opposed views, according to the Visitor, it is thus necessary to admit the privileged existence of a living *psyche* capable of thinking or knowing being as it is in itself. This *psyche* is, moreover, conceived by both the materialist and the formalist as the privileged nexus of a definitive

⁸ 248e-249b.

possibility of a *combination* or *mixing in co-presence* which ultimately demands, on either view, the admission of a real relationship of co-existence and interaction between the changeable and moving and being as it is in itself.

From the perspective of the Visitor (if not necessarily from that of Plato himself), the suggestion that being and becoming combine in the privileged medium of the soul thus represents at least the beginning of a *maximally general* account of the relationship obscurely indicated by Parmenides himself in the remark that “thinking and being are the same”.⁹ In the context of the dialogue, this suggestion will provide, as well, the basis for resolving the formidable Parmenidean problem of the possibility of saying “what is not”. In particular, given the avowed possibility of a mixing or combination between the great types of being, rest and change, it becomes possible for the Visitor as well to argue that one must acknowledge the sameness and difference of these.¹⁰ It is then possible to consider that difference can mix with all of the other great types, and in particular that a mixing of difference with being produces “something different from” it.¹¹ This allows, finally, the actual essence or form of “that which is not” (the *me on*) to appear, and allows it finally to be said that it blends with speech or the logos in the deceptive discourse of the sophist.¹²

The actual form and structure of the potential combination of types in the soul which solves the problem of the relation of being and becoming is, at this point, left obscure. But as the dialogue moves toward its conclusion, the Visitor develops the suggestion of a superior *logical-syntactical grammar* of essential types figured (in a more than simply metaphorical sense) by the actual relations between phonemic or lexical elements characteristic of language.¹³ The suggestion is closely related to the methodology of “collection and division”, or *synthesis* and *diaeresis*, suggested by Plato in a number of late dialogues. Here, it depends also on the recognition, common to the materialist and the friend of forms, of an essential capacity for synthesis or combination rooted in the nature of the soul. In particular, given this possibility of combination in the soul, the Visitor can now argue that such opposite types as *change* and *rest*, even if they cannot associate with one another, must themselves have some capacity for association (*dunata epikoinonein*) with other general types, including particularly *being* itself.¹⁴ All of those who discuss being and becoming, the Visitor argues, are forced in their very statements to “use *being* about everything, and also *separate, from others, of itself*, and a million other things.”¹⁵ Even those who hold that everything is in motion, in using the signifier “is”, thus admit some possibility of the mixing of being and becoming. In this way, they incessantly “link together... in speech” the various types and attributes determinative of objects and phenomena, and so concretely exhibit the actual mixing and combination of these types.

⁹ “*to gar auto noein estin te kai einai*” (Diels and Kranz, Fr. 3; quoted in Clement, *Stromateis*, VI, 23 and Plotinus, V, I, 8); both the translation and the textual provenance of the remark are controversial. See Kirk, Raven, and Schofield (1983), p. 246.

¹⁰ 254e.

¹¹ 257b.

¹² 260c.

¹³ Compare Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* (Wittgenstein 1953) §371: “Essence is expressed in grammar.”

¹⁴ 251d – 252d.

¹⁵ 252c.

Since it is untenable to suppose either that all of the types or elements mix with one another or that none do, it is necessary to recognize the existence of a broader structural determination of the actual possibilities of mixing, and of a specific type of art, or expertise, capable of discerning these possibilities and relationships:

Visitor: Since some will blend and some won't, they'll be a good deal like letters of the alphabet. Some of them fit together with each other and some don't.

Theaetetus: Of course.

Visitor: More than the other letters the vowels run through all of them like a bond, linking them together, so that without a vowel no one of the others can fit with another.

Theaetetus: Definitely.

Visitor: So does everyone know which kinds of letters can associate with which, or does it take an expert?

Theaetetus: It takes an expert.

Visitor: What kind?

Theaetetus: An expert in grammar.¹⁶

As is the case, similarly, with the capacity to combine high and low notes to produce pleasing harmonies, the *techne* (or expertise) of grammar requires a specific kind of knowledge (*episteme*) of the capacity of some kinds to blend and others to refuse such combination. This is a knowledge, according to the Visitor, proceeding through *logos* and allowing the possibility of recognizing those types or elements that run through everything else. It involves a singular knowledge of the number and relationships of the forms; such knowledge, the Visitor suggests, may in fact be that characteristic of the philosopher, the knowledge that "free people have."¹⁷ According to the Visitor, it is in fact none other than the science (*episteme*) of dialectic:

Visitor: Aren't we going to say that it takes expertise in dialectic to divide things by kinds and not to think that the same form is a different one or that a different form is the same?

Theaetetus: Yes.

Visitor: So if a person can do that, he'll be capable of adequately discriminating a single form spread out all through a lot of other things, each of which stands separate from the others. In addition he can discriminate forms that are different from each other but are included within a single form that's outside them, or a single form that's connected as a unit throughout many

¹⁶ 253a.

¹⁷ 253c.

wholes, or many forms that are completely separate from others. That's what it is to know how to discriminate by kinds how things can associate and how they can't.¹⁸

Through his special technical understanding of the possibilities for the mixing and separation of forms, the dialectician is thus able to see clearly, using reasoning [*logismon*], in particular, to "stay near the form, being." Here, the philosopher is difficult to discern, according to the Visitor, because of its intrinsic brightness of this place [*khora*].¹⁹ Nevertheless, the Visitor here suggests that this particular *techné* of discerning the combination and separation of forms is the proper art of the philosopher as opposed to the sophist and that, with respect in particular to the "great types" or genres, reasoning about their structure of possible combination and difference will amount to reasoning fully about them, at least as far as the particular method thereby suggested will allow.

The dialectical method, as the Visitor then develops it, bears a specific relation to the possibility of a *counting* of the most general types of being, as well as of being and non-being themselves in relation to what they characterize. In particular, a brief elucidation of the structure of mixing and separation among the "most important" types leads the Visitor to identify the five great types of *being, rest, motion, identity* and *difference*. Difference, in particular, "permeates them all" in allowing each to distinguish itself from the others. Motion, in particular, is "other than being" in that it is different from being; with respect to motion, thus, "non-being is," although as has been shown, motion also takes part or participates in being.²⁰ In fact, this consideration holds generally; in "each of the types" difference is operative to make them "other than being, and therefore non-being." This allows the Visitor to specify the duality of being and non-being, with respect to what each characterizes, as the problematic relation between a *multiplicity* and an *infinitude*: "And so, in relation to each of the [ideas], being is many, and not-being is infinite in number."²¹ Thus the realm of the possible application of the dialectician's art, that of counting the types of being by discerning the ideas, is here set off against the indefiniteness or *apeiron* character of non-being. It is in this infinitude of non-being that the synthetic/diaeretic technique of the dialectic reaches the specific limit of its capacity to discern forms.

The twofold relationship thereby asserted between the relational structure of the forms, as available to the philosopher possessing the grammatical *techné* of dialectic, and the underlying structure at the root of the coherence of ordinary discourse significantly inaugurates the project of a *logical analysis of language* capable of seeing in the characteristic structures of ordinary speech the implicit or presupposed structure of the ultimate types definitive of the thought and knowledge of being in itself. Though chronologically preceding what is usually recognized as the first development of "formal logic" in Aristotle's syllogisms, this twofold conception points to a more original conception of what can already be called *logical form*. In this more original Platonic conception, what is at issue is not an abstractable structure of argument that can be filled by various contingent materials, but the original connection that Plato sees between the discursive *logos* as such and the philosopher or dialectician's

¹⁸ 253c-d.

¹⁹ 254a.

²⁰ 256d.

²¹ 256e.

knowledge of the possible combination and separation of the ideas.²² This conception, as it is developed by the Visitor's argument in the *Sophist*, points to an original solution to the problem of the relationship already invoked by Socrates in his search for an account or definition for each of the various properties or ideas into which he inquires: the problem, in other words, of the relationship between the definitional *logos* and the *eidos* it picks out. As we have seen, in insisting upon a real basis of the *logos* in the life and temporality of the embodied soul, the Visitor points to a basis of the possible knowledge of being in the dynamic logical capacity of the soul to gather diverse types into the unity of a rational discourse. The suggestion anticipates, among other things, the project of a logical investigation of the structural form of the *assertoric or predicative sentence* thought as capable of discerning what is obscurely involved in the predicative form as such.

His conception of the link between the logical structure of sentences and forms leads the Visitor to articulate what has been seen as the first significant conception of the grammatical structure of a *predicative* sentence in the entirety of the Western tradition. Specifically, a sentence is a combination of names and verbs; it is no more possible for a series of mere names to come together to form a significant sentence than it is for a series of verbs to do so.²³ Rather, someone who utters a simple sentence such as "man learns" puts together a noun with a verb; in so doing, he "gives an indication [*deloi*] about [*peri*] what is, or comes to be, or has come to be, or is going to be."²⁴ Such an indication does not simply consist in naming either things or actions; instead, the "weaving together" of names and verbs into a sentence constitutes what is itself an accomplishment, that of *saying something*. As with the earlier example of letters, and the possible combination of forms that it illustrates, the discernment of the specific combinatorial possibilities of these elements thus makes possible the very structure of the *logos* itself, the possibility of saying or asserting rather than simply naming. And it is this structure, as well, which establishes that every sentence must be *about something* [*tinis*]; formed by the combination of a significant subject or name for an object and the sign for an action, the sentence as such thus has the articulate structure of *saying something about something*. It is through this capacity that it is finally possible for a *logos* to be false; in particular, a false *logos* says about its subject something *other* than what is.²⁵ As thought [*dianoia*] is actually a kind of "silent inner dialogue" [*dialogos*] of the soul with itself, it is thereby possible for falsehood and illusion actually to occur in thought and in the language that expresses it, and for the formidable problem of the being of the Sophist as the purveyor of falsehoods finally to be resolved.

The Eleatic visitor thus finds the solution to the vexing Parmenidean problem of the possibility of saying and thinking non-being in the power or capacity of a living *psyche* to produce the co-presence of the *logos* through the dynamic *synthesis* of the "great types", including *being* and *difference*, in communication with the overarching structure of their possible articulated combination or mixing. The

²² Accordingly, "form" should be taken as a translation of "*eidos*" or "*idea*" rather than "*morphe*", here.

²³ 261e-262c.

²⁴ 262d.

²⁵ 263a-b. Plato's formulation here closely anticipates the "definition" of truth and falsehood that Aristotle gives at *Metaphysics* 4, 1011b, in the course of a defense of the universality of the principle of non-contradiction: "To say that what is is not, or that what is not is, is false; but to say that what is is, and what is not is not, is true..." See also chapter 3, below.

point of this communication, which forces the positions of both the materialist and the friends of the forms to admit the possibility of the combination of being and change, is the capacity of such a living soul to know or understand being as it is in itself. For the visitor, this capacity is moreover itself a *logical* one; it is achieved only on the structural basis of the specific structure of the *logos* as the predicative combination of subject and predicate, and through the possibility of appropriately combining the “great types” that this permits. The *topic* of the standing structural capacities of the types to mix with and separate themselves from one another is thus revealed as the superior place of a specifically logical *a priori* capable of dominating both words and objects, open to the philosopher as a practitioner of dialectic but also capable of dominating and determining the meaningful everyday discourse that it structures and constitutes.

The Visitor’s rigorously developed solution to the specific problem of the *Sophist* thus points to two more general problematics of logic and sense, characteristic of the development of reflection on linguistic meaning up to the present. The first is the problem of the nature of *predication*, of the specific structure of sentences, propositions, assertions or judgments, such that something is said, asserted, or judged of or about something else. The second is the problem of linguistic *intentionality*, or of the link between speech and the external reality that it characterizes, describes, denotes, or refers to.

Whether or not the Visitor’s solution can be considered adequate in addressing these problems, it is significant for their subsequent development that the Visitor determines the ultimate basis of linguistic sense in the superior structure of an *a priori* connection whose privileged temporal medium is the life of the rational psyche, or the capacities of the *living being* capable of specifically *logical speech and thought*. Such a conception of the superior structural basis of the logical form of language and life looks back, from Plato, to the enigmatic remark by Heraclitus in which the imperative of a “common” identified with the *logos* is counterpoised to the privacy or idiosyncrasy that is the characteristic assumption of the many:

Therefore it is necessary to follow the common [*koino*]; but although the Logos is common the many live as though they had a private understanding.²⁶

At the same time, it looks forward to a problematic of the relationship of logical forms to the commonality of a shared life that is as broadly representative of 20th century philosophy in its inquiry into the logic of language and is as pressing today as it was already for Plato. Within this inquiry in both its “analytic” and phenomenological/ontological forms, the question that arises repeatedly and decisively determines methods, considerations, and results, is that of the particular mode of the relationship of the *logical form of language* to the *facticity of a life*. As such, it is the question in the ultimate horizon of which it is possible to envision a joint contemporary inheritance of the methodological and problematic legacy of an analytic inquiry into the specific rational structure of language and that of an ontological inquiry into the structure and meaning of being.

²⁶ Diels and Kranz, Fragment 2; quoted in Sextus, *adv. Math VII*, 133, translated in Kirk, Raven, and Schofield, p. 187. Kirk, Raven and Schofield note that Heraclitus probably used *zunos* instead of *koinos*, but that the former is simply the usual “epic and Ionic” formulation of the same concept.

II

Martin Heidegger's discussion of the "battle of gods and giants" over being, in his comprehensive Marburg lecture course of 1924-25 devoted to the interpretation of Plato's *Sophist*, comes just after he briefly discusses the remark of the Visitor which he would use, roughly 2 years later, as the epigraph for *Being and Time*:

For manifestly [*delon*] you have long been aware of what you mean when you use the expression "being". We, however, who used to think we understood it, have now become perplexed.²⁷

The remark, in its original context, is addressed to Parmenides and all those who have earlier attempted a "critical" definition [*epi krisin...diorisasthai*] of the number and types of beings [*ta onta*].²⁸ These predecessors, the Visitor avers, have been "careless," and have told stories [*mython*] as if to children rather than considering whether their arguments [*legousin*] can genuinely be followed out. In particular, Heidegger suggests, in aiming to deal with being, they have instead told stories about beings or entities, actually only explaining beings in terms of beings; thus they have "moved naively in the dimension of beings" and thereby failed to enter into the "dimension of the *Being* of beings."²⁹ All of those who have tried to explain being by counting the types of the most proper beings, including monists like Parmenides himself as well as those who hold that being is to be explained in terms of a duality or plurality of principles, have necessarily invoked, in so doing, the specific structure of *legein*, the saying or speaking. In so doing they have already, according to Plato as Heidegger understands him, also invoked "something else" that is "co-said" in *all legein*, or in all speaking about entities, insofar as the *logos* itself includes the possibility of its own saying as a constitutive and implicit moment. And this "something else" is, Heidegger says, "no less than Being itself."³⁰ It is thus that the Visitor comes to pose the question of what is really meant by the sign "Being," which all those who discourse about beings and their structure ceaselessly presuppose.

In particular, Parmenides and the Eleatics propose the hypothesis "*hen to pan*," all is one.³¹ Heidegger suggests that we can summarize Parmenides' principle with the slightly different formulation "*hen on to pan*," or "all that is, is one." With respect to the hypothesis thus understood, according to Heidegger, Plato's demonstration does not have the goal of simply disputing the hypothesis but of showing that in it "there resides a moment which reaches beyond its own proper sense."³² The hypothesis raises the problem of the signification of the *name* "being" in relation to what it signifies. Here, invoking a problem that is more fully developed in the dialogue *Parmenides* itself, the Visitor states an inherent dilemma involved in assuming "being" to have such a signification within the scope of the Parmenidean hypothesis of the *hen on to pan*, that being is one. The dilemma is that admission of a *name* of being, in

²⁷ GA 2, p. 1.

²⁸ 242c.

²⁹ GA 19, p. 441.

³⁰ GA 19, p. 446.

³¹ 244b.

³² GA 19, p. 453.

addition to what is named itself, already requires that *there are at least two*, and not only one, as the hypothesis apparently requires. Far from being a mere sophistical problem, according to Heidegger, the problem in fact concerns the very structure of the *logos* as *legein ti*, or as a saying of something “about something”. The fact that every *logos* is a *legein ti*, that every *logos* is about something, here means that the hypothesis, as a *logos* about being, says of being that it is one. Thus the Visitor’s consideration shows that, with respect to the number of being, in Parmenides’ hypothesis itself “there is already given a whole series of phenomena, a multiplicity [*Mannigfaltigkeit*] of characteristics of Being.”³³

Heidegger accordingly suggests that the Visitor’s inquiry as to what is meant by the word “being” [*on*] captures the “genuinely central concern ... of the whole dialogue;” this, in particular, is the concern to *prepare* the ground for a possible ontology by posing the question of the meaning of Being by interrogating the specific relation of the meaning of the term “being” in relation to the *logos* that articulates it.³⁴ The continued trenchancy of the questioning for ontological investigation rests much more, according to Heidegger, in the specific *problematic* it sets up than in any actual solution given by Plato or the Visitor. In particular, “to raise the question of the meaning of Being does not mean anything else than to elaborate the questioning involved in philosophy in general.”³⁵ This questioning, Heidegger additionally says, “must provide guidance as to the possible meaning in any concrete question about the particular ontological structure of various beings.”³⁶ As such, the questioning itself both requires and involves an “elaboration... of the *ground* on which the interrogation [*Befragen*] of beings as to their Being is at all possible.”³⁷

The nature of what is thereby brought out emerges in the course of the Visitor’s questioning directed toward the partisans of materialism and those of the forms. The materialists, in particular, understand “body” and “material thing” to signify the same as *ousia* (or “being” in the sense of the (nominalized) present participle of the verb *einai*) (246a-b), holding that everything is constantly in motion and becoming. The friends of forms, by contrast, identify *ousia* with *eidos*, privileging the static form or idea as that which is most genuinely or substantially real. In having to admit the existence of *phronesis* in the actual living soul, the materialists necessarily admit a more general basis in the structure of the soul for the possibility of combination of the visible with the intelligible. This more general basis is the *dunamis* which, the Visitor suggests to the materialist, might thus be taken as the basic structure of everything that is. For the formalists, by contrast, true being, which is understood as *stasis*, is known only through thought and reasoning; nevertheless, the reality of knowledge as a capacity of the soul again forces the adherent of the position to acknowledge a more general possibility of combination or being-with-one another.

Heidegger suggests that the common form of this solution, for both parties, directly captures Plato’s own solution to the difficult problem of the communion of change and becoming with stasis:

³³ GA 19, p. 461. Transl. slightly modified.

³⁴ GA 19, pp. 446-447.

³⁵ GA 19, p. 448.

³⁶ GA 19, p. 448.

³⁷ GA 19, p. 448.

Being itself, then, will mean for Plato, if he is to make both these positions intelligible, *dunamis*, as the possibility of co-presence with something [*Möglichkeit zur Mit-Anwesenheit bei etwas*], in short *dunamis koinonias*, or in a fuller determination, *parousia dunameos koinonias*, factual occurrence of the possibility of being with one another [*Vorhandensein der Möglichkeit zum Miteinandersein*]...This concept of *dunamis koinonias*, as the possibility of being with one another, is the focus of Plato's entire ensuing discussion.³⁸

In particular, in proceeding from the two positions discussed to the discernment of a characteristic unified phenomenon, Plato (according to Heidegger) identifies the possibility of knowledge as a "particular *koinonia*". This *koinonia* "includes, in the first place, a connection, a companionship [*ein Zusammenhang, ein Mit-sein*] of the *psuche*, of *nous*, with the *eide*, i.e. a being of *genesis* with that of the *aei on* [*ein Sein der genesis mit dem aei on*]." (p. 487)³⁹ According to this solution, in particular, "the soul is the being in which we can see that in fact stasis is co-present with movement." (p. 552).

In this way, according to Heidegger, Plato solves the original problem that is at issue between the two parties in the battle, the problem of the relationship of what moves and changes with static being, of *kinesis* with the *aei on*. But the issue that is thereby resolved itself presupposes, ontologically considered, another problem also at issue between the two parties, at least implicitly: that of the proper "mode of access to what authentically possesses Being [*Zugangsart zum eigentlich Seienden*]." ⁴⁰ In the context of the dialogue, this question of access is posed as the question whether it is *aesthesis* (or sense-perception) directed toward bodies or *noein* (thinking) directed toward forms that gives the most direct access to genuine beings as they are in themselves. By posing the question in this way, Plato formulates the specific requirement that "...the meaning of Being is ...dependent upon the possibility that beings can be encountered by a being which possesses something like the present [*so etwas wie Gegenwart*] in general" (p. 468). But what is shown in the way Plato poses in placing exactly this requirement on the form of an account of the proper mode of access to genuine beings, according to Heidegger, is the inexplicit but guiding presupposition of a specific understanding of the meaning of Being [*ousia*], which guides not only Plato's questioning but the whole ontological problematic of the Greeks:

This meaning of Being does not naturally lie in the light of the day but instead can be understood explicitly only by means of a subsequent interpretation [*Auslegung*]. The meaning of Being implicitly guiding [Greek] ontology is Being=presence [*Sein=Anwesenheit*]. The Greeks did not get this meaning of Being from just anywhere, they did not just invent it, but rather it is the one borne by life itself, by factual *Dasein*, insofar as all human *Dasein* is interpretative [*Auslegendes ist*], interprets itself as well as everything that is a being [*alles Seiende*] in whatever sense. In this interpretation there is operative [*lebendig ist*] an implicit sense of Being. And indeed the meaning of Being, as the Greeks inexplicitly understand it, is drawn out of the natural immediate interpretation of Being by factual *Dasein*: Being means: to be there already

³⁸ GA 19, p. 486.

³⁹ GA 19, p. 487. Transl. slightly modified.

⁴⁰ GA 19, p. 467. Transl. slightly modified.

at the very outset [*im vorhinein schon da sein*] as possession, household, property [*Anwesen*] – put more sharply: as presence [*Anwesenheit*]. We will make use of this meaning of Being (which we ourselves first make visible, although of course we cannot discuss it further in this context), namely Being=presence, because *in it lies concealed* [*beschlossen liegt*] *the whole problem of time and consequently the problem of the ontology of Dasein*.⁴¹

The problem posed in the battle of gods and giants thus captures in a very specific way the problem of the ultimate basis of the being of beings as it connects with the problem of time. In particular, according to Heidegger, the problem of the meaning of Being in general here appears specifically as the problem of the most proper mode of access to being in itself, a problem that is already posed with the admission, made by both parties to the battle, that the soul's knowledge of being is in some way possible. The solution points, according to Heidegger, to what is actually "what today we would call a *consideration of essence* [*Wesensbetrachtung*] or a *knowledge of the apriori*;"⁴² that is, in locating the specific possibility of a combination of stasis and kinesis in the structure of the soul Plato develops what is actually an original account of the possibility of *a priori* knowledge, which is now treated, Heidegger notes, in the phenomenological theory of eidetic cognition.

Although Heidegger urges that this solution, in Plato, should not be understood as a subjectivist one, it nevertheless depends, according to Heidegger, on Plato's assumption that "the grasping of the apriori resides on the same level as the grasping of the ontical in general."⁴³ In particular, the factual and substantial existence of the *psuche*, as the basis for the possible combination of the essential types of *stasis* and *kinesis*, is here invoked as the basis for the possibility of knowledge of being as such. At the same time, though, the priority of the *a priori* and the whole possibility that the soul's synthetic capacities can indeed yield knowledge of being depends further on the specific relation of the soul to the structure of *logos*. Plato understands this relation as one of possession or having. But this possession of the *logos* is itself grounded, as Heidegger emphasizes, in a specific conception of the temporality and life of this being as such, what Plato understands as the being of the *psuche* and its *dunamis* or capacity for logical synthesis.

In particular, the consideration that being can be called by many names leads Theaetetus and the Visitor directly to consider the *koinonia* that is needed for access to being and non-being, not only in terms of the structure of the soul, but also as a "*koinonia* within *logos* itself."⁴⁴ It is in fact impossible, according to Plato as Heidegger reads him, to deny the actuality of this commonality, which is shown by the specific possibilities of ultimate types to mix as well as differentiate themselves from one another. For as the Visitor emphasizes, those who discourse about being constantly presuppose the specific capacities of types to mix or refuse mixing. Drawing the formal and methodological analogy to the *grammata* or basic elements of language, Plato considers these types, according to Heidegger, as those knowable beings which have, among all others "those which have the fundamental privilege of universal

⁴¹ GA 19, pp. 466-67. Transl. slightly modified. Emphasis in original.

⁴² GA 19, p. 342. Transl. slightly modified.

⁴³ GA 19, p. 495.

⁴⁴ 251a; GA 19, p. 500.

presence” and thus, since Being is here interpreted *as* presence, as beings with the “privileged rank” of that which is “always already, in advance, present in all beings.”⁴⁵

As a specification of this general structure of correspondence between the dynamic *koinon* within the soul and the “*koinon* of the *logos*” which itself makes the knowledge of being, in general, possible, Plato additionally discerns in the structure of *legein* as such, according to Heidegger, the very basis of the relationship of *intentionality* between thought and its object. Specifically, as the Visitor notes, every *legein* is a *legein ti*; every saying is a saying of or about something. In recognizing this “basic fact of *legein*”, according to Heidegger, Plato discovers the “...basic structure...of every human comportment and in general of the comportment of every living thing that is with and to something in the sense of Being [*das ist im Sinne des Seins bei und zu etwas*]” which contemporary phenomenology calls “intentionality.”⁴⁶ The specific phenomenon of the *legein ti*, moreover, as a relation “pertaining to the living being with respect to its very Being” has the significance of exposing the “genuine constitution of the possible uncoveredness [*Aufgedecktheit*] of something addressed” and “what in general is said in a *legein* as something said.”⁴⁷ This points back, according to Heidegger, to a more original phenomenon of demonstration or revealing whereby, as the visitor says, a *logos reveals (deloi)* “the presence of beings or of non-beings” (*ousian ontos kai me ontos*).⁴⁸ This more “fundamental” phenomenon, according to Heidegger, is not simply an aspect or outcome of the spoken sentence as such; rather, it is in fact the “primary” phenomenon which harbors the very possibility of discourse to begin with.⁴⁹ In particular, Heidegger urges, the capacity of the sentence to disclose or reveal is not somehow the result of a synthesis or combination *into* a sentence of words of various types which are themselves already equipped with disclosive meaning; rather, it is on the basis of the more fundamental phenomenon of *deloun* (revealing) that words can first be grasped as something beyond mere sounds at all.

With this specific conception of the *logos* as a synthesis of signs and of the *psyche* as the substantial basis for the capacity dynamically to achieve such a synthesis, Plato, according to Heidegger, thus develops a specifically “logical” understanding of the sense of Being, dependent upon the interpretation of Being as presence, which obscures and precludes a more “original” understanding of the ontological structure of presencing. In particular, Plato, as we have seen, proposes to solve the problem of the possibility of knowing being and the underlying problem of temporality to which it points by invoking the dynamic life of the soul as the substantive basis for an interlinked series of logical manifolds in whose linkage or communication in the structural configuration of the *logos*, both in terms of the individual sentence and the larger possibilities of “what can coherently be said” as such, provides the ultimate basis for the intelligibility of beings and any possible knowledge of being in itself. In a summary formation, Heidegger links this series of manifolds to what is, according to him, the basic determination of the nature of the human animal for the Greeks:

⁴⁵ GA 19, p. 520.

⁴⁶ GA 19, p. 424. Transl. slightly modified.

⁴⁷ GA 19, p. 424, p. 597.

⁴⁸ 262c; GA 19, p. 593.

⁴⁹ GA 19, p. 594.

It is no accident that ...Plato refers to this double structural manifold [*doppelte Gebildemannigfaltigkeit*], of *eide* and of *grammata*.The structural manifolds are therefore not juxtaposed, isolated realms but instead stand in an intrinsic substantive *koinonia*: the matters at issue [*Sache*], what is properly visible in them [*Sachsichbarkeit*], word, word-sound – beings, world, disclosure [*Aufgeschlossenheit*] of beings, discourse, manifestation. This is nothing else than the universal context [*Zusammenhang*] of phenomena within which man, the *zoon logon echon*, ever exists [*überhaupt ist*]. This context is ultimately grounded in Being-in [*In-Sein*], in the antecedent uncoveredness [*Entdecktheit*] of the world.⁵⁰

In particular, according to Heidegger, the specific structure of the *psyche* as a substantial basis for the combination in co-presence of ideas and logically differentiated types allows for the very possibility of the soul possessing knowledge of being in itself; this combination in co-presence itself has its specific basis in the *dunamis* or capacity for logical combination or synthesis that also shows up, in the traditional “definition” of man, as the living being’s “possession” of the specific structure of *logos* or speech. This possession of the *logos*, and hence Plato’s overarching determination of the possibility of some relation of thought to being, is itself grounded, as Heidegger emphasizes, in a specific conception of the temporality and life of this being as such, what Plato thinks as the being of the *psuche* and its *dunamis* or capacity for logical synthesis.

Plato thus ultimately gives, on Heidegger’s reading, what can be called (in an anachronistic but accurate sense) a *psycho-logic* theory of being and truth. In particular, it is, for Plato as Heidegger reads him, the temporal capacity of the *soul* dynamically to synthesize *logical* elements in actually speaking and thinking that ultimately accounts for the sense and meaning of being in itself, insofar as it is thinkable or knowable. The temporal contact of the *psuche* with the larger structural possibilities established by the pre-eminently existing types is itself guaranteed by this dynamic structure of the *psuche* as the capacity for combining them into a thinkable *logos*. The underlying structural basis for this connection between the *psuche*’s capacity to produce intelligibility and the logical structure of being in itself is the intercommunicating series of *koinonia*, or commons, that Plato thus sees in the capacities of the *psuche*, the structure of the predicative sentence, and the intentional relation between sentences and their objects. All of these are linked together, for Plato, in the notion of a *logical/ontological co-presence* that preserves meaning and ensures the ordered communication among the different orders of the psychic, the material, and the ideal. And the ultimate basis of this co-presence is the manifold *koinon* (or common) of the *logos* itself. This assumption of co-presence in the unity of the *logos* is, however, open to interrogation by way of a prior investigation of the phenomenon of presenting itself which Heidegger now undertakes. The investigation yields a deep-seated critical challenge to the underlying assumption of the unity of presence among ideas, their representation in signs, and the capacities of the soul that Plato assumes under the heading of a presumably unified *logos*.

This critique of Plato’s psychologism plays an essential role in generating the broader critique of the “logical tradition” of the West, along the guideline of a radicalized questioning of the sense of being, that Heidegger announces in *Being and Time*. In particular, if this critique necessarily takes the form of a

⁵⁰ GA 19, p. 585.

deconstructive interpretation of ancient ontology on the more original basis of the problematic of temporality, it engages in particular the ancient and continuing determination of Dasein as the *zoon logon echon* or as “that living thing whose Being is essentially determined by the possibility of discourse [durch das Redenkönnen bestimmt ist].”⁵¹ For this conception as it unfolds in the subsequent development of the Western tradition according to Heidegger, the being of the *psuche* enjoys a recurrently marked priority in the description of the ultimate basis of meaning and truth. Thus for Aristotle, the soul is, “in a certain way,” all entities.⁵² And for Aquinas the “distinctive entity” that is the soul (*anima*) is “properly suited to ‘come together with’ entities of any sort whatever [*die Eignung hat, mit jeglichem irgendwie Seienden ‘zusammenzukommen’, d. h. ubereinzukommen*]” in such a way as to produce the possibility of truth and ensure its status as a “transcendental,” something that goes beyond any generic classification of entities to characterize any subject matter whatsoever.⁵³

But the ontological conception that underlies this position depends equally, Heidegger suggests, on taking the structure of *logos* and *legein* as “the clue for arriving at those structures of Being which belong to the entities we encounter in addressing ourselves to anything or speaking about it [*des im Ansprechen und Besprechen begegnenden Seienden*].”⁵⁴ To penetrate beneath this presumptively synthetic structure, it is necessary not only to see it as in fact grounded in a more basic “apophantical” structure of disclosure, but also to see that this more original structure, in itself, has nothing to do with either the “binding and linking together of representations” or a “manipulation of psychical occurrences” in an uncertain relation of possible “agreement” with “outside” physical objects.⁵⁵ In this way, Heidegger’s critique of the psychologistic position on truth that originates with Plato’s conception of the synthetic logical *koinonia* of the *psuche* undercuts any conception of truth as correspondence between the psychical and the physical, or between any two types of (ontic) beings. Here, the relation of correspondence or “agreement” supposed in such a conception to occur between a psychological representation or judgment and its object or objects is revealed as simply the flattened outcome of the more ontologically basic phenomenon of uncovering or disclosure itself.

If, moreover, the Platonic configuration that Heidegger interrogates in the *Sophist* lectures itself arises specifically in the Visitor’s determinate questioning of the Parmenidean hypothesis of the *unity of beings* along the guideline of the *logos*, then the *logical* problematic thereby elicited retains a priority for Heidegger’s deconstruction of metaphysics throughout its whole itinerary. This remains so even, and even in a heightened form, after Heidegger’s thought undertakes the famous “turning” in the 1930s from what he specifies, in the *Beiträge zur Philosophie*, as the “guiding question” of the being of entities to the historical “grounding question” [*Grundfrage*] of being’s (or ‘beyng’s’) truth.⁵⁶ In the altered conception of the *history of being* to which this leads, the being of entities is said to be successively “metaphysically” determined according to a series of privileged figures, for instance as *idea*, as *hupokeimenon* and *dunamis*, as *transcendens*, as *cogito* and representing and willing subject, as will to

⁵¹ GA 2, p. 25.

⁵² GA 2, p. 14.

⁵³ Aristotle, *De Anima* 3. 8, 431b21; GA 2, p. 14.

⁵⁴ GA 2, p. 25.

⁵⁵ GA 2, p. 33.

⁵⁶ GA 65, p. 8.

power and technology.⁵⁷ Each of these determinations grounds the intelligibility of entities as a whole by reference to what is thought as the most essential aspect of their character. Throughout all of these specific determinations, however, the specific structure of metaphysical thinking is visible in its claim to *unify* beings as a whole into a determinate configuration of intelligibility. And according to Heidegger, the specific basis of this claim, through all the various configurations of the metaphysics of the West, is the privilege of the *logos* as the ground of the thinkability of entities as such.

This privilege of the *logos* throughout the succession of differing metaphysical interpretations of the being of entities is marked in the double hyphenation of what Heidegger specifies in a late (1957) lecture as the “onto-theo-logical constitution of metaphysics.” As Heidegger here explains, metaphysics in its thought of beings as a whole always has a twofold determination, as ontology and theology, uniting the ontological determination of “beings as such in the universal and primordial [*das Seiende als solches im Allgemeinen und Ersten*]” with their theological determination in terms of “the highest and ultimate [*im Höchsten und Letzten*].”⁵⁸ But the two kinds of determination of the being of beings (from ‘above’ and from ‘below’) are themselves further linked in the thought of the *unity of being and thinking* that makes possible the intelligibility of beings as a whole for each specific, epochal configuration.

Heidegger finds the basis of this unity, as it is thought throughout Western metaphysics, in the specific structure of the *logos* as a gathering and unification that grounds:

Being manifests itself as thought. This means: the Being of beings reveals itself as the ground that gives itself ground and accounts for itself. The ground, the *ratio* by their essential origin are *logos*, in the sense of gathering and letting-be [*im Sinne des versammelnden Vorliegenlassens*]: the *En Pantá*.⁵⁹

Thus, the two interlinked structures of ontology and theology that together define Western metaphysics have a further and still unthought unity in the structure of the *logos* itself as the grounding basis for the *gathering*, binding, and presentation of beings in the unity of a whole.

Ontology ... and theology are “Logies” inasmuch as they provide the ground of beings as such and account for them within the whole [*das Seiende als solches ergründen und im Ganzen begründen*]. They account for Being as the ground of beings. They account to the *logos*, and are in an essential sense in accord with the *logos*-, that is they are the logic of the *logos*. Thus they

⁵⁷ The connection of metaphysics with the thought of the totality of beings is already explicit, before the “turn”, in Heidegger’s 1929 Freiburg inaugural address “What is Metaphysics?” (GA 9), and develops considerations about “world-view” and totality that go back much earlier, at least to the 1919 “War Emergency Semester” course “The Idea of Philosophy and the Problem of Worldview” (GA 56/57). These texts are discussed in chapters 2 and 4, below. Compare, also, “The Age of the World-Picture” in *Off The Beaten Track* (GA 5), (1938).

⁵⁸ GA 11, p. 68. Compare Iain Thomson’s perceptive analysis of the “twofold” operation of grounding that is characteristic of ontotheology for Heidegger: “All successful, epoch-grounding metaphysical systems *combine* these two different forms [ontological and theological] of foundationalism, thereby securing our understanding of the being of entities (and so grounding the intelligible order) from *both* the inside out *and* the outside in, microscopically *and* telescopically, floor to ceiling – or, as Heidegger puts it, ontologically *and* theologically, that is, *ontotheologically*.” (Thomson 2005, pp. 18-19).

⁵⁹ GA 11, p. 65 (transl. slightly altered).

are more precisely called onto-logic and theo-logic. More rigorously and clearly thought out, metaphysics is onto-theo-logic.⁶⁰

Because “metaphysics responds to Being as *logos*,” it is “accordingly in its basic characteristics everywhere logic” and in particular “a logic that thinks of the Being of beings.”⁶¹ In each of the determinate configurations of metaphysics up to the present, the thinkability of beings as a whole in determinate figures of ontological and theological unity is, in fact, itself made possible by the specific grounding unity of the *logos*. In each of these configurations, “logic” is “the name for that kind of thinking which everywhere provides and accounts for the ground of what is, as such and as a whole [*das Seiende als solches im Ganzen... ergründet und begründet*] in terms of Being as the ground (*logos*).”⁶²

If, then, the unifying and grounding character of the *logos* provides an original basis for the various determinations of the Being of beings that comprise onto-theo-logy, Plato’s thought of logical form as permitting the specific capacity of combination of logical elements in the soul originally determines the conception of “being as presence” that underlies it. This Platonic figure seeks to ground the temporality of the logic that links being and beings in the co-presence of the thinkable. It does so by pointing to the correspondence between the psychological form of life of the animal possessing the capacity of *logos* and the overarching logical/ontological structure of the forms or types. The unity of this correspondence allows being as such to be determined as the unity of an ontic totality of beings, a determination which is always characteristic of metaphysics, for Heidegger. The determination forecloses the ontological difference between being and beings in understanding being as such as the thinkable unity of co-presence toward which Parmenides’ hypothesis – *hen on to pan* – originally gestures.

In Heidegger’s historical project, which specifies the matter of thought beyond the closure of the epoch of metaphysics as this difference in itself, the determination of beings from Being itself will no longer be thinkable as any ontic relation. Accordingly, it will no longer be possible to think the basis of the conception of the Being of beings as the logical co-presence of ultimate beings in the soul, as the possibility of their subjective representation in the unity of consciousness, or as the result of the synthetic activity of a constitutive transcendental subject. As the “intentional relationship” between subject and world is, here, radicalized into a more ontologically original problematic of unconcealment and disclosure, the logical/metaphysical operation that grounds beings as a whole from the position of an assumed and unquestioned *a priori* deepens into a more basic inquiry into the very temporal structure of ground as the structure of the truth of Being itself. In this deepening, it will no longer be possible to consider the relationship between Being and beings in the figure of a simple limit that bounds and enforces the sense of the totality of beings, theologically and ontologically, from above and below. That there will be no ontic figuration of the limit between Being and beings, except as originary and irreducible difference, means that there is no place from which to draw the line that bounds the

⁶⁰ GA 11, p. 66.

⁶¹ GA 11, p. 76.

⁶² GA 11, p. 67.

metaphysical epoch of presence, unless it be drawn in its own erasure, in the original historical withdrawal of its own definitive trace.⁶³

It is in terms of this withdrawal that Heidegger specifies, in *What is Called Thinking?*, the very event of our present:

What must be thought about [*das Zu-dekende*] turns away from man. It withdraws [*entzieht*] from him. But how can we have the least knowledge of something that withdraws from the beginning, how can we even give it a name? Whatever withdraws, refuses arrival. But – withdrawing [*das Sichentziehen*] is not nothing. Withdrawal is an event [*Entzug ist Ereignis*]. In fact, what withdraws may even concern and claim man more essentially than anything present [*als Alles Anwesende*] that strikes and touches him... The event of withdrawal could be what is most present in all our present, and so infinitely exceed the actuality of everything actual. [*Das Ereignis des Entzugs könnte das Gegenwartigste in allem jetzt Gegenwartigen sein und so die Aktualität alles Aktuellen unendlich ubertreffen.*]⁶⁴

The “infinite” excess of this withdrawal, beyond the metaphysical determination of the “actual” as that, in presence, which is capable of striking and touching us, exerts its claim from the “beyond” of a site whose topology is complex, and that cannot be thought as one of presence, unless it be, as Heidegger says, the place of the very presence of the present. The metaphysical determination that holds beings together as a whole and determines their totality in the figure of a limit, over against the absolute being of the theological transcendent that masters their intelligible sense from above or that of the ontological substrate that supports it from below, thus yields, as I shall argue in the succeeding chapters of this book, to a very different problematic of the limited and the unlimited as such. As I shall argue as well, it is in terms of such a problematic, and what is here specified as the event of withdrawal that it both marks and effaces, that it is alone possible to think the very structure of what the later Heidegger specifies, beyond any ontic figuration, as *Ereignis*, the “event” of Being that opens and closes the epoch of presence as appropriation and disappropriation.

⁶³ Cf. Jacques Derrida: “Since the trace is not a presence but the simulacrum of a presence that dislocates itself, displaces itself, refers itself, it properly has no site – erasure belongs to its structure. And not only the erasure which must always be able to overtake it (without which it would not be a trace but an indestructible and monumental substance), but also the erasure which constitutes it from the outset as a trace, which situates it as the change of site, and makes it disappear in its appearance, makes it emerge from itself in its production. The erasure of the early trace...of difference is therefore the “same” as its tracing in the text of metaphysics. The latter must have maintained the mark of what it has lost, reserved, put aside. The paradox of such a structure, in the language of metaphysics, is an inversion of metaphysical concepts, which produces the following effect: the present becomes the sign of the sign, the trace of the trace. It is no longer what every reference refers to in the last analysis. It becomes a function in a structure of generalized reference. It is a trace, and a trace of the erasure of the trace.

Thereby the text of metaphysics is *comprehended*. Still legible; and to be read. It is not surrounded but rather traversed by its limit, marked in its interior by the multiple furrow of its margin. Proposing *all at once* the monument and the mirage of the trace, the trace simultaneously traced and erased, simultaneously living and dead, and, as always, living in its simulation of life’s preserved inscription.” (Derrida 1968, p. 24).

⁶⁴ GA 8, pp. 10-11.

III

As we have seen, the problematic of thinking and being to which Plato, in the voice of the Visitor, offers the solution of the logical *koinonia*, is originally the problem of the specific *temporality* of logical thought insofar as it touches on what is thinkable in being itself. In a characteristically trenchant methodological passage in the *Grundgesetze der Arithmetik*, Frege takes up the consequences of the same problematic as it bears on the issue of truth:

For me, truth is something objective, independent of the judging subject, for psychological logicians, it is not...We can capture this more general still: I acknowledge a realm of the objective, non-actual, while the psychological logicians take the non-actual to be subjective without further ado. Yet it is utterly incomprehensible why something that has being independently of the judging subject has to be actual [*wirklich*], i.e. has to be capable of acting [*wirken*], directly or indirectly, upon the senses. No such connection between the concepts [of objectivity and actuality] is to be found ...

Since the psychological logicians fail to appreciate the possibility of the objective non-actual, they take concepts to be ideas [*Vorstellungen*] and thereby assign them to psychology. But the true state of affairs asserts itself too forcefully for this to be accomplished easily. And hence a vacillation afflicts the use of the word 'idea' [*Vorstellung*], so that sometimes it seems to refer to [*bedeuten*] something which belongs to the mental life of an individual and which, in accordance with the psychological laws, amalgamates with other ideas, associates with them; while at other times, to something that confronts everyone in the same way, so that no bearer of ideas [*Vorstellender*] is either mentioned or even presupposed. These two uses are incompatible ...⁶⁵

The basis of Frege's conception of this specific mode of objectivity of the logically articulated concept, like that of so much else in Frege's thought, is the specific link between logic and truth. In particular, if logic is, as Frege says near the beginning of an 1897 work, "the science of the most general laws of truth," this is because its task lies in saying "what holds with the utmost generality for all thinking, whatever its subject matter."⁶⁶ In this way the "word 'true' can be used to indicate" the goal of logic, as "good" points to the goal of the study of ethics, or "beautiful" that of aesthetics.⁶⁷ As Frege suggests in a roughly parallel passage of the late (1918) article "Thought," if "the reference [*Bedeutung*] of the word "true" is spelled out in the logical laws of truth," it is thus accordingly necessary to consider logic as articulating the laws governing *what is* true, rather than "the laws of taking things to be true or of thinking" as a process or activity.⁶⁸ It is thus necessary, in order to preserve this definition of logic as articulating the laws of truth, to recognize also the privileged link between logic in this sense and being

⁶⁵ Frege (1903), pp. XVII-XVIII

⁶⁶ Frege (1897), p. 228.

⁶⁷ Frege (1897), p. 227.

⁶⁸ Frege (1918), p. 326.

in the sense of *what is*, as opposed to the illusory or false objects of opinion, appearance, or fallible judgment. Recognizing this link is, in turn, sufficient, as Frege says in the *Grundgesetze* passage, to break any presumed link between the being of what is and “actuality” in the sense of the sensible, or of whatever has the capacity to affect or be affected.

A basis for this position can be found in the argument that Frege gives, both in the 1897 “Logic” and in “Thought,” for the conclusion that *truth is indefinable*, and in particular that it cannot be identified with any property, feature, or relationship of objects:

Now it would be futile to employ a definition in order to make it clearer what is to be understood by ‘true’. If, for example, we wished to say ‘an idea is true if it agrees with reality’ nothing would have been achieved, since in order to apply this definition we should have to decide whether some idea or other did agree with reality. Thus we should have to presuppose the very thing that is being defined. The same would hold of any definition of the form ‘A is true if and only if it has such-and-such properties, or stands in such-and-such a relation to such-and-such a thing.’ Truth is obviously something so primitive and simple that it is not possible to reduce it to anything still simpler. Consequently we have no alternative but to bring out the peculiarity of our predicate by comparing it with others. What, in the first place, distinguishes it from all other predicates is that predicating it is always included in predicating anything whatever.⁶⁹

In other words, if the truth of sentences were indeed definable in terms of any property, relation, or set of properties or relations, the usefulness of the definition to determine what is involved in the truth or falsity of a particular sentence would depend, in turn, on a determination of whether that sentence indeed *had* the requisite property (or stood in the right sort of relation to something else); and the need to make this determination in each case would lead, Frege suggests, to an infinite regress which would have to be traversed in order for the purported definition to be applicable at all.

One might wonder why the regress must be vicious; in particular, a proponent of some particular definition of truth might simply hold that it is reiterated at each stage, without ever leading to any actual incoherence at any stage. But as Dummett points out in his analysis of the argument, it actually has a further premise which suffices to show the untenability of such a picture. The premise is another claim that Frege was probably the first to make, and that has elsewhere been called the “redundancy” or “equivalence” principle.⁷⁰ The claim is that the assertion “It is true that ‘A’”, or the predication of the truth of A, is (in some sense) *equivalent* to the assertion “A” (or to predicating what A predicates). Frege states this equivalence principle explicitly elsewhere,⁷¹ and it is at least implicit in the current passage in his claim that “predicating [truth] is always included in predicating anything whatsoever.” Given this, however, it is clear that any definition of truth in terms of any property, feature, or relation is untenable. For given any such definition, even while asserting “A,” it would still be open to us to inquire whether

⁶⁹ Frege (1897), p. 228; the parallel passage in Frege (1918) is pp. 326-27.

⁷⁰ Cf. Michael Dummett, “Can Truth be Defined?” in Dummett (1973), pp. 442-470 (esp. pp. 443-45).

⁷¹ E.g., in “Thought” (Frege 1918) he says: “It is also worth noticing that the sentence ‘I smell the scent of violets’ has just the same content as the sentence ‘It is true that I smell the scent of violets’.” (p. 328).

“A” had the requisite property, feature or relation (thus, whether “A” is true). But that this is in fact *not* open to us is a direct consequence of the equivalence principle itself.

It is suggestive that the principle at the basis for Frege’s general and powerful argument for the indefinability of truth in terms of correspondence or any other notion is, at its basis, just the same one that was subsequently used by Tarski to capture what he considered to be the most important formal constraint on the definition of a *truth predicate* for a particular formal language, L. For *if* applied, in this way, as a constraint on possible definitions of such a language-specific truth predicate, the equivalence principle becomes Tarski’s notorious T-schema:

(T): s is true-in-L if and only if p

where ‘ s ’ is replaced with a description of a sentence, and p is replaced by the same sentence, or a translation of it.

The schema would later prove decisive in many of the formal and informal approaches of the analytic tradition to problems of meaning and truth; in particular, in application to natural rather than formal languages, it would become the basis for Davidson’s powerful conception of the structure of a theory of meaning, grounded in a Tarskian truth-theory, for any particular natural language.⁷² Nevertheless, as Davidson himself argues in the posthumously published text *Truth and Predication*, the applicability and definability of Tarski-style truth definitions for any number of particular languages still leaves open a larger question, not solved by any number of such definitions: that of the *general* concept of truth, or what is held in common by every language and formulated in *each* of the language-specific truth predicates.⁷³

It is in this sense, the sense of the “general concept” as opposed to particular truth-predicates for specific languages L, that truth is plausibly “normative” in that it provides (as Dummett has suggested) a “norm of assertibility” or, as Frege says, that it “points the way” for logic, where logic is, again, the theory that articulates the *laws* of truth rather than simply those of what is held true.⁷⁴ Any such theory will never, if Frege’s argument is correct, amount to a *definition* of truth.⁷⁵ But even so, it nevertheless remains open to hold that, as Frege himself says, the *phenomenon* of truth is “indicated” or “pointed toward” by the logical/semantic theory that articulates the logical structure of any possible language. If this is indeed the case, the consequences of the equivalence principle that yields the general argument against definitions of truth will nevertheless have a special and pivotal role in producing this indication. In particular, if, as Frege says, the predication of truth is always “included in” any predication

⁷² See the essays collected in Davidson, *Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation* (2nd edition, Oxford U. Press, 2001), especially “Truth and Meaning,” “In Defence of Convention T”, and “Radical interpretation.”

⁷³ “My own view is that Tarski has told us much of what we want to know about the concept of truth, and that there must be more. There must be more because there is no indication in Tarski’s formal work of what it is that his various truth predicates have in common, and this must be part of the content of the concept ... The concept of truth has essential connections with the concepts of belief and meaning, but these connections are untouched by Tarski’s work.” Davidson (2005), pp. 27-28.

⁷⁴ Dummett (1959).

⁷⁵ Davidson (2005), chapters 1 and 2; cf. Davidson (1996).

whatsoever, a logical/semantic theory that articulates the constitutive logical structure of predication itself, gestures beyond the properties and relations of beings, toward the constitutive connection of the sentences of a language to their truth-conditions. Beyond beings, such a theory would thus gesture toward the indefinable point at which the sentences of a language bear, in the structure of predication itself, the inarticulate mark of their Being.

As is well known, Frege officially distinguishes “assertoric force”, the particular kind of force which is applied to a sentence or its content when it is asserted, from the content itself, holding that *asserting* is just one of several possible actions that can be performed with one and the same content. In a 1906 summary of his “logical doctrines,” for instance, Frege placed at the top of the list his having “dissociated assertoric force from the predicate.”⁷⁶ Along similar lines, he treats one component of what would become the familiar logical turnstyle as a “judgment stroke” signifying that what follows is in fact judged, or that its truth is recognized.⁷⁷ According to Frege, it is necessary in particular to use the symbolism in that it is necessary to separate the act of judgment, when it occurs, from its subject matter; for otherwise it would be impossible to distinguish the judgment (or assertion) that some content does in fact hold true from a mere supposition of the same content.⁷⁸ The maintenance of both claims (about the separation of assertoric force from the content and about the significance of the judgment stroke) invite difficult questions about the proper description of the activity of judgment and of force itself from a Fregean perspective.⁷⁹ The problem is, specifically, that of how the logical structure that characterizes a language and determines the sense of its terms communicates with the dynamic actuality of its use, and particularly with this use insofar as it characteristically involves the possibility of making assertions that are true or false. More generally specified, the underlying problem is that of the general (linguistic or non-linguistic?) context in which *force* communicates with *meaning* in general, or the broader contextual space *in which* the specific structure of communicative sense relates to that of meaningful intersubjective action and *praxis*.⁸⁰

At other places, Frege gestures toward the inarticulate relationship between logic and force that shows up, not indeed in the sense or reference of any linguistic term by itself, but in the peculiar *failure* of the predicate “true” to contribute positively to the sense of sentences in which it figures:

⁷⁶ Frege (1906).

⁷⁷ “A judgment will always be expressed by means of the symbol | - which stands at the left of the symbol or complex of symbols which gives the content of the judgment. If the small vertical stroke at the end of the horizontal one is *omitted*, then the judgment will be transformed into a *mere complex of ideas*, of which the writer does not state whether he recognizes its truth or not.” Frege (1879), p. 52.

⁷⁸ Frege (1891), p. 142.

⁷⁹ On the ambiguity involved in any treatment of the judgment stroke as having logical significance (for instance the significance of a predication of facthood or of truth) see Martin (2006), chapter 3. Here, Martin convincingly argues that any attempt wholly to separate what is signified by the judgment stroke from the content judged must fail, and that this failure points to a necessary and ineliminable “expressive limit” in the logical representation of judgment.

⁸⁰ Cf. Jacques Derrida in Derrida (1971), p. 309: “To the semantic field of the word *communication* belongs the fact that it also designates nonsemantic movements. Here at least provisional recourse to ordinary language and to the equivocalities of natural language teaches us that one may, for example, *communicate a movement*, or that a tremor, a shock, a displacement of force can be communicated – that is, propagated, transmitted.”

If I assert 'It is true that sea-water is salt', I assert the same thing as if I assert 'Sea-water is salt.' This enables us to recognize that the assertion is not to be found in the word 'true', but in the assertoric force with which the sentence is uttered. This may lead us to think that the word 'true' has no sense at all. But in that case a sentence in which 'true' occurred as a predicate would have no sense either. All one can say is: the word 'true' has a sense that contributes nothing to the sense of the whole sentence in which it occurs as a predicate.

But it is precisely for this reason that this word seems fitted to indicate the essence of logic. Because of the particular sense that it carried any other adjective would be less suitable for this purpose. So the word 'true' seems to make the impossible possible: it allows what corresponds to the assertoric force to assume the form of a contribution to the thought. And although this attempt miscarries, or through the very fact that it miscarries, it indicates what is characteristic of logic ... 'true' only makes an abortive attempt to indicate the essence of logic, since what logic is really concerned with is not contained in the word 'true' at all but in the assertoric force with which a sentence is uttered. (p. 323)

In particular, according to the passage, it is the unique structural role that 'true' plays (in that, specifically, it adds nothing to the sense of *any* sentence in which it figures) with respect to *all* the sentences of a language that allows it to "[seem] to" manifest the specific force of assertion that is involved in any predication whatsoever to appear *as* an element of a predicative sentence. But the attempt "miscarries"; it is not, in fact, possible for a predicate signifying this involvement to appear significantly as a predicate within a sentence. Nevertheless, in the miscarriage itself, "what is characteristic of logic" is formally and negatively "indicated".⁸¹ The indication, though it is not of something that *can* figure within a sentence as the sense of any term, nevertheless points to the characteristic force of assertion that is "included" in all predication as such, and thus to the specific structure of predication insofar in, and as, it itself includes the possibility of truth.

Although Frege's conception of truth does not resolve the problematic of logical force and combination that is already invoked by the Visitor's conception of the *dunamis koinoneon* as the specific structure of the logos, it thus radicalizes and deepens this problematic on the basis of Frege's thoroughgoing appreciation of the consequences of the impersonality and indefinability of truth. This appreciation plays a decisive role, along with the new quantificational logic itself, in producing a completely new understanding of the logical structure of the sentence with revolutionary consequences for the interlinked problems of linguistic meaning and truth. The methodological consequences of this new

⁸¹ Cf. Martin (2006), p. 96, who discusses the passage: "What Frege here calls a miscarriage is ...exactly what befell him with his paraphrase of the judgment stroke in the *Begriffsschrift*. He tried to import the mark of assertion as a contribution to the content judged as true. The miscarriage exhibits the limits of Frege's representation of judgment: the expressive limit of the judgment stroke and the impossibility of fully excluding the truth-claim from the content available for judgment." Martin goes on to argue that this miscarriage or failure points to necessary features of logic in relation to truth that bear close comparison with what Heidegger formulates as the implications of the "ambiguity of the copula", and in particular that the work of both philosophers on the relationship of logic to judgment points to the necessity of a "pre-logical understanding of truth and judgment" (p. 102) in our understanding and use of natural language. See also Michael Dummett, *Frege and Other Philosophers* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), esp. pp. 247-48.

conception are displayed, in perspicuous form, in Frege's statement in the *Foundations of Arithmetic* of the principles guiding his investigation there into the logical basis of number:

There must be a sharp separation of the psychological from the logical, the subjective from the objective;

The meaning of a word must be asked for in the context of a proposition, not in isolation;

The distinction between concept and object must be kept in mind.⁸²

Whereas the second principle directly challenges any synthetic conception of the unity of a sentence, on which it is composed fundamentally of individually representative words, the third points to the very different conception of this unity that Frege positively proposes. The first consequence of this new understanding is already drawn in the *Begriffsschrift*; it is that judgments as represented in a logically perspicuous language do not have the form of subject and predicate.⁸³ In particular, since Frege considers what is relevant to the logical content of a judgment to be limited to the structure of its possible consequences, and that judgments expressed variously in subject/predicate form may nevertheless have the same content in this sense, it is essential to distinguish the superficial subject/predicate structure of a sentence (and, more broadly, all aspects of its superficial grammatical form) from its real underlying logical structure.⁸⁴

The new devices of quantification that Frege had developed in considering the logical structure of mathematical judgments allowed him to repudiate the subject/predicate logic that had been widely presupposed since Aristotle. On Frege's new conception, it is generally impossible to portray the actual logical structure of a predicative sentence simply by means of the grammatical distinction between subject and predicate. Rather, within the sentence it is necessary to distinguish concept-words from object-words, and to recognize the fundamental difference in their logical nature. Whereas an object-word has an object as its reference, what a concept-word signifies is inherently "unsaturated," or requires completion by means of an object. More generally, the references of concept-terms are *functions* from objects (or sequences of objects) to truth-values. This leads to a fundamental distinction in the modes of signification of concept- and object-words, which issues in the notorious restriction upon which Frege rigorously insists; namely that a concept-word must never be used in the logical place of an object-word.⁸⁵ It is thus impossible to *refer* to concepts as we would to things. Similarly, we cannot predicate *of* concepts; as much as we would like to say "the concept 'horse' is a concept easily attained," to do so would be to violate a fundamental aspect of logical structure and to utter what could only be nonsense.⁸⁶

As a consequence, the reality or event of predication can never be understood, on this picture, as simply forging an *ontic* relation between entities. In a Heideggerian paraphrase, the being of beings, such as it

⁸² Frege (1884), p. 90.

⁸³ Frege (1879), p. 53.

⁸⁴ Frege (1879), p. 54.

⁸⁵ Frege (1892), pp. 181-193.

⁸⁶ Frege (1892), pp. 184-85.

is expressed or indicated in a predicative sentence, is never itself a being. Or equivalently: *between* what metaphysics since Aristotle thinks of as substances and what are thought as their properties, there lies the genuinely *ontological* structure of unsaturated concepts and saturated objects, which links sentences in a language to the conditions of their truth. Like the ontological difference itself, the distinction between concept and object thus points, in a fashion that resists direct summarization and also leads to its own original paradoxes of meaning, to the generation of sense at the ontological point of the insistence of a fundamental difference that cannot be positively schematized in a figure or captured as a positive substrate.⁸⁷

This relation between the structure of truth and the proposition is, again, at the conceptual core of the particular conception of sense, as distinct from reference, that Frege articulated a few years after the *Foundations*. According to this conception, the sense of a nominal term is a mode of presentation of or of givenness of a referent, and the sense of a sentence as a whole is a thought with a truth-value. The motivation to which Frege appeals is the distinction is the need to account for the possibility that a *judgment of identity* has the value of positive knowledge.⁸⁸ As Frege recognizes, it is not sufficient, in accounting for this possibility, simply to assume (as on his own earlier account in the *Begriffsschrift*) that the informativeness of an identity judgment consists in its recognition that two *signs* designate the same object. For if that were the case, the identity judgment “a=b” would concern *only* the signs rather than the object itself, and its possible value for knowledge would remain inexplicable. The use of signs is, moreover, “arbitrary” in that anyone can use “the arbitrarily producible event or object as a sign for something.”⁸⁹ In order to explain this value, it is thus necessary to recognize that a positive identity judgment concerns not simply the signs, but rather the different *modes of presentation* of the object itself. Frege thus argues that it is necessary to recognize, beyond or behind the contingencies of the actual uses of signs, the real differences in the ways in which objects are presented and thereby made available as the objects of possible judgments, including judgments of identity, capable of truth. The “realm” of senses is thereby separated from the domain of signs and their use, on one hand, and from the “realm” of references, on the other. The basis for the separation is the need to recognize a constitutive and essential link between the possible *truth* of judgments and the ways their objects are presented or disclosed in them.

The structure of these ways or modes of givenness is spelled out in the concept of objective sense, which accordingly cannot be identified with any ontic domain of entities but rather exhibits the constitutive link between truth and their presentation. This is the motivation, as well, for the Fregean conception, which some commentators have found problematic, according to which the reference of a true or false sentence is one of the two unique objects, “the true” or “the false,” but which we must rather understand, again in the Heideggerian jargon, as pointing to the thought that the employment of a true sentence, in addition to presenting its referent or referents, *also* in a certain way structurally

⁸⁷ And thus, *a fortiori* (as we shall see), a difference that cannot be captured as a “type” of “form” capable of mixing with others, as in the *Sophist*.

⁸⁸ Frege (1892b), p. 151. *Erkenntniswert*; standard translations render this as “cognitive value,” but this is somewhat misleading, given Frege’s thoroughgoing separation of sense from anything “cognitive” in the sense of “psychological.”

⁸⁹ Frege (1892b), p. 152.

presents or co-discloses the specific phenomenon of truth itself. That this structure is manifest in the structural form of the sentence, again, indicates the privileged logical connection between that structural form and “being in the sense of truth.” The structure thereby elicited, and articulated (without being defined) through the articulation of the laws of logic themselves, is the one that Frege identifies in the *Grundgesetze* passage as the objective and non-actual domain of the contents of judgments, itself ultimately demanded by the impersonality of thought.

Only a superficial reading could identify this conception with a “Platonism” in the sense in which that term is usually used today, that in which it refers to a “theory of the forms” as substantial, timelessly existing entities connected to ordinary sensory objects by an obscure relationship of “participation.” The distinction between concepts and objects, for example, by itself suffices to clarify that the unity of a predicative sentence on Frege’s conception is not founded in any relationship between two self-standing entities of any kind. Rather, it is founded in the peculiar kind of unification that occurs in the figuring of a specific object as a definite value of a variable function.⁹⁰ In the further development of this conception of unity made by Tarski, the formal theory of truth turns on the interpretation of this relation as “satisfaction.” The dynamics of this relation are modeled, not by any memetic or representational account of the relation of universals to individuals, but rather by the mathematical set theory developed by Cantor and Frege among others at the inauguration of the analytic tradition. In this connection, it is necessary to consider both the specific relationship of set theory to mathematics, including the mathematics of the infinite, and the inherent paradoxes definitive of this relationship.

In conceiving of the concept of a set as that of a whole in which a plurality, indifferently finite or infinite, of distinct entities “can be thought as one,” Cantor transfigured the ancient conception of the problem of the one and the many on the basis of a new formal theory of the relation between thinking and being itself.⁹¹ Crucial to this transformation is the possibility of formally conceiving of the infinite as the real domain of an ordered succession of positive wholes, by contrast with the conception dominant since Aristotle on which the infinite is thinkable only as the open potentiality of the unlimited. But if the Fregean conception of sense thus points to an original structural domain of formal unity at the basis of the possibility of presentation, it is no mere accident that Frege’s own project of logicist reduction of mathematics founders at the point of the paradox demonstrated by Russell in 1901 at the very formal center of this theory in its naïve conceptualization. In the context of Frege’s attempt to reduce arithmetic truths to purely logical ones in the *Grundgesetze*, this conception has the consequence that is formulated in his notorious basic law V, which requires that every coherent concept pick out a determinate set or range of objects as its extension.⁹² It is this consequence which leads,

⁹⁰ Cf. Dummett (1981, p. 541): “The very sharpness of Frege’s distinction between objects and concepts makes it impossible to compare his doctrines at all fruitfully with those actually advanced by Plato.”

⁹¹ Cf. *The Politics of Logic* (Livingston 2012), chapter 1.

⁹² More technically: Basic Law V says that any two concepts, F and G, have the same value-range if and only if the objects that are Fs are exactly those that are Gs. Under some interpretations, the law itself can actually be separated from the assumption of universal comprehension which is its background in Frege’s system and it has been argued that the law can be upheld as an axiom schema, in the context of more limited comprehension principles (particularly ones that prohibit impredicativity), without producing inconsistencies of the Russellian type. For discussion and an argument to this effect, see Heck (1996).

when applied to the consideration of the totality of beings as a whole, to the contradiction witnessed in Russell's paradox, that of a totality that both is and is not self-membered. This aporetic structure is, as I shall argue in the following chapters, by no means avoidable or dispensable in the context of an ontologically oriented questioning of the meaning and truth of Being itself. Rather, it points, at the very historical limit of the "metaphysical" or ontotheological reference to the ontic totality, to the inherent logical structure of paradox in which the foundations of this reference elicit their own actual incoherence.

Thus, as I shall try to show, the aporias of totality in set theory, far from suggesting a defect or a flaw for the set-theoretical *thought of* the structure of being, can and must be recovered as constituting a *positive* phenomenon and a decisive formal indication of the very underlying structure of the real in which metaphysics (ontotheology) constitutes and decomposes itself. What Russell's paradox and the closely related set-theoretical and semantic paradoxes of totality and reflexivity ultimately witness, in other words, is not a flaw in the set-theoretical *thought of* being, but a flaw in the very structure of being, as it necessarily appears in determining and determined relation to the "ontic" totality of beings. It is in such a paradoxical figure of the ultimate logical incoherence of the presentation of the ontic totality of beings that it is possible, as I shall argue, to trace the event of what Heidegger understand as the contemporary (in)-closure of the "metaphysical" epoch of presence.⁹³

From the perspective of the transformed conception of logical predication suggested by Frege's logic we can better understand the issues involved in Plato's problem of falsehood in the *Sophist*, and also reconsider the merits of the Visitor's specific solution. On a widely accepted line of interpretation of the *Sophist*, the Visitor's solution claims that to utter a falsehood, e.g. "Theaetetus flies," is to say of Theaetetus something that is *different* from everything that is "of" or about him. The Visitor's basic claim with respect to the structure of a falsehood such as "Theaetetus flies" is thus that it is false in that the action (or action-type) signified by the verb ("flies" or "is flying") is different from, or perhaps incompatible with, everything that actually holds of the subject (Theaetetus); or perhaps in that the subject (Theaetetus) is different from everything "of which" the action signified ("flying") actually does hold.⁹⁴ Both the false "Theaetetus flies" and the true "Theaetetus sits" are thus the results of a specific combination of two distinct lexical elements, one of which is the signifier of a person and the other the signifier of a type. In the case of the falsehood, what ultimately makes possible the combination of something that "is not" with respect to Theaetetus with Theaetetus himself is, furthermore, the logical capacity of *difference* to mix with *being* to produce what is *not being* (or what is *different from being*).

There are two problems that must be solved if the account, in this form, is to succeed. First, it must be explained how the relation of mixing between the great types of Being and difference itself produces the structure of predication evident in the false sentence; second, it must be explained how the combination of lexical elements that separately signify a person and an action-type suffices to explain the capacity of a sentence (whether true or false) to *say* something (possibly true or false) at all.

⁹³ For the terminology and structure of "inclosure" see Priest (2002). Cf. also my (2012), esp. chapter 1.

⁹⁴ For a helpful discussion of the position and citations to those who hold it in different varieties, see Crivelli (2012), especially chapter 5.

As Donald Davidson emphasizes in *Truth and Predication*, the Visitor's solution is incapable of answering the second question, and the root of this incapability lies in the way that it answers the first. For because it treats the structure of the sentence as a combination of separately representational elements, the Visitor's theory inevitably produces a vicious infinite regress closely related to the "Third Man" problem that Aristotle had himself found in Plato's account of forms:

The sentence 'Theaetetus sits' has a word that refers to, or names, Theaetetus, and a word whose function is somehow explained by mentioning the property (or form or universal) of Sitting. But the sentence says that Theaetetus *has* this property. If the semantics of the sentence were exhausted by referring to the two entities Theaetetus and the property of Sitting, it would just be a string of names; we would ask where the verb was. The verb, we understand, expresses the relation of instantiation...But this cannot be the end of the matter, since we now have three entities, a person, a property, and a relation, but no verb. When we supply the appropriate verb, we will be forced to the next step, and so on. (pp. 85-86)

In order to solve this problem, it is not sufficient to refer simply to the capacity of forms to mix with and separate from one another; although such a reference might be seen as preceding a more modern or contemporary conception of the logical structure of concepts, what remains obscure is how such a topology of conceptual relations can be related to the possibility of predication itself without producing the regress. The problem, which as Davidson says is just "one of the ways in which the problem of predication may be posed" is, moreover, not one that is solved by Aristotle's invocation of the copula as a connecting term responsible for the unity of the sentence, though one that does not name or represent any entity:

Aristotle seems at one point to suggest that the copula, written separately, or combined with the verb, tells us that the named entity, for instance Theaetetus, *is* an entity with a certain property. It is easy enough to sympathize with Aristotle's insistence that the copula itself brings in no new entity. We sympathize because if it did bring in a new entity, we would once more face the regress. But sympathy is one thing; clear understanding is another. What is impossible to understand is why, if the function of a verb is to introduce a universal, the copula, expressed or not, does not in turn introduce another universal, this time a relation that must be expressed in every sentence. Aristotle has not solved the problem of predication. (pp. 93-94).

Despite his apparent awareness of the issue, Aristotle's theory of the copulative "tie" thus does not solve the problem of the regress that already threatens in the context of the assumption that each significant lexical element (and in particular each verb) represents a separately existing entity. Aristotle's thought, in particular, that the copula is present (whether expressed or unexpressed) in *every* sentence, threatens in fact, in the context of this assumption, to intensify the problem, for the universality of the copula then apparently requires that there be a particular relation that is referred to in *every* sentence insofar as it asserts anything at all, that of predication or of being "in a predicative

sense.” But the attempt to determine the copula as having any such significance inevitably (as Frege says) “miscarries,” producing the infinite regress to which Davidson points.⁹⁵

It remains that something is shown in this miscarriage. In concluding his discussion of Plato’s conception of predication, Davidson gestures toward the way in which Frege’s quantificational apparatus transforms and deepens the problem at its basis:

The notion of ‘places’ in a predicate is the key to the modern concept of a predicate. Any expression obtained from a sentence by deleting one or more singular terms from the sentence counts as a predicate; the spaces left in a predicate when singular terms are removed are the places...The resources of quantificational languages and logic mirror the resources of natural languages well enough to justify treating the problem of predication as it applies in such cases. The problem of this form includes the problem as it came to life in the work of Plato and Aristotle. In its modern form, the problem is both clearer and more formidable – clearer because exactly what counts as a predicate is better defined, more formidable because of the infinity of structures that general quantification and the truth-functional connectives introduce. (pp. 96-97)

If, in particular, the logical conception of the Visitor shares with that of Aristotle the central thought of the *dunamis koinonian* of the psyche, which obscurely combines the problematic of force with that problematic of an ontic or representational combination in the unique nexus of co-presence that is the soul, the Fregean conception decomposes this configuration term for term. It does so, in particular, by insisting upon the problematic distinction of force from the predicate and locating the possibility of the formation of the predicative sentence outside the *nexus* of the finite psyche and in a completely different, non-psychological, and (as Davidson points out) constitutively infinite structure. This is not to say that Frege solves, or even provides the basic ingredients needed to solve, the underlying problem of the relationship of force and sense. Rather, his account of the impersonality of sense provides at most, as I have suggested, the positive terms in which this problem must be grasped and intensified today. As Davidson’s own development of the implications of Frege’s logic and Tarski’s semantic conception in the context of radical interpretation witnesses, these are the terms in which the problematic of truth can be formally *indicated as a problematic* in the logical structure of judgments, or in the structure of language as we use it or apply it in the course of a life.

⁹⁵ Crivelli (2012) argues convincingly that on Plato’s view as expressed by the Visitor, there are no unified or composite entities that are involved in the assertion of sentences (or other acts involving them); rather, like a violin player combining bow and violin in action, in the utterance of a sentence “a speaker puts together two entities (namely an action and an object) by performing a single act in which each of the two entities involved is employed in a distinctive way” (p. 231). The suggestion is reasonable as an interpretation of the Visitor’s views, but it does not solve the problem of regress that Davidson points out. In particular, holding that the utterance of a sentence is itself an event of combination of significant terms of different types does not clarify how these terms gain their own independent significance, and thus how an “action and an object” (rather than simply the terms for them) can be said to be combined by the utterance of the sentence itself. The difficulty, as noted, is sharpened in the case of a false sentence, where either the signified object, the signified action (-instance), or the particular combination asserted or represented to hold between them by the sentence does not exist.

IV

In the 1925-26 course *Logic: The Question of Truth*, given just one year after the *Sophist* course, after describing the structure of the uncovering [*Entdeckens*] of “something as something” as the “basic hermeneutical structure of Dasein” which ultimately underlies the structure of the *logos* and the possibility of its being *about* something, Heidegger considers the specific possibility of the false *logos* through a close analysis of Aristotle’s *Metaphysics*, book 9, chapter 10.⁹⁶ In the chapter, Aristotle discusses the meaning of truth and falsity with respect to both composite and incomposite things. Whereas, with respect to composite things, being amounts to synthetic unity and the truth of statements about them thus depends on whether or not the composite is unified, in the case of non-composite or simple entities or statements about them (Aristotle gives the examples: “the wood is white” and “the diagonal is incommensurable”), neither being nor truth can be understood in terms of *synthesis* and *diaeresis*. In fact, according to Aristotle, in these cases there is *no* possibility of falsehood; all that is possible to is to “simply touch and address” the entity. The possibility of falsehood, error, or deception is thus dependent, according to Aristotle as Heidegger reads him, on the possibility of a synthesis of these ultimate entities into a *unity of co-presence*, whereas this possibility of synthesis is itself, in turn dependent upon the standing existence of the ultimate non-composite elements that are simply and always present.⁹⁷

The twofold analysis confirms, according to Heidegger, that Aristotle understands being as “presenting or presence” [*Präsenz, Anwesenheit*] and understands the “corresponding comportment [*Verhalten*] to beings as beings” as one with the basically “presentative” [*Präsentisch*] character of being the “rendering present” [*Präsentierens*] or “making present” [*Gegenwärtigens*] of something.⁹⁸ Whether it is a case of the synthesis of composite entities or the simple encounter with things that always are, this “making-present” is furthermore, according to Heidegger, a *temporal* phenomenon. In particular, it is “letting a present being be encountered in a now-moment [*Anwesendes in eine Gegenwart begegnen lassen*]” and this “presence-now” is a characteristic of time. [*Gegenwart ist ein Charakter der Zeit*].⁹⁹

As Heidegger suggests, Aristotle’s conception of the synthetic structure of the *logos* which makes falsehood possible is closely related to Plato’s conception of the logical basis of the unity of the sentence, as articulated in the *Sophist*.¹⁰⁰ On both conceptions, in particular, the synthetic unity of the sentence is, on the one hand, the logical unity of subject and predicate, and on the other, the ontological synthesis of basic and eternally subsistent elements. But if *synthesis* thus is, as Heidegger

⁹⁶ GA 21, p. 160 (transl. slightly modified).

⁹⁷ GA 21, pp. 183-84.

⁹⁸ GA 21, pp. 191-92.

⁹⁹ GA 21, pp. 192-93.

¹⁰⁰ GA 21, p. 168.

says, for both Plato and Aristotle a “chameleon-like concept [*schillernder Begriff*], sometimes logical, sometimes ontological – or more precisely, usually both at the same time...”, then the critical question of the temporality of the *logos* requires that this synthetic conception *itself* be further interrogated in terms of the conception of temporality that makes *it* possible.¹⁰¹ This conception is, as Heidegger argues, none other than the conception of presence as grounded in the unity of a “now,” or in the simultaneous co-presence that allows the articulate structure of the *eide* to appear together in the unified nexus of the sentence and in the unified cognitive act of the thinking soul.

Once the question is posed, it is no longer possible, Heidegger suggests, to see the structure of the *logos* as it is involved in making linguistic statements *simply* as a matter of synthesis at all.¹⁰² Rather, it is necessary to undertake a deeper analysis of the specific way in which the structure of the *logos*, and with it truth or falsehood, is bound up (in what Heidegger admits is still an “enigmatic” way) with an underlying structure of time. The task here suggested, specifically, is to “use our insight into the inner connection between truth – or uncoveredness as presence-now – and being as presence” to elicit a more fundamental connection between truth and time. As a guideline for this task, Heidegger proposes the thesis that “truth, being, and consequently falsehood, synthesis, and assertion are in some kind of, up until now, wholly obscure sense, connected [*im Zusammenhang*] with the phenomenon of time,” and proposes to use the specific conclusions of the analysis of Aristotle’s account of falsehood as a basis for demonstrating these connections.¹⁰³ This points, in particular, to the project of a “phenomenological chronology” which will demonstrate how the phenomena of assertion, truth, and *logos* are “essentially” characterized by time and rooted in its underlying structure.

Near the beginning of the summer 1925 course, *History of the Concept of Time*, Heidegger further specifies the task of such a phenomenological chronology as that of a “history of the discovery of time [*Geschichte der Entdeckung der Zeit*]” and a “history of its conceptual interpretation [*begrifflichen Interpretation*]” that amounts to a “history of the question of the being of entities” and in particular of “the attempt to uncover [*entdecken*] entities in their being.”¹⁰⁴ This investigation will take as its guideline the particular understanding of time that has made it possible to determine the various domains of reality according to their temporal characteristics, for instance as “temporal, extratemporal” or “supratemporal reality.”¹⁰⁵ The phenomenological chronology thus investigates in particular the temporal conditions for the separation of domains of entities, most significantly the separation of the domains of “nature” and “history,” and provides the possibility of indicating the “original and undivided context of subject matter [*Sachzusammenhang*]” that “remains hidden” behind the division by illuminating the specifically temporal basis of the concepts of positive science and their origin in pretheoretical experience.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰¹ GA 21, p. 168.

¹⁰² GA 21, p. 161.

¹⁰³ GA 21, p. 198.

¹⁰⁴ GA 20, p. 8.

¹⁰⁵ GA 20, p. 8.

¹⁰⁶ GA 20, p. 2, p. 6.

The investigation amounts, Heidegger says, to “what I call a *productive logic*”; this is, in particular, “an anticipatory disclosure and conceptual penetration of potential domains of objects for the sciences”.¹⁰⁷

Unlike traditional philosophy of science [*Wissenschaftstheorie*], which proceeds after the fact of an accidental, historically given science in order to investigate its structure, such a logic leaps ahead into the primary field of subject matter [primäre Sachfeld] of a possible science and first makes available the basic structure of the possible object of the science by disclosing the constitution of the being [Seinsverfassung] of that field. This is the procedure of the *original logic* as it was put forward by Plato and Aristotle, of course only within very narrow limits.¹⁰⁸

The particular need for such an investigation into the possibility of the domains of objects and objectivities studied in the various fields of science is shown, Heidegger says, by the “crisis of the sciences” much discussed at the time. Specifically, the sciences have thus lost the “original understanding of their subject matter” that is needed to give them a positive ontological foundation, throwing them back upon the tendency, and the need, to secure their basic concepts in a more original way and thus “forge their way back to the field of subject matter which is thematizable in their research.”¹⁰⁹ But although the need for this renewed fundamental reflection is thus sharpened and made evident by the situation of crisis, it points to the appropriate way to further develop the sciences positively, for “genuine progress in the sciences occurs only in this field of reflection [*Vorbesinnung*]” (i.e. in “the attempt to secure ...concepts in a more original understanding of” a particular science’s “subject matter.”)¹¹⁰ The phenomenon of crisis thus points to the need, and the possibility, of a more original logical research grounded in the consideration of the specific structure of *temporality*, and Heidegger next points to a series of examples of contemporary sciences whose individual “crises” manifest this need.

The first and most “characteristic” example that Heidegger gives is in fact the crisis in the *foundations of mathematics* that yielded the dispute between Hilbert’s formalism and the intuitionism of Brouwer and Weyl.¹¹¹ The dispute, which developed over a period of several decades but came to a head in the late 1920s, concerned centrally the question whether the foundations of the mathematical sciences can be understood as consisting in purely formal propositions within an axiomatic system or whether “what is primarily given” is, rather, “the specific structure of the objects themselves” (including the continuum in geometry, which, as Heidegger notes, provides the basis for the integral and differential calculus).¹¹² In the dispute, “what is *prima facie* the most firmly established science manifests the tendency toward a

¹⁰⁷ GA 20, p. 2.

¹⁰⁸ GA 20, pp. 2-3.

¹⁰⁹ GA 20, pp. 3-4.

¹¹⁰ GA 20, pp. 3-4. Cf. *Sein und Zeit*, p. 9: “The real ‘movement’ of the sciences takes place when their basic concepts undergo a more or less radical revision which is transparent to itself. The level which a science has reached is determined by how far it is *capable* of a crisis in its basic concepts.” There follows a compressed version of the *History of the Concept of Time* discussion of the present crises in various sciences, with the formalist/intuitionist crisis in mathematics again at the head of the list.

¹¹¹ GA 20, pp. 4-5.

¹¹² GA 20, pp. 4-5. For a helpful overview, including original sources, see Mancosu (1998).

transposition of the entire science onto new and more original foundations.”¹¹³ Although Heidegger gives further examples of the contemporary crises in other existing sciences including biology and physics, the problems involved in the “foundations crisis” in mathematics have a certain priority (both marked and unmarked) for the more general questions of the phenomenological chronology itself. In particular, insofar as mathematics provides a general grounding for empirical science as a whole and thus determining the “domain” of nature itself, the issue of the availability of and proper mode of access to mathematical truths and objects amounts to a crisis for the positive possibility of “mathematical” empirical science as such, not limited to any specific ontic dimension of objects or objectivity. Relatedly, as Heidegger here points out, the idea of a phenomenological chronology is intimately connected with the question of the *measurement* of time.¹¹⁴ This is the question of how the continuity of “natural reality” becomes accessible to thought and understanding on the basis of a “mathematical” understanding of its structure, including the relation of its flowing continuity to the discrete moments or instants thought to compose it.

The issues taken up in the dispute between the formalists and the intuitionists, including those of the basis of mathematical knowledge and the relationship of the discrete to the continuous, thus bear implications for the broader question of the fundamental constitution of temporality as it is understood both within and without the natural sciences. But if the crisis in the foundations of mathematics thus points to the question of the “more original” foundations of the domain of mathematical objectivity, bringing this question to light in the context of a philosophical chronology also suffices to illuminate the more general question of the basis of the determination of being as presence itself. If, in particular, the “domain” of mathematical objectivity is historically determined as that of the “extra-“ or a-temporality of what is thinkable *a priori*, then the specific ontological structure of this “domain” illustrates, in a privileged way, the temporal basis for the idea of the *a priori* itself. This illumination, as we shall see, involves bringing to light the temporal problematic of the *a priori*, determined as logically structured and as distinctively accessible to specifically logical thought. But this problematic is just that of the questionable point of the intersection of mathematics and logic, to which Frege’s own researches into number are, of course, unremittingly devoted. Seen in its broadest sense, these problems are, again, none other than those to which Plato’s visitor responds, namely those of the specific temporality of *thought* in relation to what is purely *thinkable* in being itself. Although the specific problematic at issue between the logicism, intuitionism, and formalism of the 1920s was never univocally resolved, but rather transposed into a whole different domain by logical and syntactical research in the subsequent decades (chiefly by Gödel’s incompleteness results in 1931), its further development, and in particular an examination of the implications of the fundamental inquiry into the *infinite* from which it arises, are thus requisite for the contemporary continuation and radicalization of Heidegger’s own questioning of ontological chronology.

In the 1928 course, *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic*, Heidegger points to the particular way in which such a chronological investigation of traditional logic deepens the problematic of the nature of “reason” in the sense of “ground.” In particular, according to Heidegger’s reading in the course, Leibniz,

¹¹³ GA 20, p. 5.

¹¹⁴ GA 20, p. 7.

along with the tradition since Plato, understands the specific structure of the *logos* as that of a *synthesis*; here, a judgment is, “in the broadest formal sense,” a “relationship between representations” or “of concepts”.¹¹⁵ For Leibniz, this is essentially a structure of inclusion: in a true judgment, in particular, the predicate or its concept is “in some way” involved or included in the concept of the subject.¹¹⁶ The consideration, according to Heidegger, wavers between an ontological level, on which the containment is the real containment (or *inesse*) of a property in a substance, and a purely logical one, on which the primary relation of containment is exhibited in the true sentence itself.¹¹⁷ For both determinations, the specific nature of the connection is furthermore (insofar as truth is *idem esse* or *identity*) here thought as the basis for the unity of the unitary structure of the sentence or judgment as such. On Heidegger’s reading, this conception in turn provides the basis for Leibniz’s own conception of the monad as individuated drive, capability of representative apprehension and reflection of the totality of the world.¹¹⁸ It further underwrites, Heidegger suggests, Kant’s subsequent determination of the highest principle of subjective unity as that of the synthesis of transcendental apperception.¹¹⁹

Leibniz’s notorious principle of sufficient reason expresses the implication of this originally and undecidably logical/ontological unity in identity for the problem of *grounding*. This is the problem of the nature of beings, understood ontologically and metaphysically as the problem of the *basis* of beings as a whole. In this form, the problem of grounding is, according to Heidegger, specifically that of a “rather than” which takes up being insofar as it asks: why beings *rather than* nothing?¹²⁰ If the problematic of grounding thereby identified as developed on the basis of an original ontological/logical unity of identity must be radicalized along the lines suggested by invoking the problematic of the ontological difference between being and beings, the radicalization replaces the unity of the monad as subject with the “transcendence” of Dasein, understood in relation to its constitutive possibility of disclosing its world. Such a relationship is not simply a relation of Dasein to an ontic totality of entities. Nevertheless, in a suggestive “appendix” to the first section of the second part of the course, Heidegger points to the need to develop, alongside or before the fundamental ontology of Dasein, a “metontology” capable of considering “nature” as a possible and thinkable totality of beings as a whole within which Dasein *itself* is an actual existent:

Since being is there only insofar as beings are already there [*indem auch schon gerade Seiendes im Da ist*], fundamental ontology has in it the latent tendency toward a original metaphysical transformation which becomes possible only when being is understood in its whole problematic...In other words, the possibility that being is there in the understanding [*das es Sein im Verstehen gibt*] has as a presupposition the factual existence [*Existenz*] of Dasein, and this in turn presupposes the factual extantness [*Vorhandsein*] of nature ... From this there results the

¹¹⁵ *Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Logik im Ausgang vom Leibniz*. (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1978). Transl. by Michael Heim as *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic*. (Indianapolis: Indiana U. Press, 1984) (page #s as in translation). GA 26, p. 38.

¹¹⁶ GA 26, pp. 40-42.

¹¹⁷ GA 26, p. 44.

¹¹⁸ GA 26, p. 112.

¹¹⁹ GA 26, p. 85.

¹²⁰ GA 26, pp. 141-42. Cf. *Introduction to Metaphysics*.

necessity of a special problematic which has as its theme beings as a whole. This new investigation resides in the essence of ontology itself and is the result of its overturning [Umschlag], its *metabole*. I designate this problematic: *metontology*.¹²¹

This problem of Dasein's possible reflection of the world from a position within it is further manifest, according to Heidegger, in the structure of "world-entry" [*Welteingang*] in which both particular entities, and the more general domains in which they exist and are definable, become accessible and possibly intelligible to Dasein.¹²² As grounded in the basically *temporal* phenomenon of the constitution of a "horizon of possibility in general" which subsequently allows any definite possibility to be "expected," both Dasein's structural transcendence and the phenomenon of world-entry it allows are themselves based, according to Heidegger, on a more on a more "primal" "temporalization of temporality" in which underlying temporality constitutes itself in a particular way.¹²³ Both the structure of Dasein's transcendence and that of the underlying (self-)temporalization of basic temporality itself, remain, however, in a questionable relationship to the phenomenon of the world understood as the *totality* of beings:

Time is essentially a self-opening and expanding [*Ent-spannen*] into a world. I will not go into the comparison [with Leibniz] any further, particularly the question of the extent to which one might conceive the interpretation of Dasein as temporality in a universal-ontological way – just as the monadology is presented as an exposition of the whole universe of beings. This is a question which I myself am not able to decide, one which is completely unclear to me.¹²⁴

What is literally undecidable for Heidegger in 1928 is thus the question of the relation of Dasein's being in the world to the ontic totality of beings *and thus* to the temporality at the basis of the possibility of totalizing them, or of *quantifying* them as a whole. As I shall argue in subsequent chapters, this undecidability of the question of world and world-entry in relation to the ontic totality of beings, which remains characteristic of Heidegger's inquiry into the conditions for the historical intelligibility of beings through its whole itinerary, can also be understood as a positive and constitutive phenomenon, and thereby recovered for phenomenological research. If, in particular, the problem of world-entry is always a problem of the constitution of the (infinite) sense of the whole of beings *for* a (finite) Dasein, the undecidability indicated here is intimately connected to the problems of reflection and totality which emerge from the aporeatic relationship of finitude and the ("mathematical") infinite themselves. This is the problem of how an "infinite" structure – including eminently the kind of structure that characterizes the "sense" of beings as a whole – emerges and is thought at a particular time by finite beings as bearing on the determination of the whole of what is. As we shall see in more detail, the basic problem of limits and the unlimited that emerges here substantially recurs in relation to the late Heideggerian consideration of the constitution of the metaphysical epoch of presence and its problematic "closure," the withdrawal of being as the matter for thinking, and the exteriority of *Ereignis* to the metaphysical epoch that it ostensibly both determines and exceeds. In venturing to think the problem of the

¹²¹ GA 26, p. 199 (transl. slightly modified).

¹²² GA 26, p. 270.

¹²³ GA 26, p. 270

¹²⁴ GA 26, p. 271.

metaphysical intelligibility of entities from out of a more original difference, Heidegger will have evoked this problematic constantly, even as it is prevented from appearing at the surface of his text by the assumption that the infinite can *only* be thought as the absolute, or in the figure of the onto-theological closure of a self-consistent One-All.

IV

As we have seen, both Heidegger and Frege, in different but complementary ways, thus point to a transformative deepening of the problematic that is already laid out in the Visitor's discussion of the positions of the materialists and the friends of the forms. The problematic is that of the *relationship of thought to being* that allows, within what is there determined as a human life, for the *specific possibility of thinking being as such*. If the solution suggested by the Visitor to the problem of this relationship has set the terms for the subsequent development of thought about it in the Western tradition, both Heidegger and Frege, in their radical thinking about the logical structure of the sentence, challenge the specific solution by deepening the general problem to which it responds. Heidegger does so by pointing toward the more original *ontological* phenomenon of unconcealment, which relates Dasein to the very structure of world as such, thereby relating Dasein's factual being back to its sense, and thereby to the Being of beings. Along similar lines, Frege does so by pointing to the place of impersonal and ineffectual *sense* and to its constitutive link with indefinable truth. But if truth is indefinable for Frege, being is equally so for Heidegger, and for similar reasons.¹²⁵ In particular, in both cases, the attempt at definition collapses the phenomenon into an empirical or ontic one that appears then to be both ubiquitous and empty. This is the basis of the prejudice which, according to Heidegger, keeps us from raising the question of Being today and of the inevitable vicious regress which, according to Frege and Davidson, results from any ontic account of the basis of predicative truth. In neither case, however, does the impossibility of definition point to the emptiness or meaninglessness of the phenomenon itself. Quite to the contrary, in fact, for both philosophers, the re-interpretation of what at first appears as the mere indefinability of being and truth as, instead, a positive phenomenon grounded in the matters themselves is the first step toward a systematic clarification of their sense.

For both philosophers, as we have seen, this reconsideration implies a radical challenge to *correspondence* theories of truth, according to which truth consists in the structural resemblance, correlation, or representation of a thing or state of affairs by a sentence or mental item. The challenge is radical because what it questions in both cases is the very possibility and ground of *identity*, thereby undermining the thought that truth can be understood, in any sense, as having any ontic ground in antecedently *identifiable* beings at all. Thus, in both philosophers, the thought that truth can be

¹²⁵“‘Being’ cannot be derived from higher concepts by definition, nor can it be presented through lower ones. But does this imply that ‘Being’ no longer offers a problem? Not at all. We can infer only that ‘Being’ cannot have the character of an entity [*ist nicht so etwas wie Seiendes*]. Thus we cannot apply to Being the concept of ‘definition’ as presented in traditional logic, which itself has its foundations in ancient ontology and which, within certain limits, provides a justifiable way of characterizing “entities”. The indefinability of Being does not eliminate the question of its meaning; it demands that we look that question in the face.” (GA 2, p. 4)

grounded in identity cedes to a more basic thinking of *difference* as the positive basis for the phenomenon of truth. To identify this positive phenomenon, in each case, it is necessary to recognize a specific mode of phenomenalization operating at the very boundaries of the ontic totality and indicated, from within the specific activities, concerns, and judgments of a human life, as the initially obscure supplement of their sense.

These connections point, as I shall argue in detail in chapters 3 and 4, to the contemporary possibility of a unified *logic of truth*, drawing both from Heidegger and from theory in the analytic tradition. This account clarifies the structure of truth along two perpendicular but complementary directions: first, that of the “semantical” description of the logical structure of language as such; and that of the “ontological” conditions for the disclosure of beings. Both dimensions can be pointed out, as I shall argue, by means of a unitary configuration of formal indication; and both dimensions, in their articulation of the structure of judgments and practices of everyday life, are essentially “hermeneutic” in the sense of a “hermeneutics of facticity.” This conjoint hermeneutic configuration cross-cuts at a basic methodological level the usually assumed “divide” between the methods and results of “analytic” and “continental” philosophy.

The suggestion of such a reconciliation of analytic methods of primary linguistic/logical analysis with Heidegger’s ontological inquiry into the truth of beings will seem to some flatly incompatible with the criticism that Heidegger constantly makes of what he treats as a constitutive and misguided prejudice of traditional logic, namely its tendency to treat the linguistic *assertion* [*Aussage*] as the basic locus of truth. By contrast with this prejudice, as Heidegger recurrently emphasizes in *Being and Time* and elsewhere, for the ontological problematic truth is to be seen as *aletheia*, or unconcealment, and thus as primarily and essentially a phenomenon whose locus is the disclosure of beings rather than assertions, sentences, judgments, or anything linguistic in nature. Developing this criticism, some have interpreted Heidegger as attributing to Frege and much or all of the analytic tradition a “logical prejudice” that they share with the “logical tradition” since Aristotle. This prejudice consists, in particular, in seeing the logical structure of the predicative sentence as the “basic” or fundamental place of truth, as opposed to those non- or pre-linguistic sites at which entities first manifest themselves (perhaps paradigmatically in the course of engaged activity and non-theoretical practice).¹²⁶ The suggestion is, I think, overstated on the basis of Heidegger’s text and the implication of irreconcilability between the two conceptions of the basis of truth accordingly misguided. The suggestion that there is a basic disagreement about the “primacy” of the sentence as the “basic” locus of truth has little meaning, in particular, unless it is further specified what sense of “primary” and “basic” is at issue. And once this sense is disambiguated, the impression of a deep irreconcilability between the two conceptions can, as I argue in more detail in

¹²⁶ This suggestion is made, e.g., by Daniel Dahlstrom in *Heidegger’s Concept of Truth* (Cambridge U. Press, 2001), especially pp. 23-28. In particular, Dahlstrom holds that various partisans of the “Fregean tradition” (p. 24) hold the “logical prejudice” of “conceiving truth primarily as a property of a proposition” (p. 17) insofar as they have conceived of “a ‘thought’ or ‘proposition’...as the truth-bearer” (p. 25) or insofar as they have held “redundancy,” “semantic,” or “pragmatic” theories of truth (pp. 25-28). Dahlstrom does not, however, discuss the implications of Frege’s argument for the indefinability of truth, which has, as we have seen, the consequence that truth is precisely *not* the property of a proposition or any other entity, and also that any definitional *theory* of truth is untenable.

chapter 3, accordingly dissipate. In particular, if truth is not basically “logical” for Heidegger, it nevertheless remains that, as in the title of the 1925-26 course, the *question* of logic *is* in a basic sense the *question* of truth, and the problematic of truth is unthinkable without a constitutive reference to the problems of logic that unfold and point to it. This is not to say that developing a twofold conception of logic that takes account of the insights of Heidegger’s ontological interrogation as well as the analytic development of the truth-conditional structure of sentences does not involve broadening our understanding of logic. In particular, as we will see, we must broaden this conception beyond what is involved in the view of logic, dominant since Frege, on which it is simply or primarily a symbolic calculus. But it is to say that the critique Heidegger voices of the substantialist and representationalist assumptions underlying the traditional subject/predicate logic itself gives us simply no reason to suppose that the analytic problematic of the logic of language inaugurated by Frege must also be rejected on its basis.

Further, the suggestion of a unitary hermeneutic configuration points to the possibility of deepening *both* approaches to sense and truth, each in ways suggested by the other. In particular, as I shall argue, on the one hand Heidegger’s ontological and temporal problematic suggests the possibility of an ontological interpretation of the specific conception of *the being of language* underlying the possibility of a Davidsonian and other structural accounts of linguistic meaning. But on the other, the problematic of the basis of *number and mathematics* that arises in Frege’s logicist project, and in particular becomes manifest with the constitutive problems of set theory in its dual reference to totality and infinity points the way to a deepening of the Heideggerian investigation into the ontotheological and metaphysical determination of the being of beings and *its* “historical” temporality.

The second suggestion may admittedly seem to fly in the face of Heidegger’s own self-description of his methods; for as is well known, he often and unequivocally rejects the applicability of “logic” in the sense of formal, mathematical logic or logistics to the ontological/hermeneutic problematic. The point of this rejection is not, as is abundantly evident from Heidegger’s own use of the terminology and methodology of “formal indication,” to reject the relevance of any and all formal methods to the problems of hermeneutics. Rather, it is to oppose what is here seen as the “empty,” merely calculative or “formalistic” technique of logical symbol manipulation to the substantiality of a concrete and disclosive indication or demonstration of the things themselves. The opposition has its roots in the distinction that Husserl adopts from Kant between a “formal” logic capable only of such empty calculation and a “transcendental” one capable of demonstrating the “truth” of beings in the sense of manifestation. But it is in fact overcome in Frege’s radical conception of senses as modes of presentation and as thereby constitutively linked to truth. On this conception, as we have seen, the constitutive nexus of sense is the domain of *impersonal* presentation, or of a presentation of beings and truths that founds and decomposes equally the identity of beings and the possibility of linguistic reference to them.

Frege’s conception is certainly not without its own constitutive problems, including eminently those involved in the possibility of the extensional reference to *entities (or objects) as a whole*. But I shall argue (chapters 6 and 7) that these problems, including ultimately the problematic of the relationship between the finite and the infinite which the set-theoretical aporias of totality and infinity display in precise form, cannot ultimately be separated from an inquiry which interrogates the formal and

ontological conditions for the possible presentation of entities in their being. As I argue there, these conditions range up to and include the formal conditions for the “metaphysical” determination of being as presence itself. It is, moreover, ultimately necessary in the context of this problematic to find terms and means structurally to indicate the place of truth as the anonymous, a-subjective and ineffectual structural “place” of unconcealment. To find these terms and means is not, as I shall argue, to dispute or cast doubt on Heidegger’s recurrently reiterated claim of the ultimate dependence of disclosive truth on Dasein. It is, though, to think Dasein itself, outside any reference to the biological or psychological nature of the human subject, as the *impersonal* structure of truth; and the place of unconcealment, outside any reference to entities, as the *ineffective* structure of being.

For this conception, there will be no *privileged* access to truth, not even the privilege that determines Dasein within the limit of an “authentic” finitude whose individuating end is found in its capability of death.¹²⁷ It is necessary, in other words, to follow out the ultimate consequences of the claim that Dasein is, independently of any human or subjective determination, a structure of being-in-the-world; and one that cannot any longer be thought as a subject of capacities in any sense. Such a conception will be, I shall argue, the one requisite to any legitimately *realist* conception of being and truth that also takes seriously the implications of Heidegger’s ontological interpretation of truth as unconcealment. It is such a conception of truth that is moreover needed, as we shall see, in order to overcome what has seemed to many commentators to be a significant limitation of Heidegger’s approach to truth in relation to ontological constitution: its apparent failure adequately to treat *ahistorical* events and occurrences in the realm of nature (up to and including the “natural” origin of Dasein itself).

If we look beyond Heidegger’s own disavowal of the problems of the “foundations” of mathematics and number, it is actually possible, as I shall argue, to discern and verify in other parts of Heidegger’s text the applicability and even a certain conceptual *priority* of these problems in connection with the ontological problematic of being, time, and history. In discussing the possibility and structure of the “metaphysical” conception of being as constant, standing presence, Heidegger often makes reference to a conception of time based ultimately on the domain of nature and the kind of (regular, countable, calculable and mathematizable) time characteristic of it. In the culmination of metaphysics, i.e. the contemporary regime of technological enframing correlative to the dominance of a “calculative thinking” that appropriates objects and resources as standing reserve, it is the calculability or mathematical form of natural science that ultimately co-determines the possibility of the technological regime of this handling and trafficking with beings. The two sides of this configuration – the dominance of calculative thinking modeled on mathematical computation, on one hand, and the treatment of beings as raw material for mechanistic manipulation and trafficking – converge, in a way that is predicted by Heidegger himself, though never developed in detail, in the pervasiveness of what is today called “information technology.”

¹²⁷ Cf. Jacques Derrida, *Aporias: Dying – awaiting (one another at) the ‘limits of truth’* (transl. Thomas Dutoit, Stanford U. Press, 1993). For some trenchant critical considerations about Derrida’s position, see Iain Thomson, “Can I Die? Derrida on Heidegger on Death”, *Philosophy Today* 43:1, (1999), pp. 29-42.

This pervasiveness is linked, both historically and conceptually, very closely to the developments of contemporary mathematical logic inaugurated by Frege. In particular, the specific conceptual origin of the computer lies in Alan Turing's analysis of the implications of Frege's logic, at the very boundaries of its effectiveness, for the formalization of the specific question of the solubility of mathematical problems by regular, algorithmic means. As I shall argue in chapter 5, the undecidability and essential ineffectivity that Turing's results elicit point in a significant way to the positive phenomenon of undecidability at the limits of calculative effectivity themselves.¹²⁸ The regime of "calculative thinking" that comes to dominance and to enjoy an unquestioned privilege in the contemporary configuration of "late capitalist" life and *praxis* is thus, as I shall argue, already prepared from long afar by an implicit or explicit thought of the basis and applicability of number, which underlies a specific conception of time.¹²⁹ Given this, the positive phenomenon of undecidability and the ultimate ineffectivity that it elicits provide essential *temporal* terms in which this regime can be interrogated and even perhaps transformed.

This leaves, in the other direction, the issue that will perhaps appear to many Heideggerians to be the biggest thematic obstacle to a sympathetic reading of Frege's project: Frege's determination (or metaphorization) of the realm of sense as a *timeless* or *extra-temporal* "third realm" outside the domains of physical reality and the individual-subjective. In relation to the problem of the origin of number and mathematics, the determination may seem to replicate the traditional determination of the temporality of mathematical beings as those which are maximally separate from history and temporal becoming. The question arises of how the being of mathematical objects can be thought on the basis of a more originally grounded interpretation of the modes of temporal being themselves. The question, if posed in relation to Frege's literal or metaphorical picture of the "third realm," bears a strong resemblance to the critical question the young Heidegger repeatedly posed to Husserl's own determination of phenomenological "laws of essence" as grounded in a realm of ideality wholly distinct from the spatiotemporal world: the question of the *being* of such a realm in relation to time. Here, the question of the "a priori" as a specific temporal designation of ontological existence is not just criticized, but also modified and deepened in Heidegger's particular inquiry into the conditions for the possibility of a temporality that transpires structurally "before" all that is empirical.

¹²⁸ Compare also *The Politics of Logic*, especially chapters 6 and 10.

¹²⁹ In particular if, as Heidegger suggests, the "metaphysical" interpretation of being as presence is itself determined by a particular conception of time, the inauthentic, everyday or "vulgar" one according to which time is a succession of present, punctual "nows", this determination is explicitly and decisively co-original in Aristotle's *Physics* with a particular and specific conception of the nature of number. According to this conception, time is definitively that which can be mathematically counted and numbered. It is thus possible to see the history of metaphysics, as Heidegger describes it, as in fact opened and closed with determinate and decisive reference to number and mathematics. In this respect, the total "mathematization" of nature achieved in the Enlightenment by Descartes and Galileo is but one determinative moment of a larger regime of thinking and *praxis* that opens with Aristotle and closes or culminates in the contemporary dominance of technological enframing. For more discussion, see chapters 8 and 9 below.

In reading Heidegger's problematic together with the "analytic" one that arises from Frege's initial conception of the atemporality of sense, it is thus necessary to pose the question of the *temporal* determination of the structural picture of language that dominates in the analytic tradition. This is the picture on which language as a whole is a structural configuration of signs governed in their combination and use by comprehensive, logically tractable rules. In fact, in the tradition inaugurated and underwritten by this conception, the underlying logical or grammatical structure of language appears in various guises. For example, it appears not only (as in Frege) as a timeless, supersensible structure of laws and norms, but again as a system of conventions (Carnap), as the empirical regularities of language use (Quine), as the explicitation of what is grasped or understood implicitly in coming to understand and master a language (Davidson, Dummett, Brandom), or again as the unique resource of a special type of "imagination", the "projective imagination" that unfolds and projects the ordinary uses of words into ever-new contexts (Cavell). In each case, though, the inherent problems of this structuralist conception, including its essential aporias, can be read as pointing to the problem of the being of language and its unique relation to the problem of being itself.

It is thus necessary, in order to grasp and reawaken the ontological problematic as it characterizes our present, to perform a twofold reading with respect to the philosophical traditions that dominate today: on the one hand, to interrogate Heidegger's text with respect to the question of the basis and status of number and mathematics as it is linked both to the problem of thinking the totality of beings and to the problem of time; and on the other, to perform an "ontological" reading of the conception of the structure of language that dominates in the analytic tradition and determines its own key problems and insights. The result of such a twofold reading should be to elicit terms and problems with a critical and potentially transformative bearing on the overarching determinants of contemporary life and practice insofar as they are rooted in the contemporary ontological situation itself. In particular, if, as Heidegger suggests, this contemporary situation is characterized by a certain exhaustion or completion of the metaphysical epoch of presence, then such terms for its critique can be found by developing the distant implications of the original Parmenidean unity of thinking and being, as they figure in the motivation and support of those individual and social practices, habits, techniques and technologies that most globally characterize the organization of life on the planet today.