

From the Philosophy of Language back to Thinking:  
A journey towards a Heideggerian understanding of language

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## **Abstract**

This work examines the works of Heidegger in order to search for an understanding of the nature of language. The understanding sought is not assumed at the start; that is, no assumptions are made about what language might be, or even if language is at all, as such.

Heidegger declared that language is beyond the philosophy of language that he understood, but, if not the understanding of language that is studied and examined generally, how did he believe we should understand language? This work attempts to address that question. It allows Heidegger to indicate a path towards an understanding of language, but tries to make no assumptions, not only of where the path leads, but even of the nature of the path itself.

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## Introduction

Within the works of Heidegger, language holds a special place. The 'turn' within Heidegger's writing is considered a turn towards language. The problem is, though, what is 'language'? For the most part, it is assumed that language is either a common sense understanding of the term or deductions from that common sense understanding. When the term 'language' is said, the assumption is made that we know exactly what is meant. This is not the course taken here. In order to understand how Heidegger used the term I will not use any preconceived understandings or, at least, preconceived understandings will not be taken as an endpoint of the explication, but the starting point. That does not mean that no understanding of the term will be carried into the exploration, just that there is a willingness to question all preconceived ideas and allow those understandings to point the way towards the goal of a Heideggerian understanding of language. Heidegger wrote in German but I do not attempt to translate *die Sprache* into English, instead, I take the term 'language' only as a pointer. The term is not taken as a term that can be understood by reference to other terms or sets of terms in another language, but as it is used within the text. The objection could be made that, as the text is being taken in translation, then the meanings of the text have already been corrupted. This is correct, but it misses the point that all readings of texts are interpretations and so are always in danger of being corrupted from the start. The problem that the text is being taken after it has been processed by an interpreter does not mean that nothing can be said about the text, only that the text, being once removed from the original, has

to be considered in a way that allows the terms used to be thought about in a way that frees them to break away from the fixed meanings they normally have if they had been written initially in our native language. This means that I try to take the terms used with great caution even though they appear to be just the normal terms we use in our day-to-day lives. Even though I read the text in an English translation, I try to read it as though it is written in another language where the meanings of the terms are not fixed and are, at the outset, terms that I cannot be sure I understand. The terms encountered when reading Heidegger, then, have to be interpreted even though they appear to be in our own tongue. As this is the case, the possible difficulty of reading Heidegger in a language other than German not only disappears, but the disadvantage becomes an advantage: at the outset, the terms are taken as having meanings that could diverge from our preconceived ideas.

I try to approach the subject of 'language' from a position of ignorance. As Heidegger is being interpreted from an interpretation, I hold little faith in preconceived ideas of what is read. Each of the terms used are treated with suspicion and the meaning gathered from the text is one that can never be taken as absolute. I address these considerations in chapter one. The chapter examines the 'methodology' used but the first thing to consider is what should be understood by the term 'methodology'. As I am involved in exploring the works of Heidegger, who spoke against the use of any methodology, 'methodology' must be understood in a specific way. The chapter starts by considering this issue and



showing how the 'methodology' used here differs from activities implied by the normal use of the term. What is proposed is that the 'methodology' to be used is actually a mode of reading the text that is in contrast to a mechanical reading that might be normally called a method. The chapter goes on to consider what Heidegger said he was doing in *Being and Time*; and, in the light of this, considers how the text has to be read – the 'methodology' needed for a Heideggerian understanding. This gives us a statement of intent. It declares what we want to discover and how we intend to discover it. The 'what', though, has to be taken in a way that allows the 'what' to be understood, not as a thing that lies in the distance - something that is not known in any detail at the outset, but something about which we hope to gain some understanding - but the 'what' is, at this stage, totally mysterious. I take the position that I have no idea of where the search might lead me, but I start out by furnishing myself with tools that would be reasonable to take on any search. I give myself a direction and a means of travelling, that is, I take it that I am making my way towards an understanding of language from an ontological perspective using a reading of the texts that takes the terms, not in a static way, but in a way that allows me to move towards my goal. This chapter is to point in the direction of the road that has to be followed and the mode of transport that has to be used for such a journey if an understanding of 'language' within the works of Heidegger is to be achieved. It does not give any preconceived idea of the nature of the goal, but tries to make clear that the goal has to be thought of with a completely open mind: not only must 'language' not be thought about as a certain thing, but it should not even be

presupposed that language is a thing at all.

The second chapter explores language within *Being and Time*. The reason for using this single work at this point is the place of importance given to it by the philosophical community. This importance is justified as *Being and Time* gives an account of Dasein, however, the account it gives must be taken with great caution. Just as I try to take 'language' with an open mind, I try to take 'Dasein' in the same way. By not translating 'Dasein', there is the possibility that its meaning can become mysterious. This is what is required. The term should become so mysterious that any preconceived idea of even the class of terms into which it might fall is lost. I try to understand 'Dasein' but with no idea whether it is verb, noun, adjective or any other part of speech.

*Being and Time* can be read in a way that allows the terms to be understood as references to things. There is nothing to prevent the reader taking a term in *Being and Time* and understanding that term only as a reference to a definition taken as an autonomous whole. This is the way in which *Being and Time* is often read but, by reading it in such a way, it changes from being a fundamental ontological investigation into being a scientific anthropology. This reading, though, is understandable: the work, as Heidegger himself understood, lends itself to such a reading despite Heidegger stating that it was supposed to be a work of fundamental ontology and so very much not a piece of scientific anthropology. The problem is that to understand *Being and Time* in the sense

required for it to become fundamental ontology requires it to be read in a way that would allow this, but this way of reading the text is not forced on the reader. Not only this, the mode of reading required to change *Being and Time* from a scientific anthropology into a fundamental ontological investigation requires the reader to read the work in a way that might well be alien to them, at least, alien when reading a philosophical or scientific work.

The second chapter, then, has a number of purposes: it explicates what is said about language within *Being and Time*; it points out or hints at the problems reading *Being and Time*; and it tries to move towards a reading of the tract that allows Heidegger to speak through the text.

Although the chapter examines the nature or, what might be called, the structure of Dasein as it tries to work towards an understanding of language within *Being and Time*, there is a simultaneous effort to point out that any such nature or structure would be an illusion when undertaking a fundamental ontological investigation. This criticism is not a criticism of the content of the book, but of a mode of understanding the language in the book. The criticism is not of the terms Heidegger uses as such, but of the way that those terms can be taken. Although *Being and Time* does give an account of Dasein that could be taken in a fundamental ontological way, it can also be taken in a calculative sense. That is, rather than taking the terms as signposts on a path towards their own essence or fundamental ontological ground, the terms in the work can equally easily be

taken as referencing things or concepts. In such a reading, terms need only be understood by definitions given in a dictionary or that we already know, but either way, definitions that are self-contained as objects. The reading of terms as things in this way is the reading that the chapter tries to put into doubt, but this is how texts are generally read. I try not to labour the point in this initial exploration of Heidegger but, instead, I take what the text says in a way that tries to make a fundamental ontological reading more obvious and yet keeps the work as it is. The chapter does not try to force such a reading, but to suggest it more obviously than Heidegger does in *Being and Time*.

What the chapter tells us about the nature of language is, as is in *Being and Time* itself, very limited; however, it does try to lay out the landscape in which the essence of language lies. The chapter, then, rather than trying to discover what language is, tries to set the stage for the search. Instead of constructing a logical structure given by deductive relations between the terms used in *Being and Time*, supporting those deductions with definitions given by Heidegger himself and with the gaps filled in by relationships we already know or that we find in the dictionary, the chapter only sets out to use the work as a signpost towards the landscape of the search. By approaching the work in this way, I hope an understanding of language will be forthcoming from the fundamental ontological ground pointed to by 'language' rather than an understanding that restricts itself to terms and their relationships to one another.

The third chapter continues the search for the essence of language within the works of Heidegger, but, in doing so, takes the way that terms are understood further from the calculative; that is, away from the mode of thinking that takes terms as discrete things or pointers to discrete things. Initially, I examine both language and thought from their dictionary definition. This might seem surprising: if the search for the essence of language within Heidegger requires thinking in a non-calculative way, how would the use of dictionary definitions and even using examples from logic, further this cause? The answer is that the source is unimportant, but the way that source is used is of vital importance. The first part of the chapter, then, does two things at the same time: it moves along the path towards the an essential or fundamental ontological understanding of the nature of language and, in so doing, shows that this path is not a mysterious or concealed route, but one that lies in full public openness. The path towards an essential understanding of language does not just lie within the work of Heidegger, but it is already well signposted within our general environment. It is not because this path is mysterious or that it does not lie within all our thinking that causes it not to be taken, but because it is concealed behind a thinking that puts a full stop after each concept and term and so does not look for the essence of what is said. For this part, the works of Heidegger are not used. This is to demonstrate that the thinking called for by Heidegger and what Heidegger actually wrote are in plain sight all along. The thinking used in addressing non-Heideggerian works has been informed by Heidegger's teaching, but the reading of these works is taken in a straightforward manner; one that tries to look beyond

the terms, but at the same time, one that tries to make this looking, not mysterious, but obvious.

Having engaged with non-Heideggerian sources, I go on in this chapter to examine what Heidegger says. The way that Heidegger's text is taken is informed by the way that the first part of the chapter interacted with non-Heideggerian texts. I allow Heidegger to speak, not at the level of just the terms used, but in a way that points towards a path he tries to show; a path that leads to the essence of language. I join Heidegger as he takes a path through an encounter with poetry. This should not be thought to be leading the search away from philosophy into the arts, but as a way of understanding the nature of philosophy itself. In talking about poetry, Heidegger is certainly not going away from a rational or scientific way of thinking taken in a broad sense, but he uses poetry as an indication to a way of thinking that transcends the restrictions of calculative thought. The thinking that Heidegger wants to show us is not one that throws away all logic, but neither is it one that restricts itself to just a manipulation of terms and concepts. Heidegger tries to amalgamate the two into a fuller form of thinking that is able to go beyond the calculative towards the fundamental ontological ground of the subject of the investigation. This does not make Heidegger's thinking irrational, but allows the subject to be seen from a perspective prior to the construction of concepts and things that mark the calculative thinking we normally allow to obscure our path towards the essential ground of the matter in question.

From an encounter with poetry, I move on to a contemplation of the slogan, *the being of language: the language of being*. The contemplation of this phrase takes us past an understanding of language as the disclosing of beings from being and, from here, we are brought to see language as the action of the fourfold. When it is said that language discloses beings from being, a path has been followed that was pointed to by 'language', a path that leads towards its own fundamental ontological ground. As was illustrated in chapter one, being might be thought of as the ontological totality. When "beings from being" is said then, it is talking about the 'interface' between the ontological and the ontic. Language allows beings – ontic things – to manifest themselves from the ontological ground for those things. This action of language is carried out by the meeting of the fourfold. The fourfold is not some sort of structure that causally creates things, but the way that Heidegger uses to point towards the activity of the uncovering of things. The fourfold, the sky, the gods, the mortals and the earth, are not things in any way, but aspects of ontological possibilities and, given these possibilities, the manifestation of beings is necessitated. We could use the example (however imperfectly) of the casting of a bronze. The bronze is the product of the interaction of the molten metal, the mould, the artist and the founder. The difference is that the constituent elements of the fourfold are prior to things and so we would not be talking about the production of a statue, but how a statue is produced in general. Any bronze requires metal, but no specific metal, a mould, but not any specific mould, a founder, not no one specifically and an artist whoever that might be. Here I am understanding language as being the

movement that creates the world; the movement that can make the leap from general potentialities to the specific. 'Language', therefore, moves away from being a concept or a static formula towards being a movement: 'language' stops being an object that can be studied and towards being something dynamic. When thinking about language, we are thinking about an activity from within that activity. We can say nothing definite or concrete because both the position from which we speak and the object about which we are speaking are dynamic. The mode of thinking that Heidegger was calling us to employ is in the direction of poetic thought in that he considered poetry as something to be taken dynamically too. He saw poetry as song and so as a dynamic activity. His claim that Socrates was the purest thinker because Socrates failed to write anything down further shows this. Socrates spoke and walked. What he said was not written down and so could not be made a static object of study, but moved and changed. Heidegger's thinking is the same type of activity as this. We cannot, therefore, take quotations from his works and hold them up as self-contained units, but have to take them as a part of the journey he is undergoing. When a quotation or a slogan is used from Heidegger, it has to be seen as a pointer or a signpost on a journey and never as an end to the matter. This does not mean to imply that thinking is not generally a dynamic activity, but that a thinking that allows itself to think about a static thing, be it a physical object or a concept, is only partially dynamic. Although the thinking is dynamic, the object of the thought, the concept, becomes static, at least as far as it can be made a concept. Heideggerian thinking is dynamic in both senses. It takes neither its own



progress as static nor the subject of the thinking. The subject matter is allowed to manifest as itself dynamic. Consequently, the subject of the thinking cannot be expressed as a concept that can be set out as the product of thought, but as the thinking itself as an on-going activity. If language was taken as the disclosing of beings from being and this was taken as an end to the matter, the definition would be a static formula. However, if the same phrase were used as a pointer to a thinking about the nature of language, a beginning rather than an end, then this would be dynamic.

When language is traced back to its source, it becomes seen as the manifestation of things and so that activity which produces the ontic. Language, in this way, becomes a way of understanding Dasein. The essence of language is the same as the essence of Dasein. In saying 'language' or 'Dasein', we are talking, essentially, about a single activity: the manifestation of beings. We might say the disclosure of beings from being. It should be noted that the 'being' in this case is often capitalised in writings about Heidegger, but this capitalisation should be questioned. The capital is taken from the German as 'being' is taken as a noun; however, as has been seen, we are not talking about a static thing but a dynamic event, in which case, both 'being' and 'Dasein' should not be capitalised. Both Dasein and being are not nouns - they are not things - but they are dynamic. They are both verbs. The nature of Dasein, language and so on, within the works of Heidegger are misunderstood if they are taken as static things or concepts that can be examined. The fundamental terms of Heidegger are not

things or a thing, but an evolving activity. The temptation is to use for an example of the static something such as the chair you are sitting on, but this would be an error. The chair is not static unless it is taken as static or thought about in a mode of thought that allows things in the world to become static. Heidegger brings out the confrontation between modes of thought that forces things into being only the things they are taken to be against a mode of thought that allows things to emerge; where things are taken as dynamic activities.

In the fourth chapter I take the end of the third chapter as the starting point; that is, it starts from the idea of the sameness of Dasein and language. With this in mind, the first area to be contemplated is the nature of Dasein. From this contemplation, I find that, in seeking the essence of Dasein, I am also seeking the essence of language. By tracing back these terms as pointers to their own roots I discover that they are pointing towards the disclosing of things and, through this action of disclosure, the totality of things are disclosed. Both Dasein and language, therefore, are signposts pointing at the activity of the disclosing of the ontic.

The investigation then moves on to the problem of trying to understand a Heideggerian examination of language. I find that it is not just the terms that are used by Heidegger that lead to an understanding of the nature of language, but it is the way we hear those terms. We must allow Heidegger to speak to us through terms, but give those terms freedom to speak for themselves. The terms

should not be heard as assertions but as empty pointers; they become nothing in themselves but allow our thinking to progress in a certain direction. The term 'empty pointer' should not be taken as saying that the term is nothing, but it is taken in such a way that it has no definite meaning; it is not a reference to a concept but a pointer to what is undetermined. In this way, Heidegger says nothing - he is struck dumb. From this perspective, however, the nature of the subject of Heidegger's thinking can be seen. The ontic understandings of language can be seen to be built on its ontological source.

After this short revisiting of the nature of language, I move on to examine the nature of other attributes and hold these against language. The first of these is the nature of truth. As with language, I am not interested in formulating a concept that can be used to describe truth – for example, the correspondence theory of truth can only be allowed to be an initial pointer - but I am interested in tracing back truth to its own essence. I find that, when the path shown by both Heidegger and by the concept of truth taken as a signpost to its own essence of truth is followed, truth is seen as stemming from the disclosure of beings. If this way is taken, I find it is the same journey had with the journey towards the essence of language. Both language and truth, at essence, are the manifestation of beings from being. They both derive from the disclosure of the ontic and so they are both, at their essence, the same.

The final concept to be taken back to its root is thinking. In considering thinking, I

discover at the outset that it involves an uncovering and so in considering thinking I am looking at something that, if it is not essentially the same as truth, then is essentially related to it. This should be of no surprise because, as has become clear, to understand the essence of a concept such as these, we must allow ourselves to think at a level prior to the concept and so, from this perspective, we see a similar landscape. Moving on, I examine reason and, as was done with language, allow reason, as described by the dictionary, to point towards its own essence. If this is done, it is found that reason points, again, to a perspective that was found when contemplating both language and truth. By understanding reason in this way, consideration is given to the definition of man as the rational animal. This consideration highlights the difference between 'Dasein' and 'man'. In an essential sense that is, thought about in an ontological frame of mind Dasein and man are the same as they are pointers to the same; thought about in our everyday calculative mode of thought, Dasein and man cannot even be compared as they are not just different things but different types and so a comparison would be nonsense. From taking the path pointed to by contemplation of the essence of reason, I take, what appears to be a different path towards the essence of *Λέγειν* of the *λόγος*. This is takes me through a different landscape, but, even with the apparent differences, it takes me to the same mode of thought; to the same essence. The mode of thinking that is called on to consider the essence of *Λέγειν* of the *λόγος* is the same thinking as was used to discover the other essences. I am forced to go beyond any thinking of things as things to a thinking of the unsaid where apparent things are not things

but pointers to be used in continued thinking. Thinking of the unsaid brings me on to thinking of the nothing. Not a cessation of thinking, but a mode of thinking that is based on nothing. A thinking where things are not taken as the goal, but the starting point. A mode of thinking that goes beyond the thing that we set out to investigate to the ontological ground of that thing. Thinking in this sense cannot give us anything positive as anything positive has to be a thing and, as such, marks an end product. The end product gives thinking a place where it is allowed to rest and so a place where non-conceptual thinking stops. Although it can give us nothing positive, no assertion, it can allow us to see the nature of our constructs. It can make no judgements about those constructs, but can put them into perspective as being what they are. It can ground those constructs in the same ontology and so make those apparently contradictory constructs become essentially the same.

Through this exploration, a number of different paths are followed each signposted by an ontically different pointer, but each of the paths leads back, not to a common goal in so much as I do not find the same thing as I found no thing, but to a common mode of thought. Each of these signposts point towards the same thinking activity. I find that the essence of each of the concepts is not a common thing, but a common movement; not the same noun, but the same verb. The common essence is only visible while thinking in this way and so the essence can only be seen while engaged in thinking. Heideggerian thinking does not and cannot yield a conclusion; it can only start journeys into thought. The

end of the journey is to be on the journey. Language, then, cannot be given by a construct, but can only be understood when undertaking a journey towards language. When we want to understand the fundamental nature of language, we have to be always *on the way to language*.

## **Chapter 1: Methodology**

In this chapter some preliminary groundwork will be set out. The project is trying to give an account of 'language' in the works of Heidegger. On the face of it this seems a straight forward thing to do, but there exists a profound problem that must be addressed. This problem is the way Heidegger writes and how we should understand what writes. Although the text is something static, the way the text is addressed is not. The understanding of the text is dependent on the way it is read as much as on the text itself. The way that is used in reading and understanding the text might be called a methodology, but the term 'methodology' must be understood in a special way.

A method is, "the pursuit of knowledge, mode of investigation" and a "procedure for attaining an object." (Onions, 1973) With these definitions as a guide, the appropriateness of using the term 'methodology' when trying to think with Heidegger will be explored.

The definitions can be divided in two parts:

1. The pursuit of knowledge ; and
2. Mode of investigation.

The definition that says that method is the "procedure for attaining an object" has not been included in these two parts. The reasons for this are twofold: if the 'object' is seen as a thing – a physical thing, a law of nature, a concept, or the like – then this is already necessitated by the definition of method as being the

pursuit of knowledge, taking knowledge as knowledge of something; and, if 'object' is taken a goal, then the definition adds nothing as it would be just saying that the method is a way of achieving a goal.

The first understanding of 'method' explored will, therefore, be method as the pursuit of knowledge. To know is often taken to be to know a thing, but to know can be taken as to be familiar or acquainted with. (Onions, 1973) This definition might be taken as it is, but it leaves something out: to be familiar or acquainted with what? As this is the start of the investigation into Heidegger, we are not in a position to say what the 'what' might be. In addition, we cannot even say that the 'what' is a thing at all. In the normal course of events it is assumed that any 'what' is a thing. The 'what' is the object of the investigation and so it a thing that can be pointed at and examined. The investigation normally would take a thing discovered and examine it from all angles and perspectives in order that the thing might become 'known.' But this impulse to assume that the 'what' is a thing must be resisted at all costs. Not only must we say that we do not know beforehand what the object of our instigation might be, but also that we do not even know if the object of our investigation is a thing at all. We might not be proposing to investigate the 'what' of our investigation as something that can be regarded as such at all, but that towards which we might have to take a completely different attitude.

The second definition allows us to move further, away from 'method' as a way we can become familiar with things and towards 'method' as way of thinking. No



assumptions as to the nature of that being sought are made at the outset. Having said this, we are certainly investigating and so we are undertaking a mode of investigation. To this extent, it may be said that a methodology is being used. The nature of the methodology, though, should not be assumed to be of any particular type; further, the methodology being perused should be discovered, not in the form of a formula or computational process, but iteratively during the investigation itself.

### **Understanding Heidegger**

Heidegger does not lend himself easily to interpretation or the kind of interpretation that has become so familiar with the rise of the positive sciences. There is a temptation to translate his writing into conceptual formulae and, in so doing, into something that can be understood as a series of assertions. Taken in this way, Heidegger becomes contradictory, absurd and mysterious, Heidegger becomes, “another obscure Heraclitus: Heidegger the skoteinos, the bard of the equally Black Forest.” (Vandeveld, 2014, p. 255) On the other hand, we could leave what he says and regard it as a form of poetics, but in this case we are no longer doing philosophy at all. Our choice appears to be that “either the propositional Heidegger turns us, interpreters, into unexciting practitioners of a new scholastics, or the poetic Heidegger leaves us no choice but to become philologists, in both cases abandoning the field of philosophy altogether.” (Vandeveld, 2014, p. 255) The challenge is to find a way to speak and think about Heidegger’s work that falls into neither trap. We need to understand what Heidegger was trying to do and then use this understanding to read Heidegger;

that is, to follow Heidegger rather than to impose preconceptions on Heidegger..

This project concentrates, at the outset, on *Being and Time*. As this is the case, we can take what Heidegger says himself about the goal of *Being and Time* and use this as the initial foundation of the work. Alternatives might be found that could give different foundations, but it seems reasonable that, if *Being and Time* is to be the primary ground, the declared activity that *Being and Time* represents should be used in this piece. In *Being and Time* Heidegger explored the nature of Dasein. As Dasein is the source of both world and all that is in the world, Dasein must be approached without imposing things or concepts, the product of Dasein, on Dasein. "Therefore fundamental ontology, from which alone all other ontologies can take their rise, must be sought in the existential analytic of Dasein." (Heidegger M. , *Being and Time*, 1962, p. 34) Fundamental ontology, being prior to all other ontologies and, therefore, prior to the ontic, needs to be carried out in a mode of thought that always seeks to go beyond what can be said in terms of constructs; that is, prior to the structures and so cannot be expressed, or, rather, understood in terms of structures.

### **Listening to Heidegger**

The temptation when thinking about a Heideggerian understanding of language is to take what he says about the apparent subject under consideration and perform an analysis so that a conceptual model is produced that can be taken as the representation of the Heideggerian understanding of that subject. This would be to presume that a Heideggerian understanding can be encapsulated within

such an analysis. In *Heidegger and Unconcealment*, Wrathall takes much care to avoid the trap of assuming that the subject can be taken in a conventional way, but even here there is a danger that his work can be read as confining the subject to a conceptual model.

At the outset, Wrathall explicitly points away from a conventional analysis. He warns that, “we are not meant to plug a preexisting conception of language into Heidegger’s claims about language, as too many commentators on Heidegger are prone to do.” (Wrathall, 2011, p. 125) Although this does indicate that Wrathall will be taking language in an unconventional way, it allows that he could be talking about language still in a conceptual, although novel, way. By rejecting a pre-existing conception of language he does not reject the possibility of a new conception of language that can be found and taken as an endpoint of an analysis of a Heidegger’s writing on the subject.

The conflict between imposing preconceived constructs and allowing Heidegger to speak for himself are brought out when Wrathall goes on to tell us, “as we accompany Heidegger in his reflections on language, the word ‘language’ is meant to come to function differently than it did when we first set out.” (Wrathall, 2011, p. 126) This seems to be in tension. On one hand, we are to accompany Heidegger, on the other we are assuming that ‘language’ is to function in a certain way; a way that we are to seek. Although there has been no presumption that language has any specific characteristics, it does appear to be the assumption that it has a character that we can determine through an analysis of

Heidegger's writings.

Wrathall writes that Heidegger, "will proceed by (1) identifying the world-disclosive function of language, (2) analysing language in terms of the structures that allow it to perform that world-disclosive function, and (3) using the word "language" indiscriminately to refer to different things that perform this same function." (Wrathall, 2011, pp. 126-127) One might agree with this in as far that these understandings can be taken from Heidegger, but that, in itself, would impose a limit on Heidegger. Terms like 'function' and 'structures' appear to assume that language is of a certain definite conceptual character and this assumption is an imposition. The use of the terms are not in themselves limiting, but reading those terms in such a way as to assume that a definite endpoint can be reached is.

In exploring the nature of language with Heidegger further, Wrathall tells us that, "The originary language is an ontological structure responsible for the disclosure of the world. Language plays this role in virtue of imposing a particular structure on the world – the gathering of relationships of meaning or reference." (Wrathall, 2011, p. 134) This, again, can be taken as assuming a conceptual character of language that can be encapsulated. Wrathall can be taken to saying that, although there is no necessity that language has the character imposed on it by a conventional understanding, it still has a definite nature. To get such an understanding, the works of Heidegger are being used as a source of the understanding, but the understanding found or created would have to be

extracted from those works rather than being allowed to live within them. This impression is reinforced when Wrathall writes, “The logos is the structure of worldly meanings and references, the relationships that constitute things as the things they are.” (Wrathall, 2011, p. 137) The nature of language has become strange, but that strangeness has settled in something else; a new structure, but, nevertheless, a structure.

Wrathall offers as a possibility of going beyond the conceptual understanding when he says, “To reduce a poem to a punch line, to a readily intelligible and unambiguous claim is somehow to miss what is essential. Poetic words, moreover, have what one might call a ‘productive ambiguity’ or, as Heidegger puts it, they ‘oscillate,’ thus opening up multiple paths of understanding. As frustrating as this might be to those of an analytic or scientific mindset, this is not a weakness of the poem but its strength – and precisely one of the elements of the poem we must attend to in order to experience language. For one of the essential features of language is its ability to oscillate and thus to lead us into any of an indefinite number of paths.” (Wrathall, 2011, p. 139) This appears to allow an experience of language altogether different from that offered by one limited to static concepts and structures. Rather than thinking of language as giving a structure, Heidegger can be seen as travelling a path that yields no such definite conclusions; not a path towards a destination, but a journey taken for the sake of the journey where structures can be taken as scenery – sometimes attractive, sometimes interesting, but always to be passed by in the continuation of the journey.

Wrathall can be taken further reinforcing this when he says that, “Language in Heidegger’s originary sense as the structure of relations is a paradigm case of withdrawinggiving. The structure of relations, with its coherent style, withdraws in favor of the entities that are what they are only in terms of the relations.” (Wrathall, 2011, p. 151) From this it could be understood that the structure, in itself, must be rejected as it withdraws. The structure must, itself, withdraw and so cannot be a structure in the sense of something towards which one can point. However, the term ‘structure’ can mislead. By saying ‘structure’ it might be considered that there is something conceptual that can be grasped, but, but pointing out that this withdraws, a tension is established. Language becomes a non-structure. A concept that can never be grasped as it withdraws.

However, Wrathall goes on to say, “It is not the terms and associated concepts of ordinary language that house being. It is language understood as the fitted structure of relations.” (Wrathall, 2011, p. 154) This again appears to be trying to bring language within our conceptual grasp. Language becomes a set of relationships. Wrathall had successfully shown that ‘language’ in Heidegger cannot be taken in a conventional sense, but he appears to have allowed it to be taken in a new sense. That is, although he has been able to uproot language, he appears to have planted it again in a new position.

At the end of the piece, Wrathall writes, “To complete the analysis, though, we would need to work out with more care the relationship between ordinary language and originary language – a task to be deferred.” (Wrathall, 2011, p.

155) This task is not to be taken up directly in this work, but, rather, the task of walking with Heidegger towards originary language is undertaken. This journey, though, will not be undertaken with the assumption that a destination can be arrived at – there will be no assumption that structures or concepts can be taken as conclusions from a Heideggerian encounter with language – but the journey will be taken as a journey through the scenery offered by Heidegger. There will be no presumption that we are seeking anything as such other than the journey Heidegger takes us on. As we accompany Heidegger, we will listen to what he says, but not presume at the outset that he has anything definite to tell us, rather, we will try to listen to the saying and allow that saying to guide us in our own journey, not to a conceptual understanding of language, but a journey set out from language back to language.

### **What Heideggerian thinking is not**

The sort of thinking that Heidegger has in mind is a type of thinking beyond the thinking about things. This is a thinking that is not only difficult to engage in, but, as it is not thinking about things, cannot say anything ‘useful’ in the conventional sense. Heidegger says, much later than *Being and Time*:

1. Thinking does not bring knowledge as do the sciences.
2. Thinking does not produce usable practical wisdom.
3. Thinking solves no cosmic riddles.
4. Thinking does not endow us directly with the power to act.

(Heidegger M. , What is Called Thinking?, 1976, p. 159)

This appears to be a rather depressing start. It looks as though the type of thinking we are calling for is not only difficult to do, but has no use in any normal sense and so we would have to wonder why we would want to indulge in it at all. However, the reason for Heideggerian thinking will not be addressed at this point and we will only concentrate on what Heidegger tells us about its nature.

The limitations of Heideggerian thinking given above can be compared to the limitations of thinking in a fundamental ontological manner. If the two are consistent with each other, then we have the first ground for supposing that 'thinking' in Heidegger is the same activity as that required for the practice of fundamental ontology and so for the investigation carried out in *Being and Time*.

Before examining the four limitations Heidegger places on 'thinking,' a question that should be addressed is: What is meant by science here? Heidegger tells us that, "science is the founding disclosure, for the sheer sake of disclosure, of a self-contained region of beings or being." (Heidegger M. , Phenomenology and Theology, 1998, p. 41) From this it can be taken that there are two possibilities of science: the consideration of beings and the consideration of being, or the ontic sciences and ontological science. The ontic sciences start from a given assumption; they start from a posit. For this reason, Heidegger terms these studies the positive sciences. But what are the positive sciences? If we consider them as any study that is based on a posit, we find that all studies other than fundamental ontology are positive science. This includes studies that are



normally thought of under the label of sciences as well as those thought of under the label of humanities and any other label we might like to put on areas of study. The thing that all these have in common is that they are all working from a posit or set of posits; that is, they have to make assumptions that they take as being true in order to progress in a logical and rational direction. The difference between all of these sciences is that they each relate to a different set of assumptions and are so relatively different from one another; their underlying principles or structures being the same but their underlying posits different. When it comes to Heideggerian thinking, however, the difference is complete. With Heideggerian thinking there is no binding principle, no beings on which it is based, nothing posited, it is based on no thing at all and, as such, is something completely different in nature from any positive science. There is no bridge or way of crossing from science to thinking, just a gulf that requires a leap to cross. To understand what thinking is, previous ideas of thinking must first be unlearned; that activity we indulge in when we do positive science must be forgotten or, at least, not taken as a limit.

If we are thinking of the ontological, that thinking cannot bring knowledge as do the practical sciences. Knowledge in the practical science is knowledge of things relative only to other things. As has been pointed out, the ontological is not a thing or things, but the possibility of things. If we discovered a piece of scientific knowledge in our contemplation of the ontological, then that piece of knowledge would have to be knowledge of a thing, but then we would no longer be contemplating the ontological as the ontological is not a thing. So, we cannot

hope to achieve any knowledge of the same type as scientific knowledge; any knowledge that we do discover is knowledge at a totally different level and of a totally different type.

The question of how to act presupposes a number of things and so is beyond the scope of ontological thinking. It might be said that the possible actions one could perform are all within the ontological; that is, the set of all actions that could be followed is not a thing as such, but possible things. This is correct, but having a set of possibilities does not give us any particular possibility over and above any other and so ontological thinking “does not produce usable practical wisdom;” we might glean practical wisdom in a certain sense, the possible courses of action, but we cannot limit these possibilities and so our ontological knowledge cannot be used in telling us specifically the correct course as this would demand the restriction of the possibilities to a single thing with the motivation of so doing being another thing.

Because ontological thinking cannot be thinking about things as such, it cannot help us with our puzzling over any cosmic riddles. If we were to ask, “What created the universe?” the question is meaningless in ontological terms and any possible positive answer is beyond the realms of ontological thinking. The ‘what’ assumes the answer has to be a thing or things; the ‘created’ assumes a positive action that is itself a thing and so beyond the ontological; and ‘universe’ is a thing or things and so is not ontological at all. Although ontological thinking is able to give possibilities, these possibilities cannot be delimited to the extent that a

meaningful answer to a question that is not in posed in an ontological way can be given.

In the same way as ontological thinking fails to help in the above, it can also be of no assistance in giving us the power to act. The ontological cannot give us anything positive. Although dealing in possible things, none of these specific possibilities can take priority of any other. Because of this, the ontological can give us no positive information or inclination.

All of the limitations given by Heidegger of 'thinking' are totally consistent with the limitations of thinking in fundamental ontological terms. Although this might not prove definitively that the 'thinking' of Heidegger is fundamental ontological thinking, it certainly says nothing against this view.

### **What Heideggerian thinking is**

What has been done is to show what Heideggerian thinking is not; it is not an activity grounded on concepts or assumptions. The task is now to move beyond the limitations of Heideggerian thinking to uncover what it is. The purpose of this thinking is to uncover the basis of all beings and so uncover what cannot be put into terms or be conceived of as a thing of whatever sort.

When we normally think of beings and the source of those beings, we make assumptions. We assume that we already know the nature of beings and that the origin of beings is equally clear and obvious. This might be seen as the metaphysical codification of our historical epoch. "By codifying and disseminating an understanding of what beings are, metaphysics provides each

historical 'epoch' of intelligibility with its ontological bedrock. And by providing an account of the ultimate source from which beings issue, metaphysics supplies intelligibility with a kind of foundational justification which [...] Heidegger characterizes as 'theological.'" (Thompson, 2000, p. 298) Heidegger wants to go beyond our normal theological or ontotheological ground and discover what grounds even this. This means going beyond the ontotheology under which we interpret the world. We normally know the groundings of beings because that grounding is provided by our ontotheology and is not questioned. But Heidegger wants to question the very basis of our normal understanding. As everything including the concepts and terms we use are born from our ontotheological basis, we must be ready to allow those terms and concepts to speak of what lies beyond our ontotheology.

Heidegger sets out to question our own basis: the fundamental basis on which the totality of beings with which we are involved is built. When we question the basis of beings and being in the normal way we are actually asking a double question; our question, "What is a being?" asks about the Being of beings by searching both for what makes a being a being (the essence or 'whatness' of beings) and for the way in which a being is a being (the existence or 'thatness' of beings)." (Thompson, 2000, p. 300) We might assume that being as the being of beings is a being and something that can be examined just as any other being can be examined. But we want to go further than this. We want to understand the grounding of the being of beings. We seek to ask, "If metaphysics' ontotheological postulates of the Being of beings doubly 'ground' those beings,

then *what in turn grounds the Being of beings?* Only two kinds of answers can halt the regress. Either there must be something beyond the Being of beings in or by which the Being of beings can itself be grounded, or else the Being of beings must be self-grounding. ” (Thompson, 2000, pp. 304-305) This question will not be answered at this point, but the thing to take from it is that what we are questioning lies, of necessity, beyond our normal use of terms and concepts, beyond the ontotheology in which these terms and concepts are grounded and beyond all things, even the being of beings taken as a being.

The problem is that we normally talk about things – our terms are things, and they refer to things – those things conceal their source because, once a thing is disclosed, that thing becomes an object of our attention and so, “how does one gain access to the question of the meaning of Being without also engaging in the corruption of covering it up, especially since one must put into words – and thus flirt with the possible corruption that attends the mere recitation of assertions – the very investigation that seeks to do the uncovering? ” (Streeter, 1997, p. 2)

In order to understand the nature of 'thinking,' Heidegger does not use the usual methods one might normally use to understand a term; he does not look for a simple dictionary definition and stops at that; he does not resort to what we already know or assume is the nature of thinking; and he does not ask what it is to think well. Rather than any one of these, he asks, “What is called thinking – what does call for thinking?” (Heidegger M. , *What is Called Thinking?*, 1976, p. 114) This statement can be understood as asking: What is it that makes us think;

what commands and pushes us into this activity we call thinking? What we are trying to discover in this question is what it is that makes us in the first place start to think and, by thus pulling us into thought, make us thinkers and, so, having become a thinker, indulge in thinking only because of its calling. Of course, if we look at the question in the normal way, we might well consider it to only be asking for a definition or an account of thinking as we understand it and, in this way, it becomes an object of investigation. Making it as such already limits our possible understanding; already we are only asking the question from the realm of positive science and have limited our sphere of thought to beings.

What we are investigating is something that occurs in us. As the investigation is at first directed toward only thinking, we can assume that the laws of thought are something independent of us as human. If we were to assume that Heideggerian thinking were just a feature of the human, we would have already covered up the nature of that thinking. As 'human' presupposes things, then claiming that thinking is a feature of a human would be claiming that thinking is an attribute of a thing and so we would have fallen into the ontic. All we can assume is that we think and that the activity of thinking is something that can be examined. But when we ask the question, we are asking something about the nature of our self. We are asking, not only about thinking, but about our own essential nature. The question is directed at ourselves and, as we are to answer the question, the answer will be about ourselves.

Heidegger tells us that to understand what thought is, we must examine what is

most essential to it. To this ends, that which is most thought provoking will be considered, “we now call ‘thought-provoking’ what in itself is to be thought about.” (Heidegger M. , What is Called Thinking?, 1976, p. 4) But the problem that impedes any progress in this direction is that Heidegger claims that, “What must be thought about, turns away from man.” (Heidegger M. , What is Called Thinking?, 1976, p. 8) The problem is to answer how we can contemplate that which withdraws from us; of that which disappears as soon as we look in its direction? How can we even hope to name that which has gone before it can even be named? These are, indeed, problems, but we can start by noticing that the withdrawal itself is not nothing but is an event or happening. For the most part, we concern ourselves with the actual or ontic. The actual is made up of the totality of beings, but this concern with beings blinds us to that which concerns and touches us more fundamentally: if we are man then it “touches man in the surely mysterious way of escaping him by its withdrawal.” (Heidegger M. , What is Called Thinking?, 1976, p. 9) That which withdraws might turn out to be more fundamental and concrete than all of the things with which we are normally concerned; more than the totality of beings. Heidegger claims that this act of withdrawing pulls on us and, by so pulling, we are turned to point to it. This turning towards and pointing is something that happens despite ourselves; we turn to point whether we know it or not; whether we are aware of it or not. With this attraction, pulling and pointing, we become the signpost to that which withdraws. The nature of pointing is not something addition to us, but is what we essentially are; we are the signpost to that which withdraws. As a pointer to that

which has withdrawn, we do not point at anything, but towards the withdrawal; we are the “sign that stays without interpretation.” (Heidegger M. , What is Called Thinking?, 1976, p. 10)

Heidegger indicates the nature of this pointing when he tells us that we are the beings that have their being “by pointing to what is, and that particular beings manifest themselves as such by such pointing.” (Heidegger M. , What is Called Thinking?, 1976, p. 149) This pointing, then, is not a pointing at a being or even the totality of beings; the pointing is the pointing at the manifesting of beings. The pointing is at being itself; it points at everything in the having been, present and what might be. Rather than pointing at a thing or even the totality of things, our essential nature is to point to the source of all things. As we have discovered in our explication of ‘ontological,’ the source of things is the ontological, so we can now say, in a more positive sense, that the thinking Heidegger tells us about is compatible in this sense, as well as in the negative sense addressed earlier, with ontological thinking.

### ***Destruktion of Konstruktion***

If we take metaphysics as an activity trapped in the ontotheological landscape of an epoch, then, in order to see beyond the confines of this ontotheology, we must be prepared to first clear away that which obscures our vision. The addressing of the ontotheological confines of our normal thinking, early Heidegger calls *Destruktion*. The assumption could be made that this *Destruktion* would be something like the demolishing of the ontotheological ground of our current



metaphysics, but “despite the apparent negativity implied by our usual understanding of *destruktio*, Heidegger is not endorsing a ‘demolition’ of metaphysics. On the contrary, the *Destruction* aims to dissolve the sclerotic historical layers of metaphysics by revealing their concealed ontotheological structure and endeavouring to uncover the ‘decisive experiences’ responsible for this structure.” (Botha, 2008, p. 56) *Destruction* does not aim to destroy the metaphysical theology within which the activity is positioned, but takes that as a basis of understanding what lies beneath. The metaphysical theology does not need to be destroyed at all, it is just not itself the end point of the *Destruction*, but a way pointer. So, “Heidegger's *Destruction* does not abandon the ontological tradition. Rather, it attempts to reveal its positive possibilities by casting a critical eye on the prevailing approach to the history of ontology.” (Botha, 2008, p. 57)

*Destruction* is a way by which what is being examined can be taken as a starting point for investigation. Because the text itself is not the endpoint, the text becomes a tool used to achieve a goal. We accept that what is being examined was produced from an ontotheological ground and is a *Konstruktion* based on that ground, but that does not imply that neither the text nor the metaphysics upon which it is based is something to be done away with. Rather, both the text and the underlying metaphysics are accepted but recognised as what they are. If this is done, movement can be made. The reading of the text goes beyond the confines of the text. Using the text as a guide, it exposes the underpinnings of the text in ontotheology of the epoch of its creation. But we do not stop there. By seeing more clearly the position and grounding of the text, it can be used to go

beyond both the immediate text and the underlying metaphysics. These can be taken to be talking about their own ultimate ground. This is what Heidegger is concerned with. The most fundamental ground is implied with all theological metaphysics and so all texts based on that. By moving beyond the text in such a way, it appears that text is being used to say something that it does not say at all. This is correct. When a text is used in this way, the goal is not to understand the text within its own metaphysical theology, not to understand the text within the metaphysical theology of our own epoch, not even to understand our own or the writers of the text's own metaphysical theology, but to move beyond all of this to ask the text the question of the ultimate ground. Of course, this may never have crossed the mind of the writer of the text. The writer might have seen the text as an exploration within the current ontological theology or even as a movement within and beyond that metaphysics to create a new *Konstruktion*, but, as the ultimate basis is always the same, that basis must be implied by the text.

In other words, because philosophy is a *Konstruktion*, it is also subject to a *Destruktion*. The *Destruktion* is an attempt to become aware of the unthought (das *Ungedachte*) in thinking and to the unsaid in saying. The unthought of the unsaid is always presupposed in philosophical thinking, which can be thought and said. This is the problem of the difference (*Differenz*) – the difference remains essentially unthought and unsaid, but remains simultaneously constitutive for every thinking and saying, or in Heidegger's words, for every understanding of Being. (Botha, 2008, p. 58)

### ***Confrontation with the text***

When we read a text, we read it in a way that allows us to enter into a discourse with the text that allows us to move toward an understanding of our goal; the text speaks to us and answers questions we address to the text. Heidegger did not read a text as simply an interpretation whereby he proposed that how he read a text was the 'true' understanding of the text but, rather, as a confrontation during which he entered into a dialogue with the text. This way of reading texts can be helpful in our own reading of Heidegger. Blok examines Heidegger's confrontation with Nietzsche (Blok, 2009). In this confrontation, Heidegger explores the writings of Nietzsche but, in doing so, recognises the fundamental difference between his own concern with being and Nietzsche's concern based on a metaphysics grounded in beings. These positions are incompatible, but that does not mean that a discourse one with the other is pointless. Heidegger recognises from the outset the fundamental differences and does not propose to ignore these. On the contrary, Heidegger's confrontation with the text highlights the differences and allows the differences to become the fruit of the confrontation. Blok points to three differences between an interpretation and Heidegger's confrontation.

"First of all, every interpretation lives off the understanding of being and presupposes in this way the principal identity of interpretation and interpretandum." (Blok, 2009, p. 47) In a normal interpretation, a common ground is assumed. In the case of Heideggerian concerns with being and his examination of Nietzsche's texts, this commonality is, according to Heidegger,

lacking. Nietzsche has assumed a ground for his work, but Heidegger wants to go beyond this ground to another ground. In doing this, the underlying principle of the interpretation and interpretandum is questioned. In a normal interpretation, there is no such fundamental difference and so the possibility of a chasm between the two positions is overlooked. The assumption is made at the outset of the identity of the groundings between the reader and the writer. With Heidegger's confrontation the grounding differences are brought out and so the, "confrontation, is in other words, not controlled by the logic of identity as in interpretation, but by a logic of difference; the point is the 'difference' between me and the other." (Blok, 2009, p. 48) The difference does not imply a criticism of attack on the text, but, by focusing on the difference, the interpreter is able to bring out their own position. The difference is based on the difference between the two groundings and it is this difference in grounding, the fundamental difference that Heidegger wants to bring out. But the difference, as it is a difference in a specific area, a difference in grounding, is not a total difference. It implies that there is a similarity as the "grounding question is indeed differentiated but not completely disconnected from the guiding question. Both are involved in the question about being, that is to say that the confrontation has the *Auseinander-setzung* (difference) within the same (identity) in mind. The confrontation is, in other words, controlled by a logic of 'iteration'." (Blok, 2009, p. 48) The difference is a difference within a common totality. When Heidegger addresses the text from Nietzsche he seeks to discover the fundamental difference between Nietzsche's and his own fundamental ground, but that

difference assumes that there is a fundamental ground in both the text and Heidegger's position against the text. By addressing the text in this way, the text and the question are able to enter into a discourse.

The second difference is that, "An interpretation takes a position or standpoint, out of which the 'interpretandum' is represented. This standpoint is the ground or the subject of interpretation, which itself is not involved in interpretation. On the contrary, the confrontation is primarily the confrontation with our 'ownmost'; the interpretative subject. Our thinking is, in other words, 'involved' (*einbegriffen*) in the confrontation." (Blok, 2009, p. 49) When we read a text in a confrontational way, we read it, not as something 'objective' that is apart from us and stands on its own, but our interpretation is grounded in our self. We enter into a discourse with the text in which the text is allowed to speak to us, but not as a monologue. Both the text and our understanding contribute to the interpretation that becomes based on our own new grounding. We do not claim that our interpretation is 'the' interpretation of the text or the correct interpretation of the text, but our confrontation with the text results in a creation of an understanding that results from an interaction with the text based on our own guiding principles. From the perspective of trying to understand the nature of being, it is this fundamental grounding that we are most interested in. This underlying principle on which our interpretation of the text is based is our understanding of the nature of our fundamental ontology. When Heidegger interacts with Nietzsche, he is doing so in order to bring out and understand the difference between the fundamental basis on which Nietzsche grounds what he says and Heidegger's new grounding.

The goal is to understand this difference through discourse with the text. We can do the same sort of thing when we enter into a discourse with Heidegger. We are not trying to give an interpretation of Heidegger's text based on our existing and unquestioned underlying principles, but are trying to highlight the difference between our own fundamental position and Heidegger's. This allows us to understand our self relative to Heidegger and enables us to move towards a Heideggerian position.

The third and final difference is that, "An interpretation presupposes a priori the presence-at-hand of the interpretandum, which has already appropriated its presence. That *our* philosophical thinking is involved in the guiding question means on the contrary, that we *cannot* claim to possess the other commencement of philosophical questioning as our property." (Blok, 2009, p. 49) When we confront the text and leave behind the idea of interpreting it based on our unquestioned existing ontotheological grounds where the both the text and the interpretations of the text are static things, we allow our self to be moved by the text. The text is allowed to live and change as we read it. Instead of understanding the text in a predetermined way and so to move the text so that it falls in line with what we already know, we allow the text and ourselves to move. As the questions we ask the text in a study of Heidegger are questions of our most fundamental basis, we must expect that our fundamental position is moved with our encounter with the text; the examination of the text becomes a two way movement. When Heidegger confronts Nietzsche's text, he allows the text to move his own fundamental position, away from the ground on the metaphysics of

beings and onto the ground of the metaphysics of being, “we see the eventual or momentous character of confrontation, the farewell of the metaphysical guiding question and the ‘leap’ in the grounding question, which has to happen every time again and has to be attempted by everyone for himself.” (Blok, 2009, p. 49) Our interaction with the text can take us away from our ontotheological ground and position us in a different ground. If our guiding question is a question of our own ontological basis, then our leap can take us away from any ontotheological ground and onto the ground of the ontological itself. When we read in a Heideggerian way, or when we read Heidegger himself, “What is demanded from us is that we leave interpretation behind and become involved with the confrontation between being and thinking.” (Blok, 2009, p. 55) We must be prepared, not to understand the text as terms and concepts, not even in a way that allows for the being of being as a being, but we must be prepared to escape the confines of the ontotheological ground of our epoch and, further, to allow ourselves to escape the confines of any ontotheological ground at all.

### ***Formal indication***

Dahlstrom quotes Augustine when he tells us that, “To give them as much credit as possible, words possess only sufficient efficacy to remind us in order that we may seek things, but not to exhibit the things that we know by them.” (Dahlstrom, 1994, p. 1) So, when we use terms in our normal way, we do not pick things out, but we give hints towards things. The term is used as a signpost, but the signpost can only point; is it up to us to follow that way indicated by the signpost to discover the thing itself even if the discovery of a specific thing is possible at

all. Terms are not directly linked to things when we receive them by hearing, reading or even thinking them, but can be taken as initiators of a journey of thinking. According to Dahlstrom, Heidegger's thinking, "is nothing but a way of comporting oneself to an original, reflected or unthematic (*unabgehobenen*) comportment, an attempt to 'have' or 'understand' the latter authentically." (Dahlstrom, 1994, p. 1) This highlights the way in which this type of thinking is carried out. Rather than thinking conceptually where we would create concepts of things to speak about that which we are investigating, we 'have' or 'understand.' "Since philosophy's 'object' is what 'to be' means in the context of that original comportment, it cannot 'have' (understand, retrieve) its object as it were from the outside. Instead philosophy must itself carry out or enact (or more exactly, reenact) that original, unthematic 'having,' so as to appropriate it explicitly." (Dahlstrom, 1994, p. 1) As Heidegger is addressing what lies before all things and a concept is one thing among many, he cannot use concepts as concepts because these concepts are, themselves, things and can only speak directly about other things. In order to speak about the ground of things, Heidegger has to use apparently conceptual terms in a novel way; he has to use terms to allow the reader to position themselves so that the ground of things can be experienced. As we have already seen, this way of taking what is said in a text is not novel, but what is novel is that Heidegger intends this reading of the text beyond its own confines or all confines. The self-conscious use of terms as pointers towards something they do not immediately express is what makes Heidegger's writing have a poetic quality. This does not mean that Heidegger



writes poetry at all, just that the way in which both poetic and Heideggerian texts should be taken are close to one another. But whereas poetry allows the reader to be positioned with the world of the poet, Heidegger tries to allow the reader to position them self at the ontological ground.

Formal indication is a method that can be used to discover things, that is, beings, from a text. What is said in the text is taken as a pointer towards something other than what is immediately obvious. So the text is not taken as the end point and a thing in itself, but as a pointer to something else. However, Heidegger does not ask about things and so he uses formal indication to not point at any beings at all. The pointer in the text points in a direction “wanting completion in a concrete context although there is not enough in this direction itself to satisfy that want.” (Streeter, 1997, p. 417) We normally take a pointer to be a pointer towards something, that is, some-thing, but, in this case, the indicator is being used to point to the ontological basis of things and not things at all. Heidegger's use of formal indication takes the indication in two ways, “first, the exploration into the character of its object does not look into the content of that which is in question, and yet it yields something determinate and positive; second, as an analysis of the how of the ‘having,’ it is not just enough to analyze this modality at a distance.” (Streeter, 1997, p. 419)

The formal indicator itself should be taken as just that and not a thing as such. It points away from itself and towards our investigations. However, a pointer points towards something and so the pointer yields another thing. To remain within this

mode, however, the thing pointed to by the pointer must itself be taken as a pointer and so the formal indication is empty; it yields no thing as such as all pointers can only point to further pointers as taking a thing as an end point would be to stop using formal indication. In this way, there can be no end of a formal indication because that would imply the discovery of an ultimate thing. In following the path of a formal indication, we find no ultimate being – the content of our contemplation must remain empty – but we must follow the direction indicated and “In this giving of a definite direction, there is more than just a lack of content; there is also a positive yield in this formality and attendant emptiness because every formal indication leads to the concrete.” (Streeter, 1997, p. 419) The indication does not end in the discovery of a static thing, but we must allow the indication to “lead directly into the concrete experience of that to which it points.” (Streeter, 1997, p. 419)

The second implication of formal indication is that, rather than leading us to any static thing as such, it leads us to the conclusion that if philosophy is carried out in such a way, then “philosophy must be a kind of comportment.” (Streeter, 1997, p. 420) The object is not to discover things, but to put oneself in the position to comport oneself toward the object. This is a fourfold comportment in that it includes:

In being comported to . . . , one is situated in a sense of relation (*Bezugssinn*), which gives the unique way that one comports oneself to something. There is also a sense in which the content becomes important

(*Gehaltssinn*), in that something is “held” by the one who comports; but one is also “held by” that something because one must interpret an object out of its “full sense,” which is the phenomenon. A third sense is that of enactment or actualization (*Vollzugsinn*), that sense of fulfillment, in which, as remarked above, one “savors to the full” the object as it stands out in the shapeliness of its contours from its background. A final sense, not found in previous course texts, is a temporalizing sense (*Zeitigungssinn*) that embraces the “how” of the entire movement to fulfillment or enactment. (Streeter, 1997, p. 420)

Although the use of formal indication can allow us to achieve such comportment, the comportment is achieved by means of the activity of formal indication. The process does not yield a thing as such at all and so the conclusion is not reached as an assertion, but the conclusion, the reaching of a comportment towards and from the ground, can only be achieved if one allows oneself to follow the path of formal indication. It is not a logic that cannot yield a deductive result, but one that can put one in a position to think of being and from being. “Thus, in order to ‘have’ this object in its original accessibility, philosophy must become a fundamental way of life – a way that retrieves the fundamental experiences of comportment to objects of all sorts so as to guard against falling into the irresponsible repetition of statements not undergirded by the experiences that gave rise to them.” (Streeter, 1997, p. 421) Formal indication does not change the object of one’s study or even allow new things to be disclosed that can be held as the result of the process, but formal indication changes the one involved

in the process. It is not a way that statements, concepts, assertion or and others thing can be discovered, but a way for the investigator to change themselves so that the object of their study becomes visible or, rather, that what is already visible can become visible as held out in the object of the study. In this practice, “Heidegger has aroused through indication a specific realm closest to our immediate Being-here/there, but that realm remains an empty construct until the reader comes to know it in a refreshing way.” (Streeter, 1997, p. 421)

If formal indication is taken as a continual process, then there is no content; it is only when formal indication stops that content is assumed. As this is the case, in the case of *Being and Time*, “Because Heidegger’s method is formal indication and not metaphysical theorization understood as the attempt to give a comprehensive account of the basic ‘attributes’ of a human being, it is an ‘empty’ book.” (Streeter, 1997, p. 426) If we read *Being and Time*, or any other work, using formal indication, then that work is understood as having no content. Apparent assertions and references to beings are taken as only pointers on a path to an understanding and, if the formal indication is taken to be pointing to the ultimate destination that is being indicated, then there can be no end in the sense of a thing discovered, just a continual change in comportment.

Formal indication, when used to discover an ultimate ground, is taken *ad absurdum*. In following the sign to its own essence, we no longer find things at all, but are left with being, not a thing at all but a manner of seeing. This *ad absurdum* as the journey leads beyond things and so the thinking points beyond

logical thought – in a certain way of understanding logic – not to irrationality, but to the totality and underpinning of rationality and logic itself. From this level of understanding, the status of more privative understandings can be observed; they become irrational as they are shown to be, if not actually unsound, then insensible to their own soundness. To understand any science, that science must be seen from beyond that science. From the position offered by formal indication taken to an extreme, one goes beyond even the grounds of logic itself. As this is a going beyond logic, formal indication takes us to the absurd. It says nothing about the status of logic within the realms of logic, but it does put us in a position to see logic as an activity within a realm and not a fundamental activity at all.

### ***Hermeneutics***

The aforementioned methods of reading texts can all be used in the activity of hermeneutics. That is, these ways of reading texts see beyond what the text says at just the level of the meanings of the terms used with our predetermined understandings of those terms and goes towards an understanding of the question we want to ask of the text. These can therefore be understood as hermeneutical modes or techniques. As our guiding question is not in the realm of beings, we already understand that we cannot take terms as they would normally be taken in our day-to-day dealings with them. We have to be prepared to interact with the text in a different way.

As we saw, we are always within the metaphysical theology of our epoch. When

we read a text, we project our understanding of that text, in fact, “A person who is trying to understand a text is always projecting.” (Gadamer, 1975, p. 269) When the text is first encountered, we project our understanding of the text based on the ontotheological ground with which we first approach it, but, in rereading the text, the projection is influenced by the previous projection and so, taken in combination, we discover a new reading of the text. The “fore-projection, which is constantly revised in terms of what emerges as he penetrates into the meaning, is understanding what is there.” (Gadamer, 1975, p. 269) This process Gadamer summarises from Heidegger as:

The process that Heidegger describes is that every revision of the fore-projection is capable of projecting before itself a new projection of meaning; rival projects can emerge side by side until it becomes clearer what the unity of meaning is; interpretation begins with fore-conceptions that are replaced by more suitable ones. This constant process of new projection constitutes the movement of understanding and interpretation. (Gadamer, 1975, p. 269)

Our starting position from within an ontotheology is inevitable but not, in itself, a bad thing. The ontotheology of our own epoch gives us a prejudice, as it were, of how we set out on our reading of the text. If our prejudice is recognised as such, then, “The recognition that all understanding inevitably involves some prejudice gives the hermeneutical problem its real thrust.” (Gadamer, 1975, p. 272) As we recognise our own prejudice before we start our journey guided by the text, we

are able to allow the text to take us beyond that prejudice. Accepting that each of the iterations of our interpretation is guided by our current prejudice pushes us to reinterpret the text. Our interpretation is informed by the text and our prejudice, but, with each of the iterations, our prejudices are changed by the previous interpretation and so process can receive its own impetus.

This might be thought to lead, eventually, to a total overcoming of our prejudices, but this is not the case. “The overcoming of all prejudices, this global demand of the Enlightenment, will itself prove to be a prejudice, and removing it opens the way to an appropriate understanding of the finitude which dominates not only our humanity but also our historical consciousness.” (Gadamer, 1975, p. 277) The belief that all ontotheological prejudices can be done away with is, itself, an ontotheological prejudice. We can never achieve a view of the text that is devoid of some sort of ontotheological ground and so we can never hope to achieve a “view from nowhere” or a totally objective viewpoint. We have to accept that our interpretation can never be ‘pure.’ But this imperfection is not something that should stop us. The understanding that our interpretation cannot become perfect prevents us from being satisfied with it. The text can always be revisited and further understandings discovered allowing new discoveries to be made.

In reading a text in this way, the guide is “the hermeneutical rule that we must understand the whole in terms of the detail and the detail in terms of the whole.” (Gadamer, 1975, p. 291) Each part of the text gives us alterations to the ontotheological ground through which the whole is understood and the

developing understanding of the whole informs the understandings of the parts that make up the whole. “The anticipation of meaning in which the whole is envisaged becomes actual understanding when the parts that are determined by the whole themselves also determine this whole.” (Gadamer, 1975, p. 291) An understanding of the text as a whole becomes the understanding sought when that understanding is derived from sum of the parts which have, in their turn, have been understood according to the understanding of the whole. In the end, “the goal of all attempts to reach an understanding is agreement concerning the subject matter.” (Gadamer, 1975, p. 292) But this agreement is not confined to the text. That would be assuming that the reader had no place in the reading. The agreement is one in which the whole of the text, the parts that make up the whole and the question being asked by the reader fall into a unity. All of these areas develop with the reading and all are changed by one another until they fall into a unity or compatibility of understanding. “Heidegger describes the circle in such a way that the understanding of the text remains permanently determined by the anticipatory movement of fore-understanding. The circle of whole and part is not dissolved in perfect understanding but, on the contrary, is most fully realized.” (Gadamer, 1975, p. 293) The circle becomes stable but never final. The areas of agreement can never be perfect but a point can be found where they are able to co-exist. Tensions always remain, but these tensions are minimized. Even then, the understanding can only ever be provisional. The circle becomes stable based on the question being asked of the text and the ontotheological ground of that question. The basis of the understanding will



change with a new reading of the text based on a different question being asked of the text.

From this, it can be seen that:

The circle, then, is not formal in nature. It is neither subjective nor objective, but describes understanding as the interplay of the movement of tradition and the movement of the interpreter. The anticipation of meaning that governs our understanding of a text is not an act of subjectivity, but proceeds from the commonality that binds us to the tradition. But this commonality is constantly being formed in our relation to tradition. Tradition is not simply a permanent precondition; rather, we produce it ourselves inasmuch as we understand, participate in the evolution of tradition, and hence further determine it ourselves. Thus the circle of understanding is not a “methodological” circle, but describes an element of the ontological structure of understanding. (Gadamer, 1975, pp. 293-294)

Our reading changes our perspective. It can transport us to a different viewpoint. “Transposing ourselves consists neither in the empathy of one individual for another nor in subordinating another person to our own standards; rather, it always involves rising to a higher universality that overcomes not only our own particularity but also that of the other.” (Gadamer, 1975, p. 304) In reading Heidegger we should be seeking to position our self in such a way that we are able to see the fundamental ontological ground. This, of necessity, requires us to go beyond both the ontotheological ground with which we first enter a dialogue

with the text and seeing the text itself as a collection of terms understood as static things within out ontotheology. As has been seen, the fundamental ontology is prior to things and it cannot be talked about directly using terms. As Derrida famously said, “*There is nothing outside of the text* [there is no outside-text; *il n'y a pas de hors texte.*]” (Derrida, 1976, p. 158) This gives us a clue to the way the text must be approached. We are not trying to achieve the impossible task of formulating or conceptualising that which cannot be formulated or conceptualised; we are trying to position our self in such a way that our perspective is from the ontological ground indicated through our interaction with the text.

### ***Thinking for reading Heidegger***

At the start of the chapter, we saw that Heidegger set out to do fundamental ontology in *Being and Time*. From this, we discovered something of the nature of fundamental ontology from reading the dictionary definitions of the terms and giving some thought to those terms. This showed us that fundamental ontology is not concerned with things at all, but rather, with the source of things in the abstract or being. At this point, we have a vague idea of the sort of area in which a fundamental ontological investigation might take place, but we had still to set out the nature of our thinking when taking part in such an activity.

The claim was then put forward that fundamental ontological thinking might be the same activity as Heidegger presents in his later works. To start with, the negative characteristics Heidegger sets out of his thinking were examined and

found to be entirely consistent with the type of thinking that would have to be performed when carrying out a fundamental ontological examination.

Having examined the negative characteristics of Heideggerian thinking and its compatibility with doing fundamental ontology, we moved forward to explicate the nature of Heideggerian thinking in a positive way. Here we discovered that the mode of thinking with which Heidegger was concerned is more than just one amongst many modes; it is not like modes of logic or different types of thinking performed by different sciences, but is a fundamental mode of thinking. All other modes of thinking are derivative from this, the most essential thinking; that is, it is a mode of thinking that looks prior to all other modes. We saw that, although this most essential mode of thinking is necessary for all other thinking, it is also covered up. The modes of thinking we perform in our normal lives obscure their own source; they have to do this as essential thinking is beyond the bounds of any derivative mode of thinking and, as essential thinking cannot be talked about directly with the terms of a derivative mode of thought, thinking in this sense can only take place if we comport our self from this fundamental perspective. From the point of view of any positive science, essential thinking is non-sense – it is, by going beyond even logic, absurd from the point of view of derivative modes of thought. However, we found that Heideggerian thinking can be achieved in its own right. Heideggerian thinking, we discover, is a thinking that starts with a being and that being is taken as a pointer back to its own origin in the ontological. This going back to the source can, if we allow it, take us back too so that we are able to think from the most fundamental perspective.

We found that we have to approach the text in a certain way that will allow the text to speak to us and allow us to position our self at the level towards which Heidegger urges us. The terms of the text we read must not be taken at their face value, but must be allowed to break free, at least in part, from their imprisonment in our prejudices. As we are thinking beyond the confines where terms speak only about things, then “without understanding the implications of this indexical nature of the formal indication, *Being and Time* can easily become thematized into a manual for existential action, which it was not supposed to be.” (Streeter, 1997, p. 416) Our guiding question when reading the text should not be anthropology or any other ontic science, but fundamental ontology.

With this understanding of the terms being used, we should be aware that, if terms were not used in an apparently ontic way, “the articulated perfusion of structures would sink into the undifferentiated conceptual whirl of *Lebensphilosophie*.” (Habermas, 1987, p. 143) Heidegger has to try to describe the fundamental ontological structure, but that fundamental structure, being ontological rather than ontic, does not lend itself to being described using terms and is not even a structure as such. What is said is in tension between what Heidegger wants to say and what he can say. Heidegger has to use the ontic to bring us into an ontological compartment and this requires us to be involved. We are the ones reading the text and we are the ones that have to allow ourselves to change our perspective to one from fundamental ontology rather than one imprisoned within our ontotheological prejudices that we dare not escape.

We have now armed ourselves with something of an understanding of the nature of fundamental ontological thinking. In a sense, this thinking might be called a method, but that would be very misleading. 'Method' is defined as, "pursuit of knowledge, mode of investigation." (Onions, 1973) Fundamental ontological thinking is not a method in a sense of a defined path to a goal, but does give access to an understanding of the ontological and our own essence. This essential thinking will be used for reading *Being and Time* in order to discover what is said in that work about 'language.' From the outset we can see that we should not expect 'language' to be a thing or concept and so should not expect the 'language' we discover in *Being and Time* to be the sort of thing that we might assume it to be in our naïve understanding. We must be prepared to allow ourselves to think in the sense set out by Heidegger; in a fundamental ontological way.

## Chapter 2: Language in *Being and Time*

In this chapter an understanding of what Heidegger says in *Being and Time* about language and thinking will be sought. Although it is primarily concerned with language as it is explicated in *Being and Time*, language will only be addressed obliquely. The little said about language directly by Heidegger in *Being and Time* will be examined, but so too will those areas within the work that relate to language; that part of the work that is needed to grasp an understanding of language and thought in relation to the overall ontological analysis of Dasein. By working in this way it is hoped that, from the totality of what can be understood in *Being and Time*, an understanding of the direction in which language lies can be obtained.

*Being and Time* will be addressed using the type of thinking outlined in the previous chapter. By trying to discover the path of thought that Heidegger was taking in *Being and Time*, the nature of the mode of thought he used will be indicated. At first glance it appears that *Being and Time* is written in a 'normal' way; that is, there is little to show that it should be taken at any other than a conceptual level. This, though, ignores what Heidegger explicitly says and, in addition, it allows *Being and Time* to become anthropology; an assumption too far, at least at the outset. By addressing the work at face value, *Being and Time* becomes a description of the structure of Dasein which becomes man. But, if we consider this ontologically, there can be no structure in a conventional sense as structure implies things and there can be no man as such as man is a thing or things.

This is confusing and deliberately so. In order to address the work in its raw sense, preconceived ideas must be left behind as far as possible. The work must be allowed to talk, not from a level we assume from the start, but from a level it creates when given its freedom.

### ***Language and Being***

The initial task will be to examine the relationship between language and being worked out in *Being and Time*. In this section, the objective is twofold: to paint enough of Heidegger's ontological analysis as a background onto which an understanding of language can be based; and to explore what he says specifically about language. To do this, a path will be followed starting with what Heidegger claims provides the foundation of language and moving backwards in order to give some sort of a picture of what that foundation comprises.

Towards the start of the section in *Being and Time* titled "Being there, Discourse and Language," Heidegger says, "The existential-ontological foundation of language is discourse or talk" (Heidegger M. , *Being and Time*, 1962, p. 203). To construct an explication of language as developed in *Being and Time*, this statement of the foundation of language will be used at the outset as a starting point for the investigation. This does not mean that any claim to the truth of this statement is being made especially in the normal understanding of the words that constitute it, just that, by using this idea as a starting point, an analysis and interpretation can be performed initiated by it that will show how it can be grounded in Heidegger's analytic of Dasein and where this statement can lead

Heidegger and us in a search for an understanding of language.

The first part of this explication will be to explore the grounds in the existential-ontological analysis of Dasein on which Heidegger's conception of language has been built, or, rather, from which the conception of language springs. Of course, a full analysis of the ground cannot be given here as this would require an analysis of much of *Being and Time* which is beyond the scope of this work, so this chapter will confine itself to those concepts that lie closest to both language and thinking that are required in order to allow them to become in some way disclosed.

In his analysis, Heidegger builds an ontology using a number of terms. Although these terms do, in many cases, coincide with phenomena or aspects of a single phenomenon, there seems no necessity to consider these terms, or the underlying phenomena or phenomenon, to be causally connected in any way other than one causes another in the sense that one is a mode or aspect of another. Even the term 'mode' is likely to cause confusion and misunderstanding as it implies a being and this should not be assumed the case. In his analysis, it might seem as though one concept follows from another building a kind of chain of concepts that develop into certain outcomes, but this assumption should be questioned. Instead of an idea of a chain of discreet processes, greater consideration should be given to the idea that all of these 'concepts' are aspects of the same. There is no 'processing' from one to another, but the different terms represent different faces of a single totality. From this, we can get the



understanding that Heidegger's analysis of Dasein gives us a whole rather than a string of discreet parts. There is nothing passed to concept B from concept A, but concept B is a way of regarding concept A; we have no case of causation in a normal sense – we are, in fact, just looking at a single 'thing.' Even saying 'single thing' is misleading; there can be no things as such in the ontological. A better phrase might be a single ontological totality, but, here again, the term 'single' misleads us as it again implies an object and there are no objects at the level of a fundamental ontological investigation.

The difficulty of terminology is made clear in the quotation from which we stated, "The existential-ontological foundation of language is discourse or talk." The term that springs out is, 'foundation.' In saying 'foundation' it is implied that a building is to take place. One object or concept is to be placed on another in order to build a whole. But this would be totally against our stated aim of providing a fundamental ontology; it would not be doing ontology at all. What, then, of 'foundation'? We have to discover a way of understanding 'foundation' in an ontological sense.

### ***Foundation***

Rather than considering 'foundation' to be the foundation of a structure and so forcing us into a non-ontological or ontic mode of thinking, we have to try to think of what the term might say ontologically. As has been shown, the ontological is abstract. However, the terms we use have to have referents. This, though, cannot be the case if we are talking ontologically. Our normal way of speaking

becomes inadequate. We could either abandon all hope of doing fundamental ontology, or we could find some way of dealing with it that allows it to be talked about however apparently indirectly. As our normal use of terms is not up to the task, we have to abandon the use of those terms in a normal way. The terms we use have to be understood ontologically. This requires that we read ontologically what, through the limitations of language, appears to be written ontically. In this case, when we read 'foundation' we have to understand it ontologically.

So, how should 'foundation' be understood ontologically? The ontological has no things and so 'foundation' cannot be the basis of a structure as such. What 'foundation' can be, though, is the totality of possibilities that contain certain possibilities. For example, we could say that the foundation of 'red' is 'colour.' We need the possibility of colours for there to be any specific colour. However, this example must be taken with extreme caution: it points in the direction of a fundamental ontological understanding without itself being one. Both 'colour' and 'red' are concepts and, as such, are things and, therefore, the example is not an example of fundamental ontology as such. By dealing with possibilities rather than actualities it moves in the direction of fundamental ontology, but because it uses concepts, it stops far short. When we address concepts such as these ontologically, we must not stop. When it is said that the foundation of 'red' is 'colour,' if we were to stop, we would not have made an ontological statement but an ontic one. In thinking ontologically, we can never let our considerations end in a full stop; we can never end with 'colour' because it must be understood that colour is not a fundamental position, but itself points towards its own ground.

For the time being our investigation will carry on with only the above inadequate example as a pointer to the type of activity we are undertaking, however, as our considerations continue, the activity with which we are engaged will also become apparent. The only example that can be given of doing fundamental ontology is doing fundamental ontology.

### ***Articulation of Intelligibility***

As we are told that discourse provides a foundation for language, the term that needs to be examined is discourse. An understanding of discourse here will not only allow us to see a ground for language, but will also become a vital term later in the work. Heidegger states “Discourse is the Articulation of intelligibility.” (Heidegger M. , *Being and Time*, 1962, pp. 203-204). Our path can begin, then, with an analysis of the Articulation of intelligibility.

There are two key terms in this statement that will have to be explored: ‘Articulation’ and ‘intelligibility.’ These will be taken separately in the first instance and then recombined in order to give a view on what Heidegger was saying.

### **Articulation**

In the footnote on page 195 of *Being and Time* (Heidegger M. , *Being and Time*, 1962), Articulation is given as the translation of the German word “*artikulieren*”, the meaning of which is given as “...the joints at which something gets divided,” as opposed to “...the ‘parts’ or ‘members.’” From this, what can we say about Articulation?

From the notion that we are directed to the joints at which something gets

divided, we get the idea that it is the whole to which we are to direct our thoughts initially so that then attention can be given to the joints at which the thing can be divided. To Articulate something in this sense, requires that we be thinking about the whole and, from this whole, seek out the joints at which it can be divided. If Heidegger were to have used the other, nearly synonymous word, '*gliedern*,' we would, rather than thinking about the whole thing having the possibility of being divided at its joints be thinking about the parts that make up the whole separately from the whole. This emphasis implies that the Articulation is carried out on a whole because the parts do not yet exist as parts; it is only after the act of Articulation that the parts become visible at all, not as things in themselves, but as parts of the whole. In fact, it could be that the parts never exist as parts without the Articulation. It is true to say that Articulation divides at the joints and, thus, these joints must exist before the act of Articulation, but, even having given this, it is the act of Articulation that draws attention to the joints by cutting and dividing at them; without the Articulation no joints have been pointed out and need not have been noticed. Articulation would bring attention to joints, but only to those joints that have been pointed out in Articulation. Joints may have been overlooked. This allows for the possibility that the Articulation is incomplete. A thing could have been Articulated, but the Articulation does not have to notice every joint; the Articulation, if this is so, would only be a 'view' of the potentiality of Articulating the thing allowing for the possibility of other views to Articulate the same thing, but at different joints.

The problem then should be addressed of how Articulation can determine where

the joints are that are to be divided. There would seem to be two ways that Articulation could divide: by dividing at joints that are the only joints that make up the whole; or by dividing at possible or noticed joints that make up the whole.

From the first of these possibilities it follows that the joints that exist are already disclosed for Articulation; that is, any whole that is to be Articulated has joints at which it can be divided and these joints are public and disclosed beforehand. The second view implies that the whole can be divided at joints that are not known beforehand and it is the act of Articulation itself that makes the joints known publicly. Which of these two understandings best reflects the meaning in *Being and Time* will be addressed when the “Articulation of intelligibility” is considered at a whole.

### **Intelligibility**

Heidegger says that the “intelligibility of something has always been articulated” (Heidegger M. , *Being and Time*, 1962, p. 203). In this case, “articulation” is *gliedern*. That is, what the outcome of the articulation is concerned with is the parts after the act of dividing has taken place. Intelligibility refers to the parts that result from an act of articulation, not to the whole. The intelligibility of something does not refer to the whole and its potential for Articulation, but to the parts that have resulted from an articulation. It is possible that the whole could be lost altogether, all that the articulation need disclose are the parts. It might be true that, theoretically, by an act of synthesis, the parts could be recombined in order to reform the whole, but this, even if it is possible at all, is beyond the bounds of

articulation itself and would require something else to act on the parts.

### **Re-joining Articulation and intelligibility**

What is now required is to re-join Articulation and intelligibility in order to give an understanding of discourse. From the analysis of Articulation, two possible meanings emerged: that the joints are already known or that they are only known with the act of Articulation; however, we have seen that intelligibility already implies that something has been articulated, so the Articulation is an Articulation of what has already been already articulated. What is being Articulated rests on what is meant by the ‘something’ that is to be articulated. There seems to be two possibilities: either the ‘something’ refers to the ‘there’ as a whole; or the ‘something’ refers to things that have already been disclosed by the articulation of the ‘there’.

Before further trying to identify which of these possible meanings should be used, it is necessary to give, at least, a sketch of what is to be understood by “the ‘there’”.

Heidegger tells us, “‘Here’ and ‘Yonder’ are possible only in a ‘there’ – that is to say, only if there is an entity which has made a disclosure of spatiality as the Being of the ‘there’.” (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 171) This implies that it is the ‘there’ that allows that which is disclosed to be disclosed. When we talk of the *lumen natural*<sup>1</sup>, we mean that man “*is* in such a way as to be its

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*Lumen natural* is equivalent to Natural Light. This is the ordinary cognitive powers

‘there’.” (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 171) The ‘there’ is that which allows the things within the world to be illuminated; it is the clearing in which the world is disclosed. The ‘there’ is not something distant from the ‘here,’ but the ‘here’ and the ‘here’ and ‘yonder’ are possible only in the ‘there’; it is not separate in any way from Dasein, but is Dasein as disclosedness. “*Dasein is its disclosedness.*” (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 171) When we talk of dividing the ‘there’, we are talking about dividing up the clearing that make it possible for anything to exist. The ‘there’ is not itself a ‘thing,’ but it allows for things to be.

If we then go back to look at the two possibilities of the meaning of the ‘something,’ the Articulation would, in the first case, Articulate the whole of the articulated ‘there’ and, in this way, leave the ‘there’ as a disclosed whole while Articulating it at the joints that were already disclosed by the articulation. In this case, what would be required would be a reconstitution of the ‘there’ followed by an Articulation of the reconstituted ‘there’.

In the second case, we get the idea that the Articulation would be the Articulation of the things that have already been disclosed by the articulation of the ‘there’. All of the individual things available for Articulation would have already been disclosed by the articulation from the ‘there’ and would now be available as discreet beings. The Articulation would then Articulate each of these things so that the parts that make up these things become disclosed while retaining the

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of human reason without any outside influence or addition.

things as discreet entities of the articulation of the 'there'.

Of the two possibilities, it would seem that the second is more credible. The first meaning presents three obvious difficulties: it would require the Articulation to, in effect, carry out two actions; as in Articulation the whole is disclosed, the 'there' would have to be disclosed to day-to-day Dasein; and if Articulation reconstituted what had already been articulated, then we could end up with circularity. The first of these requires the reconstitution followed by the Articulation of what has been articulated. There seems little point in doing this as an Articulation of the 'there' in the second place would alleviate the need for including intelligibility in the first place. In the second problem, the 'there', as the object of Articulation, would be disclosed along with parts disclosed and this is simply not true; it is only by way of an existential-ontological analysis of Dasein that we become aware at all of the 'there', rather than always being aware of the 'there' as such. The third issue is that Articulation would, by reconstituting the 'there' make the 'there' an additional thing within the 'there' and so available for access by intelligibility thusly ending in a never ending circle. This last point is dependent on the idea that intelligibility and the Articulation of intelligibility are not distinct "processes" but have already been done, which seems the conception most in line with what Heidegger writes.

The difficulty with the second understanding of the Articulation being carried out on the things disclosed by the articulation of the 'there' is that Heidegger says the "intelligibility of something has already been articulated" (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 203) and it seems, at first glance, as though the 'something'



must be a thing and things are within the 'there' rather than being the 'there'. However, this can be read as a general definition, in which case, the 'something' can refer to anything, that is, it is a place-holder, not a 'thing,' and, as such, could be replaced by any term, even a term that does not represent a thing and whose referent is beyond terms, but the clearing in which things are found. 'Something' should not be read as 'some-thing,' but as 'some-concept' or 'some-meta-concept' or 'some-aspect' or, better still, 'some-ontological-region.' From this, 'something' turns out to be some way of regarding the abstract.

From our analysis we have discovered that discourse is the dividing up by Articulation of the things articulated from the 'there' such that they are disclosed as both whole discreet entities and that they are made up of parts; their revelation involving both synthesis and division.

### ***The status of discourse***

Heidegger tells us that discourse "underlies both interpretation and assertion." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 204) Our task is then to understand 'interpretation' and 'assertion' as well as the landscape in which these terms are positioned in order to better understand 'discourse.' With this in mind, an understanding of the proximate environment of discourse is essential; it is from this environment that thinking will spring and this environment will also be vital for an understanding of language. Although the investigations here are not explicitly about language, it is necessary to describe the ontological landscape or totality which includes language from which language can spring.

## **Interpretation**

Heidegger writes that in interpretation “the understanding appropriates understandingly that which is understood by it.” (Heidegger M. , *Being and Time*, 1962, p. 188) Before any explication of this definition can be made, it is obviously necessary to discover the meaning of ‘understanding.’

Fundamentally, understanding “is conceived as a basic mode of Dasein’s *Being*.” (Heidegger M. , *Being and Time*, 1962, p. 182) If this is so, then we can, by illuminating the meaning of ‘understanding,’ give, at the same time as an understanding for ‘interpretation,’ an understanding for ‘discourse;’ that is, if discourse underlies interpretation, then, unless discourse also underlies understanding, for which there is no evidence, by explicating understanding we will discover what underlies discourse and so be able to get a better idea of the meaning of ‘discourse.’

Before proceeding in doing this, we should pause and consider what is meant by terms such as ‘underlies’ that appear to be talking of a structure and processes in that structure. These terms speak, not of any actual structure of the ontological, there cannot be an ontological structure, but of the way the ontological structure is viewed. Heidegger paints a picture of the abstract and, in the process of painting this picture, uses terms that are familiar. In order to say anything, he has to use terms and terms cannot refer to the abstract directly as they have to refer to things. When we use terms like ‘underlies,’ then, we are not saying that one thing underlies another at all, but that, in our description of the ontological, it is as

if one thing underlies the other. The ontological gives possibilities and, from the point of view of the observer, that is, Heidegger, one set of possibilities is seen that appear to give rise to another set of possibilities but both sets of possibilities are already there in the ontological totality of possibilities. The impression of X giving rise to Y is only an impression, a description given using terms from an altogether different mode of thought, but the only terms we have.

### **Understanding**

We are told that, "In the 'for-the-sake-of-which', existing Being-in-the-world is disclosed as such, and this disclosedness we have called 'understanding'." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 182) Understanding is the disclosure of the 'for-the-sake-of-which' which, "signifies an 'in-order-to'; this in turn, a 'towards-this'; the latter, an 'in-which' of letting something be involved; and that in turn, the 'with-which' of involvement." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 120) This set of possibilities make up the totality of Being-in-the-world which is disclosed and it is this disclosure that is termed 'understanding.'

Interpretation as the possibility whereby "the understanding appropriates understandingly that which is understood by it," (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 188) can be analysed as that which takes for itself, in a way that retains the already existing set of relationships within the 'for-the-sake-of-which', that which is already in the 'for-the-sake-of-which'. The understanding could be thought of as a function that takes as its argument relationships from the set of relationships in the 'for-the-sake-of-which' and returns a relationship appropriate

to the totality, or relative to, that set of relationships. This implies, that the understanding discloses each 'for-the-sake-of-which' in an appropriate way for the 'in-order-to', 'towards-this', 'in-which' and 'with-which' related to all of the relationships that constitute the 'for-the-sake-of-which' and to the overall set and thereby making that which is understood consistent relative to the set of 'for-the-sake-of-which'. So, when the understanding understands a 'for-the-sake-of-which' within the world, it already understands the relationships that underlie that 'for-the-sake-of-which' and the 'for-the-sake-of-which' does not contradict anything else within the set. The set of relationships, or "relational totality of this signifying we call '*significance*'" (Heidegger M. , *Being and Time*, 1962, p. 120) and it is "in significance itself [...] there lurks the ontological condition which makes it possible for Dasein, as something which understands and interprets, to disclose such things as '*significations*'." (Heidegger M. , *Being and Time*, 1962, p. 121)

At this stage, we have already found explicitly in *Being and Time* the position of interpretation; that is, it is built on understanding and so, it is from this level that discourse springs. However, for the moment, we will not jump straight back to tracing the meaning of discourse, but carry on trying to reveal the meaning of 'understanding' as doing this will allow us to know what, at this stage, can be encapsulated by understanding and, thus, excluded from interpretation and discourse.

Understanding is not the mere disclosure of the present-at-hand, it is the

disclosure of Dasein's potentiality for being, it "always pertains to the whole basic state of Being-in-the-world" (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 184) which includes, not just the significance of the world qua world, but, when an entity within the world is freed by the understanding, it "is freed for its *own* possibilities." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 184) That is, anything ready-to-hand would be disclosed as its possibilities for use and serviceability, while those things present-at-hand can only be revealed if their potentialities have also been revealed. Heidegger says that the reason for the disclosure of potentialities is that "the understanding has in itself the existential structure which we call 'projection'." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, pp. 184-185) Dasein has already projected its being onto the for-the-sake-of-which and significance; that is, Dasein does not project what it has thought out, or what it considers to be possibilities on reflection, but the projection is there already without any reflection or consideration, the projection is a part of the world and so a part of Dasein. The potentialities are there as a part of the for-the-sake-of-which.

With this outline of 'understanding,' we return to 'interpretation.' Heidegger writes, "The projection of the understanding has its own possibility – that of developing itself" (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 188) and, in the development of understanding we get interpretation. In this way we arrive back at our original quotation, that it is in interpretation "the understanding appropriates understandingly that which is understood by it." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 188) Interpretation is not something other than understanding, but expresses what understanding does when it develops itself.

When understanding understands itself and discloses its own potentialities, “whatever is interpreted will be founded essentially upon fore-having, fore-sight, and fore-conception.” (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 191)

### **Assertion**

We can now move onto assertion. Heidegger gives us three reasons for studying assertion (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 196): an understanding of assertion will give us ways that the structure of the ‘as’ can be modified and, as this is constitutive of both understanding and interpretation, the study will bring these two phenomena more clearly into view; analysis of assertion had a special role in trying to understand fundamental ontology because *λόγος* was the only clue to access that which is and the being of entities in ancient times; and assertion has been accepted as the primary carrier of truth. Although the last of these reasons to study assertion falls outside our scope at first glance, the other two do have a bearing and, in addition, we have our original motivation of explicating assertion in order to get a better understanding of discourse, not only in the way mooted at the start, but also so that we can differentiate understandings of assertion from understandings of discourse so as not to allow the two terms to become confused; not to say that they are different, but to lay out how they are related. An additional reason for looking at assertion is a negative one; that is, assertion is often taken as necessarily underlying language or even being in some sense language and this understanding is to be, if not refuted, then questioned.

There are three significations given for the term 'assertion': pointing out; predication; and communication (Heidegger M. , *Being and Time*, 1962, pp. 196-197). From these we are able to get a unified view from which "we may define *assertion* as 'a pointing out that gives something a definite character and which communicates'." (Heidegger M. , *Being and Time*, 1962, p. 199) Assertion is able to perform this function by a combination of understanding and circumspection. That which is in the understanding is already there before any act of assertion; however, we have not given any idea of the meaning of circumspection and so, this must be our next task.

### **Circumspection**

The footnote in *Being and Time* pages 96-97 gives us an idea of a meaning for 'circumspection.' We are told that it represents a "special kind of *Sicht* (sight)." What has been translated as 'circumspection' is, in the German '*Umsicht*.' As such, it can be divided into two parts: '*Um*' and '*Sicht*.' We will examine each of these in turn, before recombining them to try and give a meaning of 'circumspection' as '*Umsicht*.'

The '*Um*', we are told, "may mean either 'around' or 'in order to'." (Heidegger M. , *Being and Time*, 1962, p. 96 footnote) Heidegger gives us an understanding of '*Sicht*' when he says, "In its projective character, understanding goes to make up existentially what we call Dasein's 'sight' [*Sicht*]." (Heidegger M. , *Being and Time*, 1962, p. 186) *Sicht*, then, is what the understanding projects. The understanding is something that has already projected possibilities and the

awareness of these pre-existing possibilities is what Heidegger calls ‘*Sicht*.’

We are given the meaning of ‘circumspection’ as “vigilant and cautious observation of circumstances or events” and, for prudence, we are given “Ability to discern the most suitable [...] course of action, esp. as regards conduct; practical wisdom; discretion.” (Onions, 1973) We now come to the task of drawing these meanings back together in order to get an idea of what Heidegger wanted, or could have wanted, to convey with the use of *Umsicht*. Most simply, it would be the awareness of possibilities given in the understanding in view of the suitability of those possibilities in the sense that the best outcome be obtained within the confines of acceptability.

### **Assertion as a mode of interpretation**

In order to predicate something, the predicate “gets loosened, so to speak, from its unexpressed inclusion in the entity itself.” (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 199) This loosening requires that more than just the entity is factually disclosed, but that the fore-having of the entity is also disclosed along with the entity itself. The entity to be predicated is not just a thing, alone, but a set of relationships and possibilities; that is, what is given in the understanding and by circumspection. Furthermore, in giving something a definite character, we are “already taking a look directionally at what is to be put forward in the assertion.” (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 199) That is, when we predicate something, we are already aware of the nature of that we wish to assert; the character we wish to give the entity by making the assertion will be already there



before any predication takes place, so that the predicate is generated, not only or primarily from the thing itself, but also, and perhaps, in the main, from the already decided character of the assertion that has not yet been formed; this requires the assertion having fore-sight. To make an assertion, there will have to be an Articulation of the entity. This Articulation will disclose the parts of the thing so that the possible predicates come to light. A predicate used will allow the thing to be 'conceived as.' The examples given by Heidegger are of predicating a hammer: "the hammer is heavy', 'heaviness belongs to the hammer', 'the hammer has the property of heaviness.'" (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 199) The idea that 'assertion' has fore-having, fore-sight and fore-conception brings to mind the understanding we came to of interpretation, so that our concern must be to discover how to think of assertion in relation to interpretation. Assertion, being grounded in interpretation cannot be separate from interpretation, if we look at assertion as being a part of the ontological whole rather than just a 'process,' then assertion must be derived from interpretation as interpretation, or a mode thereof.

In order to show that 'assertion' is a derivative or restricted mode or type of interpretation, Heidegger confines himself to cases which are used in logical assertions. In interpretation, the sentence "The hammer is too heavy" (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 200) is not something verbal<sup>2</sup> at all.

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The word "verbal" will be allowed here, but the question of whether an assertion is necessarily something verbal or written will be addressed later.

Heidegger rephrases it as “Too heavy!”, or “Hand me another hammer!”, but points out that this is not the way in which interpretation is expressed; it is, for the most part, expressed by actions derived directly from the interpretation of the world as it is; that is, not modified or restricted. When we, for example, try and use a hammer that is too heavy for the purpose for which we intend to use it, we normally just put it aside and take up another hammer. This highlights a difference between assertion and interpretation: an assertion requires, not just the interpretation of the thing (that it is too heavy), but the formation of this into an assertion, of making an assertion that the hammer is heavy; the interpretation, on the other hand, has no need to form an assertion or communicate what is asserted at all, it only reflects the way with which the world is actually dealt with.

To understand what happens with an assertion, Heidegger leads us through the making of an assertion and what this activity does to the thing about which the assertion is made. When an entity is the object of an assertion, then, if it is ready-to-hand, the fore-having changes; we no longer consider the with-which that would normally be associated with the entity, but are concerned with the about-which. The fore-sight that is normally associated with the entity is restricted to the present-at-hand. This could be considered a kind of blinkering, that we are only seeing part of the interpretation of the entity and that is what is implied; the ready-to-hand is associated with a set of possibilities that does not become a part of an assertion, the assertion only invokes what is present-at-hand and this has the effect of veiling the ready-to-hand that is associated with the entity. However, with the illumination of what is present-at-hand, the entity is

revealed, no longer as something with the possibilities of performing a task, but “is given a definite character in its Being-present-at-hand-in-such-and-such-a-manner.” (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 200) It is at this stage that the properties of the entity are disclosed. The way of looking at the entity has changed, so that the entity is seen as ‘a what’ that is drawn from only the present-at-hand. The structure of the ‘as’ changes in assertion, so that, instead of having the full for-having, fore-sight and fore-conception of the structure of interpretation, it has only a limited version of this structure in which the totality of involvements is no longer examined, but is confined to just those things that are present-at-hand. According to Heidegger, this activity of assertion gives the possibility of allowing the entities to be seen as just entities; to be looked at as things.

This might give the impression that assertion in some way changes the world; that is, the interpretation of the world is altered and limited and so alters the totality of involvements that make up the world. This, however, is not necessarily, or even actually, the case. Assertion only addresses the present-at-hand, but this does not imply that the totality of involvements in some way disappears. Assertion, as a derivative mode of interpretation, is limited in its access to the world, but the world discovered in interpretation, the full world of involvements, is still available in the same way. Assertion might be seen as a filter that only allows some of what already available in interpretation to be accessed; the whole of the world illuminated by interpretation is still there, but, in asserting, only that aspect that is appropriate to asserting, that which is present-at-hand, is regarded.

The use of a filter changes the 'as' of disclosure. The primordial 'as' of interpretation, Heidegger calls the "existential-*hermeneutical* 'as'"; the limited 'as' of assertion, he terms the "*apophantical*<sup>3</sup> 'as'." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 201)

Heidegger claims that there are "many intermediate graduations" (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 201) between the purely apophantical and the purely existential-hermeneutical interpretation; in fact, it might be claimed that there is a compressed series types of interpretation between these two limits. There are two questions that arise from this: Is interpretation static? What type of limits are the apophantic and existential-hermeneutic?

The first question here is: Is the mode of interpretation static temporarily? That is, if we are engaged in an assertion, does this mode of interpretation exist over a period of time<sup>4</sup>? What is assumed in the question is that, when engaged in a particular mode of interpretation, only that mode of interpretation is present. This is not the correct way of thinking about modes of interpretation; although being engaged in a particular mode of interpretation does imply that that mode must be present, it does not imply that any other mode must be absent. The existential-hermeneutic mode of interpretation is already present all of the time; other modes of interpretation are imposed on the absolute existential-hermeneutic. The

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From *ἀπόφανσις* meaning, in logic, predication. (Liddell & Scott, 1996)

4 At this point, an understanding of time will be used as in normal usage.

question of a particular form of interpretation being the only one present for any period of time is not appropriate; primordial interpretation is always there and is there along with other modes of interpretation. Within the act of forming an assertion, the forming of the assertion does require that the limits imposed by asserting are imposed on primordial interpretation, but it does not imply that the primordial interpretation is actually hidden in any way, just that the act of forming the assertion only accesses those parts of that which is interpreted which is appropriate to it. Even this could be misleading. Assertion is something that exists along with the existential-hermeneutic and is already a part of it; assertion is a mode of the existential-hermeneutic. As such, it is not something that happens over and above the existential-hermeneutic, but has already happened just as the existential-hermeneutic has already happened. The possibility for confusion arises because an assertion is normally seen as an act; as an 'an.' This is correct if we were considering assertion and the act of asserting, but it need not be, and is not, correct if we are seeking the existential ontological essence of assertion. An act is a thing and thus a part of the ontic, whereas we are engaged in examining the ontological that will provide the basis for the ontic. There are no things, including either acts or time in the ontological, only in the ontic. The act of asserting is made possible by it already being in the existential ontological structure of the existential-hermeneutic as assertion.

The next question is the types of limits the existential-hermeneutic and apophantic represent. The existential-hermeneutic interpretation would seem to be a limit case. The existential-hermeneutic is not a mode of interpretation, but is

all the modes of interpretation, or, at least, allows for all modes of interpretation and so is of a different type than any particular mode. The question of the type of limit apophantic interpretation represents asks more questions. We have to consider if apophantic interpretation is a limit at all and if it is a limit, what type of limit it is. If, with Heidegger, we claim that apophantic interpretation is a limit, then we claim that there is nothing beyond the apophantic mode; there can be no interpretation that takes that which is in the world as more present-at-hand than depicted by Heidegger's characterisation of apophantic interpretation. We might well agree that we can conceive of no mode of interpretation that would make the world more present-at-hand, but it does not follow that there can be no other interpretation that would. If we agree with Heidegger that there is possible no more extreme mode of interpretation, we would say that apophantic interpretation would represent a limit simpliciter, even if we claimed that it may not be a limit and that it is possible that there could be more extreme modes of interpretation, we could still call it a limit simpliciter as it would represent a limit beyond which no more extreme mode could be conceived; if a more extreme mode were to be identified, then this would represent a new limit simpliciter and the original conception of the apophantic interpretation would not be a limit at all.

### ***Λόγος and Logic***

Heidegger tells us that the *λόγος* is something, an entity, that we can come across and, "according to the orientation of ancient ontology, it is something present-at-hand." (Heidegger M. , *Being and Time*, 1962, p. 201) That is, according to the ancients, in this case, Plato, but particularly, Aristotle, words are

like things in the world that we can come across and that, in the same way, we can come across groups of words. The phenomenon of groups of words being found together, Heidegger terms “Being-present-at-hand-together”. The problem that arises is: What is the ‘glue’ that ‘sticks’ a group of words together? Heidegger says that for Plato, *λόγος* is always *λόγος πινός*, words as which, which tells us that the glue that sticks words together is the entity associated with the words. Heidegger gives no argument to support this explanation and moves on to Aristotle. We are told that *λόγος*, according to Aristotle, is a combination of *σύνθεσις* (synthesis) and *διαίρεσις* (division). Any assertion is both a synthesis and division of the object of the assertion. It is by the acts of combining and dividing that we are able to conceive of the something as something; that is, we are able to come across the phenomenon of something as a something. The act of combining and dividing could be thought of as an Articulation. In Articulation, as described above, the composite parts of a thing are discovered but, at the same time, the thing remains the thing; the thing can be identified as both the thing as a whole and the sum of the parts that constitute the thing. Articulation could be thought of, then, as a type of combining and dividing and so, the glue that joins groups of words is Articulation, or, rather, the interpretation of Articulation. It is through this interpretation of Articulation that we come to “meet the phenomenon of something-as-something, and we should meet this as a phenomenon.” (Heidegger M. , *Being and Time*, 1962, p. 202) So, a thing is perceived with regard to a combination of that which has been Articulated. The way in which this happens is by interpreting the Articulation. This interpretive

Articulation is as described in the making of an assertion above. Those parts of the primal interpretation are regarded in the light of appropriate Articulation, that is, only the present-at-hand. This calls for that which is interpreted to be interpreted with an apophantic 'as'. However, to make Aristotle's theory more than just a superficial theory of judgment, the 'as' must be recognised as what it is; that is, it is an apophantic 'as' which is a mode of interpretation and a derivative form of the existential-hermeneutical 'as'. It is this understanding that can take Aristotle away from just a theory that "becomes the binding and separating of representations and concepts" (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 202) and into the overall existential ontological analytic of Dasein. Taken as a theory of judgment, assertion can become more formalised and separated from its primordial existence in interpretation. The *σύνθεσις* and *διαίρεσις* become relationships and judgment falls into calculus. From this way of thinking, it can appear that everything can be explained 'logically' and that it is 'logic' that is the ground of everything. But this way of thinking is in opposition to Heidegger's ontological interpretation. The existential ontological analytic gives us a ground or the totality of possibilities; the universal use of logic can have no ground as logic cannot give ground either of itself or to anything it talks about.

The ontological problematic, on the one hand, tries to interpret *λόγος* and, on the other hand, the concept of judgment tries to understand the ontological problematic; that is, Heidegger tries to account for and interpret *λόγος* from the perspective of his analytic of Dasein, by way of understanding and interpretation; on the other hand, judgment and logic is used to try and understand this same



ontological structure, to convert it and bend it so that it can be understood as a set of relationships and things present-at-hand that fall within the domain of logic. To illustrate this, Heidegger uses the phenomenon of the copula or that which joins the subject and predicate. In thinking about the bond between subject and predicate in judgment the bond is something self-evident; the subject and predicate belong together because “that is the way it is.” But, in having the subject-predicate bond as no more than something self-evident, what is to become of the copula? It has been made superfluous. The copula has nothing to do with the binding of subject and object. To give the copula purpose, we are led back into the existential analytic where the question of being and of the ‘is’ can be addressed. The existence of an ‘is’ in *λόγος* itself implies that something more than judgment is required. Logic does not address the ‘is’, this is only done with an existential ontological analytic, the type of which Heidegger is undertaking with his existential ontological analysis of Dasein.

In showing how assertion is a mode of interpretation and understanding, Heidegger can claim that “the logic of *λόγος* is rooted in the existential analytic of Dasein.” (Heidegger M. , *Being and Time*, 1962, p. 203) If this is the case, then it can be seen that any attempt to analyse *λόγος* and even more, Dasein, logically will be doomed from the start. If assertion and, hence, logic, are rooted in interpretation and understanding, logic cannot even see itself as something discreet, instead, it is just a mode of interpretation; a way, or filter, through which the world is viewed and, as such, the rest of the world, that which cannot be accessible through the constricted vision of assertion, must be neglected and

beyond any logical understanding. If the only mode of interpretation is logic, as it has been assumed, in the main, for millennia, then the realm of the full primal interpretation becomes invisible to investigation and ceases to exist for it. The only way to allow the richness of the phenomena of understanding and interpretation to become a part of an analytic is by way of an existential ontological analytic.

### ***Discourse and Language***

The task now is to examine the ontological relationship between discourse and language. To start with an understanding of what Heidegger wants to indicate with 'meaning.' This will be done in order to give a background to what will be said later before going on to looking at the ontological relationship of language and discourse explicitly.

We are told by Heidegger, "That which can be Articulated in interpretation, and thus even more primordially in discourse, is what we call 'meaning'." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 204) It would be helpful to try and get a clearer understanding of what Heidegger wants to indicate by the term 'meaning.' He does give us a more full account of 'meaning' when he writes "meaning is that wherein the understandability [*Verstehbarkeit*] of something maintains itself." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 370) Meaning, then, is what allows that which is understood to be understood; it "signifies the 'upon-which' of the primary projection of the understanding of Being." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 371) We can think of meaning as a kind of ground upon which the

understanding can be built. Heidegger tells us that, “That which gets articulated in such discursive Articulation, we call the ‘totality-of-significations’.” (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 204) The task now is to explicate the differences and relationships we can find between discourse, understanding, interpretation, meaning and significations. We have already found above that the understanding is the disclosure of the set of relations that make up the totality of Being-in-the-world. The development of the understanding gives us the fore-having, fore-sight, and fore-conception that make up interpretation. In order to create the fore-having, fore-sight, and fore-conception, “the understanding appropriates understandingly that which is understood by it.” (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 188) Meaning, then, is the Articulation of that which has been interpreted. The totality-of-signification is the totality of all that has been articulated in the understanding. More primordially than all of this is discourse, so that, in discourse there exists understanding, interpretation, meaning and significations. As pointed out at the start, these are not causally linked in the sense that one causes the next like a series of processes, but are roughly modes or aspects; so that, understanding and interpretation are modes of discourse and so already exist as a part of discourse or, they are faces such that understanding and interpretation are the faces that can be presented to us by discourse. Heidegger goes on to say that the “intelligibility of Being-in-the-world [...] expresses itself as discourse.” (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 204) That is, it is through discourse that Being-in-the-world becomes intelligible. The significations that were disclosed in discursive Articulation are

that which get put into words. These significations accrue words, that is, words become associated with significations. The 'accruing' of words implies a temporal element, so that, over time words are associated with significations. A word has not had a signification already associated with it or is able to create a signification; the significations have already been disclosed in discursive Articulation and exist in discourse whether or not any word has been associated with the signification. By saying 'words' it could be assumed that words are necessarily written marks for verbal sounds, but, as will be shown later, this is not the case. We need only think of words as units of something, whatever that something might turn out to be.

### **Language as the Expression of Discourse**

We are told that the "way in which discourse gets expressed is language." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 204) That is, language, as the "totality of words," (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 204) is a way that signification can be made public but it is not that language is just for public expression. This, however, requires some investigation. Discourse, as something worldly, must have as a part of its being Being-with. In this way, it exists along with others and, as such, along with the 'they'. Before moving on, Heidegger's ideas concerning others and the 'they' will have to be outlined as this will give us a better understanding of the positioning of language.

### ***The being of others and the 'they'***

In the normal state of Being-in-the-world, things are encountered as things ready-to-hand, but they do not have to be ready-to-hand for my Dasein; they can be

ready-to-hand for another or any other Dasein. In this way, we can become aware that other Dasein exist. We might say, in a superficial way that will be expanded later, that these other Dasein are the 'Others.' When encountered in relation to the ready-to-hand, they are not just something added onto the ready-to-hand, but, that which is ready-to-hand is so by virtue of being ready-to-hand for Others. The things that are encountered are ready-at-hand in a world that is with the Others and is also my world in advance. So Dasein frees things that are neither ready-to-hand nor present-at-hand, but are Dasein themselves so that "they are there too, and there with it." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 154) However, it should be noted that the Others are not just everybody else, they are, in the main, those that we identify with; "those among whom one is too." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 154) This way of being is not a co-existence of things present-at-hand, but it is recognition of the sameness of being; of a common possession of the same existential ontology. Our Being-in-the-world is a state that is shared and so, Being-in-the-world is also a Being-with-others, not only when Others are present, but as a part of the structure of the world, so that, the Being-with-others is always a part of Being-in-the-world, even "Dasein's Being-alone is Being-with in the world." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, pp. 156-157)

We should not assume that the Others are other people or even other individual things of any sort; that would be allowing ourselves to fall into non-ontological thinking. The Others should be thought of as the ontological possibility of other Dasein. Whether there are other people or not or even other Dasein or not

makes no difference at all, what the Others allow is that Dasein includes the possibility that there could be other Dasein and so that there is the possibility of a making public. Public, in the same way, is not that an ontic public, but a possibility of being public.

In Being-with-others, one is concerned about one's relationship with the Others and how one differs from them whether this concern takes the form of desiring to be like the Others, desiring to come closer to the Others, desiring to distance oneself from the Others, or to maintain a constant distance from the Others. Heidegger describes this concern of the relationship between oneself and the Others as having "the character of *distantiality*." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 164) However, this distantiality is, in the normal day-to-day Being-in-the-world and Being-with means that Dasein "stands in *subjection* [*Botmässigkeit*] to Others." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 164) The subjection is such that Dasein is no longer an individual entity, separate and discrete, but is subsumed into the Others. The possibilities for being of Dasein are now the possibilities of being of the Others. The Others are not others in the sense of being a collection of other entities or Dasein, but the Others are something that is a part of Being-in-the-world. Dasein is taken over by the Others and by being then a part of the Others, the Others become more powerful. The question of who or what make up the Others is, according to Heidegger, not a question of individuals, or of groups of individuals, but the "who' is the neuter, '*the they*' [*das Man*]." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 164) The individuality of one's Dasein is taken over, unobserved, by the Others. The Being-with as a normal

way of Being does not notice that the Dasein stops being sovereign, but becomes a part of the Others; the desires, wants, opinions, needs of one's Dasein silently and unnoticeably become the desires, wants, opinions, needs of the Others. "In this inconspicuousness and unascertainability, the real dictatorship of the 'they' is unfolded." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 164) The 'unfolding' and 'becoming' should not be thought of as events that happen at some time, but are a part of the existential ontological analysis of Dasein; Dasein is already subsumed into the Others as a necessary part of its totality.

Heidegger goes on to describe the attributes of the "they" as being distanciality, averageness, and levelling down. Although the description of the "they" and the way in which it exists is of great interest, it does not appear to have an immediate impact on the investigation of language being carried out. However, as already part of Dasein's existential ontological structure, the 'they' does have a major role in understanding Dasein. Without the 'they' Dasein would no longer be Dasein. As something that is a constituent part of Dasein, the 'they' should be examined; its role in every aspect of Dasein should not be underestimated. We are then obliged to explore the 'they' in a little more detail which, even if only a sketch, is still able to give hints into the relationships between the 'they' and Dasein.

We are told that averageness "keeps watch over everything exceptional that thrusts itself to the fore." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 165) The averageness that stems from the 'they' tries to make everything seem

understood. The exceptional is seen as something 'against' the 'they' and, as such, must be suppressed, or, at least, pulled back in line with the expectations of the 'they'. Anything primordial that is disclosed is pulled back into the 'they' which deems it "as something that has long been well known." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 165) The overall fact of the averageness of the 'they' is that everything is absorbed and becomes a part of the 'they'. There can be no escape from the 'they', not necessarily by the suppression of deviations from the 'they', but by the 'they' assimilating any deviation and, in doing so, taking away and neutralising what was exceptional in it.

Along with averageness comes levelling down. This is the idea that, in the assimilating behaviour of the 'they', in its imposition of averageness on the exceptional, it is the exceptional that gets "pulled back" into the average. This, of course, implies that the 'they' is always, or even, usually of a "lower order" than that which is to be levelled down. There are two observations that could be made here: if the 'they' pulls everything into the average, then it would pull up as well as down; and, in what sense are we to think of up and down?

If the 'they' brings the average to the fore, then, what is exceptional could just as well be "lower" than the average and so gets dragged up to the average. The only way that the claim that the 'they' pulls everything exceptional "down", is if, by up and down, we mean conventional and unconventional. Taking this meaning, the implied value judgments of better and worse, good and bad, are removed and the statement that the 'they' pulls everything down to the average could be read



as “the ‘they’ conventionalises anything it encounters that is unconventional.” By changing up and down to unconventional and conventional we can get a more consistent account of the working of the ‘they’. Averageness would change to the claim that the ‘they’ pulls everything unconventional into the conventional and levelling down would be the same claim with different words. This is not what Heidegger meant when he wrote about the ‘they’, but, if he wanted to make the claim that the ‘they’ levels down, he should be prepared to describe what he means by up and down and face the implications of better and worse by an argument in support of value judgments. This seems to be, and might well be, an impossible enterprise so that it is little wonder that Heidegger did not undertake it. There exists little or no entirely believable defence of value judgements that does not make use of convention; what is good and bad is so just by, or grounded on convention. But, of course, if he did use the idea that what is good is what is conventional and what bad, unconventional, then, what is good would always already be in the ‘they’ and what is bad would be anything outside the ‘they’. The averageness of the ‘they’ would always, in this case, pull everything up to it; the levelling down would have to become a levelling up.

Dasein, in its normal way of being, is totally caught up in the ‘they’, in fact, “*The ‘they’ is an existientiale; and as a primordial phenomenon, it belongs to Dasein’s positive constitution.*” (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 167) Heidegger says that this “way of Being is that of inauthentic and a failure to stand by one’s Self.” (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 166) To be authentic, however, Dasein can never free itself from the ‘they’; the ‘they’, as an existientiale, is

already a part of Dasein, to become authentic the 'they' of Dasein has to be recognised for what it is and changed by a change in relation to it.

### ***Totality-of-Significations, Discourse and Language***

"The intelligibility of Being-in-the-world [...] *expresses itself as discourse.*" (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 204) This statement by Heidegger needs to be explored and its implications disclosed. How can discourse, being more primal than, certainly, assertion for example, express itself? What is it for discourse to express itself? If it does express itself, to whom is it expressing itself and how?

If we think of discourse of being something that does not communicate, but, instead, allows the world to become intelligible, then we might be able to get a better understanding of how these concepts hang together. If intelligibility expresses itself as discourse, then, the first question to address is to whom is the expression made. If it is assumed that the 'who' is something outside of Dasein, then we will end up with apparently insurmountable problems of circularity; however, if the 'who' is Dasein itself, we can get an idea of a possible way ahead. Instead of assuming 'expressing' here means communicating in a normal sense, we could use 'express' to mean the "making sense" of the intelligibility of Being-in-the-world; in other words, discourse articulates the intelligibility, and this articulation into discourse is what is call 'expressing.' There are no words expressed physically as sounds or in any other way needed at this stage, as the expressing is not expressing to the outside, but expressing that is the result of an

Articulation; it is a 'making clear' and an 'ordering' of the intelligibility so that Being-in-the-world is in a state such that it is laid out as beings for Dasein and, as the Others are included in Dasein, it becomes an ontological making public.

Heidegger tells us that the "totality-of-significations of intelligibility is *put into words*." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 204) From this, it could be assumed that all that has been Articulated by discourse from what is in the interpretation is put into words. If this is the case, then anything not put into words cannot be a part of the totality-of-signification and hence, it appears that words are necessary to create the totality-of-significations; that is, that words are required prior to significations. But words themselves "do not get supplied with significations." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 204) So words do not come associated with significations, rather, it is to "significations, words accrue". (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 204) But the structure does not need to be understood in this way that leads to circularities. By saying that the totality-of-signification is put into words, it does not follow that anything within this totality has to be named, just that the totality has to be put into words.

We still have a problem, though, of how significations can accrue words in the first place. This is only a problem if words are considered to be only noises made or marks that represent significations. If we confine ourselves to this, then we have omitted a huge amount, if not, most of means of communications that are actually used as well as ignoring the possibility of the full possible extent of the meaning of discourse. Heidegger, in his analysis of assertion, does point out that

an interpretation can be expressed, and often is, not using verbal or written means, but by an action; that is, "Interpretation is carried out primordially not in a theoretical statements, but in an action of circumspective concern." (Heidegger M. , *Being and Time*, 1962, p. 200) So, in interpretation, an action could be performed that is able to make public. The setting aside of the hammer makes public to anyone watching that the hammer is unsuitable for the purpose for which it is required. If we allow this, then it is not a large leap to allow the pointing out, for example, of a better hammer and, as a part of the understanding associated with a Being-with, for this to be interpreted as a request for the other tool. As a result of the Being-with, Dasein would be able to understand the actions of other Dasein in so far as an action of using something ready-to-hand, Dasein could appropriate what has been shown as something ready-to-hand and take that into its understanding and interpretation. For Dasein to include more things into its totality-of-signification, the things could be appropriated by seeing Others having those things as things ready-to-hand. If we have been able to build Dasein's world of significations from the actions of other Dasein, we now have to allow words to accrue to significations. Indeed, even the most basic appropriating of the world for understanding of an infant could be an example of actions being used to enable entities in the world to become things ready-to-hand. In this case, it is not the Others that have disclosed what is ready-to-hand, but Dasein by its own actions within the world. Dasein is made visible for itself in the 'there', and this Dasein includes the Other and so the possibility of making public.

The first thing to decide is what sort of things words are. Must we, and does Heidegger force us, to consider words as only noises and marks, or can any action that communicates in some sense be considered words or, in some way, equivalent to words? Heidegger says that, “Language can be broken into word-things which are present-at-hand” (Heidegger M. , *Being and Time*, 1962, p. 204) and that language as a totality of words is “something we come across as ready-to-hand.” (Heidegger M. , *Being and Time*, 1962, p. 204) The first of these statements says that language *can* be broken down into words, but must we consider this ‘can’ as a possibility or necessity? Must we consider words as noises and marks? Must the breaking down of language into words have to apply to the whole of language?

In answer to the first of these questions, it would seem that Heidegger considers that, if we come across language as the totality of words, then it can, of necessity, be broken down into individual words. If this is the case, then we must move onto words themselves and consider what these are. Heidegger does appear to take the meaning of ‘word’ in the normal sense of a sound or mark in *Being and Time*, but there seems no necessity in doing so. Any action that discloses something in the world might be considered to have the same effect as a word or collection of words. If Dasein were to put aside the hammer because it was not suitable for the task for which it was required, then the effect of this action would be no different than the assertion that the hammer is no good for, say, hammering this type of nail. The action of putting the hammer aside itself is made up of word-type actions. The ‘tone’ with which the hammer is put aside can

be analysed into constituent parts: the look of disapproval on the face; the setting down with a motion of contempt; and so on. Each of the movements, gestures and expressions associated with the act of setting the hammer aside would make up a statement that would be just as eloquent as any verbal or written assertion, if not more so. Language, then, as something that communicates or makes public in some way with words, could be taken in its broadest sense and, in this way, would include anything that communicates or makes public. This would allow language to include the arts, where a form of art would be a language in itself. Such activities as painting are intended to communicate and can do so; the school or style of painting might be considered as equivalent to what is normally termed different languages or dialects in spoken or written language. If these activities are included in our broad conception of language, then what Heidegger says about language being the totality of words will also hold. In any activity that intends to communicate or make public, where the totality of the statement of communication (the picture, piece of sculpture, poem, play, and so on) can be broken down and analysed into constituent parts in the same way as is done with language as normally understood. A difficulty then occurs of how this analysis should take place: if it should be looked at using a calculus as in logic or if it is more profitable to employ an existential ontological analytic.

### ***The Being of Discourse and Language***

Heidegger says that "Discourse is existentially language". (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 204) This statement should be explicated so that a more detailed analysis of 'discourse' and 'language' can be achieved. The kind of

being Dasein has is Being-in-the-world. Dasein, who discloses language, articulates signification discovered in Being-in-the-world. If a primal part of Being-in-the-world is a Being-with-others, then language, as the way that discourse is disclosed publicly, in some sense, must constitute part, at least, of the of Being-with-others and so Being-in-the-world. If all of discourse is, of necessity, put into words, then discourse would indeed be existentially language. However, if we take language in a broad sense as indicated earlier, then discourse would not be limited to words in the narrow sense of sounds and marks, but would include anything that could be pointed out in any way; that is, anything that is actually indicated or implied by any form of activity visible in the 'there.'

Heidegger tells us that it is by discoursing or talking that we "articulate 'significantly' the intelligibility of Being-in-the-world." (Heidegger, 1962, p. 204) This seems to offer no problems as long as we take 'discourse' and 'talking' in a broad sense. If it is taken in a narrow sense, then there would be severe problems in matching the analysis with the phenomena. If discourse and talking were taken as an activity that only uses words in the narrow sense of verbal noises or marks, then those people, for example, who do not think in words would be excluded from being Dasein; they would have to be relegated to being some sort of a sub-Dasein being. However, we are told that all 'discourse' and 'talking' do is to articulate significantly; that is, they articulate that which is in the world, dividing it up into parts. This does not require the use of any ontic words at all. There is no communication at this point; discourse is a part of the totality

of an individual Dasein's being. However, Being-with is a part of Being-in-the-world and, as such, is maintained by Being-with-one-another. We have, therefore, to account for the possibility of a Being-with-one-another from only discourse and talking. To do so would mean that discourse would need or allow a 'public' aspect. The lines between discourse and language would then become blurred. Although neither discourse nor language need words in the conventional sense, they both would need to be able to have some way of communicating or of disclosing. We have already shown how this could be with language, but what, if discourse used the same way of communicating, would the difference be between discourse and language? A possible solution would be that discourse articulates significantly what is intelligible, but can do so in a way such that, that which is articulated is made public using language as a part of the articulation.

A factor that should be kept in mind is the idea that these concepts are not things that work in serial, but modes of being. Discourse, language, interpretation, understanding, Articulation and so on, all exist, not as processes that deal with data on its way to some goal, but as modes or aspects of being. In this way, language is not separate from discourse at all, but is a way of looking at discourse. If this is the case, then we do not need to see language as something distinct from discourse, but as a way that discourse itself is seen from a certain perspective. Discourse does not change to give language; that which is observed remains immutable, only the position or viewpoint of the 'observer' is changed.



## **The Structure of Discourse**

As discourse is the articulation of the significations of Being-in-the-world and Being-with belongs to Being-in-the-world, Being-with is involved in the articulation of significations and maintains itself by way of concerned Being-with-one-another. The way this is done, we are told, is by all those ways that communication is achieved which, as we have seen, may or may not include the use of vocal noises or written marks or even any of those means that are available to the with-world. Heidegger writes, "Talking is talk about something." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 204) That which the talk is about, though, does not have to appear explicitly in the talk; in fact, Heidegger maintains that it does not even for the most part serve as the theme of the talk whatever form the talk takes. What discourse is about is a part of the structure of discourse which is involved in disclosing Being-in-the-world. There is always something said in talk whatever the form the talk takes and, it is the something that is said that discourse communicates.

Discourse should be understood in a broad sense that is not confined to noises or marks, but includes any form of behaviour, or further, any means by which things can be disclosed in a discursive way. It is through a common state of mind of being Dasein-with, where Dasein recognises others as being of the same structure, that communication can take place. The actions of Dasein can be recognised by others as a disclosure of the articulation of something in the with-world. We are told that through this Articulation of being that is communicated in the broad sense and that is understandable by others that "a co-state-of-mind

[Mitbefindlichkeit] gets 'shared', and so does the understanding of Being-with." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 205) As Dasein already is made up of a co-understanding and co-state-of-mind, 'internal' experiences, wishes and the like are not the purpose of discourse. Instead, discourse is that by which the Being-with, that already exists as a part of Dasein, is explicitly shared; a sort of affirmation of a shared Being-in-the-world. That which is communicated in talk exists already as a part of the with-world, but, by disclosing it, or making it public in talk, it not having yet been shared now becomes public and allows it to be appropriated as something that is now shared in the with-world. What is expressed is an expression of Being-in-the-world and, as this is not something 'internal,' it is an expression of what is already in the world. We are told that, "What is expressed is precisely this Being-outside – that is to say, the way in which one currently has a state-of-mind (mood)". (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 205) To get an idea of what is meant by this we will have to take a brief look at what the terms 'mood' and 'state-of-mind' might signify.

Heidegger claims that we always have a mood. When we suppose that we have no mood at all, we, in actuality, do have a mood; we have this mood when "Dasein become satiated with itself." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 173) That is, Dasein has become filled with itself beyond what it needs, to the point that it wearies of itself. As mood is of a primordial nature, the reason for a mood cannot be disclosed by the senses. A mood cannot be destroyed so that there is no mood; one mood is replaced by another. If a mood of elation replaced the apparent non-mood, then this shows up more distinctly the non-mood that

has been replaced. Mood is that by which being is brought to the 'there.' "In this 'how one is', having a mood brings Being to its 'there'". (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 173) Mood is the way that Dasein can "come across itself." This does not mean that Dasein perceives itself, but that Dasein finds itself in a mood; it is the mood that allows Dasein to be disclosed as something in the "there". An essential characteristic of a state-of-mind is that "*they disclose Dasein in its thrownness, and – proximally and for the most part – in the manner of an evasive turning-away.*" (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 175) Moods do not originate from the inside or outside, but come from Being-in-the-world. Moods are a way of Being-in-the-world. It is by way of mood that Dasein is able to direct itself to something within the world. A second essential characteristic of mood is that it "*has already disclosed, in every case, Being-in-the-world as a whole, and makes it possible first of all to direct oneself towards something.*" (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 176) Dasein must have a mood in order to be able to disclose anything within the world. It is by way of mood that something in the world can be something that matters. We can try and look at the things in the world as the things present-at-hand; that is, we can try and even out the world to be universally present-at-hand, but, even here, to be free of meanings disclosed by moods, the theory, or the construct that is the theory, must let what is disclosed come into view in a "*tranquil tarrying alongside.*" (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 177) Although anything that is disclosed is disclosed through state-of-mind, it does not follow from this that the articulation of the world falls into feelings. Dasein is not only disclosed in

its thrownness in the world which has already been disclosed in the Being of Dasein, a state-of-mind is itself the existential kind of being in which Dasein is open to the world and in which the world matters.

Returning back to discourse, it is through discourse that the world, as disclosed through a state-of-mind, is made public. The making public of this disclosed world is achieved, according to Heidegger, by the manner in which discourse is expressed; that is, by intonation, modulation and tempo. Saying this does not imply that the talk can only be done by noises or marks rather than a broader idea of talk; the broad conception of talk given earlier, is perfectly compatible with the communication of mood; indeed, it is only by means of a broader idea of discourse and language can this ability to communicate mood be explained. If we were to confine ourselves to a narrow concept of language, we would have to allow a broader concept of language – intonation, modulation and so on – as something added and needed to communicate mood.

The constituent parts of discourse cannot be extracted in any way from language; rather, they are from the state of Dasein's being. So, it is not language that is the root of discourse, but discourse is the root of language. The about what, what is said, the communication and the making known that constitute discourse are not all necessarily present in any particular act of expression; their presence or absence is a function of the nature of the discourse, but discourse always falls within these constitutive parts.

Heidegger asserts that the normal search for the essence of language takes its

starting point from one or other of the constituent parts of language; that is, from expression, symbolic form, assertion, making known of experiences, or patterning of life. It is not one of these individually or even the combination of some or all of these that we should use in the search for the essence, but the search for language should be performed on the back of an “ontological-existential whole of the structure of discourse on the basis of the analytic of Dasein.” (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 206)

### ***Hearing***

To make the character of discourse clear, Heidegger analyses the phenomenon of hearing. “Hearing is constitutive for discourse.” (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 206) Heidegger goes on to give an analysis of hearing and we shall follow him, but first, we will consider for a moment what could be meant by hearing. If we assume our broad conceptions, talk and discourse need not be heard. If this is accepted, then it might be assumed that we could replace ‘hearing’ by ‘seeing,’ ‘feeling,’ or, more generally, ‘sensed’; however, this would obscure what is done in discourse of whatever type. If we use the word ‘sensed’ then, already, we have implied an inside and outside; that which is on the ‘outside’ is sensed and is fed to the ‘inside.’ But we need not think this way. When we are involved in discourse, we are already in the world in which is included the with-world; that is, there is no inside or outside, just the world wherein discourse takes place. We shall carry on using ‘hearing’ as long as it understood in this way and is explicitly not thought of as sense data, the sensing of something ‘outside,’ or having anything to do necessarily with sound. ‘Hearing’

should be thought of, rather, as a mode of discourse and, as such, as a mode of interpretation. Heidegger supports this view when he writes, "Listening to... is Dasein's existential way of Being-open as Being-with for Others." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 206) When Dasein hears, it puts itself into the with-world. Being-with, of course, requires more than just verbal interaction; we must be aware of Others as Dasein with the same type of being and, this type of being includes an array of behaviour. Heidegger says that "Dasein hears because it understands." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 206). If we conceive of understanding as the disclosure of Being-in-the-world, then, again, we see that hearing is an aspect of understanding, not in the sense of understanding a language in the normal way (although this is an ontic mode of understanding), but as disclosing. What is said might or might not be said and heard in a conventional way, but what is heard should not be thought of as something in addition to the world, but already a part of what constitutes the world. We are told that "Dasein hears because it understands." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 206). This falls in line with what we have said about hearing. Dasein is a being-in-the-world. As a constituent part of being-in-the-world, it is in the world with Others. It is "in 'thrall' to Dasein-with and to itself; and in this thralldom it 'belongs' to these." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 206) It is by the development of Dasein-with that hearing can occur. By being Dasein-with, Dasein has the possibility of understanding other Dasein. Hearing is this understanding; an understanding of what Dasein does.

A more primordial form of hearing is harkening. This is a sensing of noises rather

than anything from Others. But even here we do not hear noises as naked complexes of sound; we already, even at this stage, are aware of the noises 'as' something. To hear pure noise requires the harkening to be of a special type or done in an artificial way. Heidegger thinks that it is possible to perceive noises as noises, but this is certainly not a normal way of being. "Dasein, as Being-in-the-world, already dwells *alongside* what is ready-to-hand," (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 206) it is not alongside sensations as bare sensations of the world, it does not even require sensation as the ground from which the world can be constructed; the world is already there and Dasein already dwells alongside so that the things in the world already have meaning. Heidegger writes "Dasein, as essentially understanding, is proximally alongside what is understood." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 206) As understanding, Dasein cannot appreciate anything without already understanding it. In this way, we always hear what is said as something said. Even, as Heidegger said, hearing something said in a foreign language is not just the hearing of noises with no meaning, but is heard as something said.

Heidegger tells us (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 208) that keeping silent is an existential possibility of discourse. This seems a strange claim to make at first sight, so, in order to understand discourse better, this idea should be explicated. When we talk to one another, Heidegger writes that "the person who keeps silent can 'make one understand'" (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 208). From this, we should ask the questions: What does Heidegger mean by "keeping silent"? How can keeping silent "make one understand"?

By “keeping silent” Heidegger does not mean not making any noise. He says specifically that he does not mean that he includes any act of keeping silent that is the result of being unable to make a noise, or even of being unaccustomed to make a noise, but only keeping silent as an authentic part of discourse. Authentic discourse is discourse in which Dasein knows itself and is aware of its enthrallment to the ‘they’. Although there is no escape from the ‘they’, Dasein is able to recognise this and is able to have some sort of freedom by manipulating the ‘they’. In inauthentic discourse, Dasein is entirely and silently subjected by the ‘they’; that which is said is only what the ‘they’ say without Dasein as being something for itself. Keeping silent in authentic discourse allows the disclosure of what is said. A point that could be brought out here is that keeping silent could be kept in mind in what Heidegger calls thinking. Heideggerian thinking could be thought of as an allowing to come forth from out of what is unsaid; a thinking prior to any ontic thinking. If keeping silent is more akin to an opening of a clearing into which that which is unsaid can come forth, then we can start to understand the place of keeping silent in discourse. In discourse, then, speaking at length does not bring anything to light other than what is in the ‘they’; it accepts the sovereignty of the ‘they’ and does nothing to go beyond it. In keeping silent, on the other hand, the ‘they’, although still there and still holding Dasein in its thrall, does not totally restrict the disclosure of what is left unsaid in discourse by recognising and altering the relationship to the ‘they’ in authentic thinking. When Heidegger writes, “talking extensively about something, covers it up and brings what is understood to a sham clarity” (Heidegger M. , *Being and Time*, 1962, p.



208), the clarity that comes from talking extensively is the clarity of the 'they' that brings everything into its averageness; everything is, for the 'they', understood, but nothing is understood. Keeping silent is a mode of discourse. In this way, keeping silent is the allowing of the disclosure of genuine potentiality for being. Far from being nothing within discourse, keeping silent becomes the way in which genuine discourse is made possible at all.

Discourse is constitutive of Dasein in so much as it is through discourse that the 'there' comes into being. Dasein, as having already disclosed the 'there' in discourse, has already expressed itself. As language is the expression of being, "Dasein has language," (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 208) not in a way that language is something added onto Dasein, but having language as a part of its being. Language is not an activity of Dasein, but it is a mode or aspect of the being of Dasein.

### ***Man as animal rationale***

Heidegger writes that a definition of man as ζῷον λόγον ἔχον given by the ancient Greek came to be translated as the rational animal. This is not a "false" idea, but one that does not disclose the phenomenal basis of the original understanding of Dasein. Instead, "Man shows himself as the entity which talks." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 208) This statement is one in need of analysis so that we can get both a better understanding of 'man' as well as the status of 'language' and its relationship to 'man.' This statement does not mean that man is that thing that is able to make vocal noises, indeed, there are plenty

of other animals that vocalise as well as using other forms of communication, but man is that entity which discovers the world and Dasein itself. The discovery of the world and Dasein is achieved by discourse. As we have seen, in inauthentic discourse, that is, discourse that is in thrall to the 'they', nothing can be revealed other than that which is already in the 'they'; in this mode of discourse, the genuine potentiality for being of Dasein is not disclosed. So, it is not by this way that Dasein can discover the world and Dasein within it, but it is only by authentic thought as a part of authentic discourse that Dasein can become so acquainted. Man is not the *animal rationale* that is able to speak in either a broad or narrow sense, but we are Dasein and, in as much as we identify our self with the ontic animal, man, man is the thing for which its being can be an issue. This must be said with the understanding that, although we might consider our self man and we are Dasein, there is a gulf between the two. We are ontologically Dasein, but ontically man.

According to Heidegger, the Greeks did not have a word for language, but the phenomenon that we might call language, they called discourse. Whether this is true or not and whether the term we call discourse can be equated with the understanding of discourse we have outlined here, is not relevant. The use of ancient Greek does not need to be a historical analysis, but allow terms to be taken in a way that allows us to understand the phenomena without them being obscured by the terms used. By giving terms unusual meanings, whether we justify the usage by pointing to their use in an ancient society or find some other way of apparent justification, does not matter, so long as the unusual use the

term is put to manages to clear the obscurity thrown up by ontotheological prejudices.

Because *λόγος* was understood by the Greeks as assertion at a certain time in their history, it was then by this kind of *logos* that was used by them to understand the basic structure and workings of discourse. The structure of grammar was sought using logic as the tool. But logic only addresses itself to the present-at-hand as was observed in the analysis of assertion. Looking at language in this way, we have lost the whole ontological foundations of Dasein. All of that which is disclosed and built in trying to understand the essence of discourse would be lost; we would only be left with a partial understanding of assertion which, at best, might be thought of as a partial understanding of a mode of discourse, not anything like an understanding of the essence of language. Heidegger claims that the study of language has been of this type ever since the Greeks. The science of language is limited to the science of discourse. As such, it is concerned with building a construct into which language can, for the most part, approximate, but it does not follow that if the construct approximates or even fits exactly for now what is seen in language, that language is, in some sense, derived from or based on logic. By searching for the essence of language in the existential ontological analysis of Dasein, the essence might be approached, not as a list of rules, but as a way or aspect of being. It is on the basis of an understanding of language as an *existentiale* that we can hope to establish an understanding of language on more primordial ontological foundations. We are told that, "The doctrine of signification is rooted in the

ontology of Dasein. Whether it prospers or decays depends on the fate of this ontology.” (Heidegger M. , *Being and Time*, 1962, p. 209)

### ***Language and Time***

Having explored language within the existential ontological analytic as Heidegger outlines in *Being and Time*, we have now to examine the relationship of language to time. This is necessary because we are told that “Dasein is essentially ahead of itself.” (Heidegger M. , *Being and Time*, 1962, p. 386) From this, we must ask the question: If Dasein is ahead of itself, where is it ahead of itself? The obvious answer is: the future, but what is future? And, if we answer that it is a mode of time, we are forced to the question: What is time? And, if we manage to answer this question, we are then confronted by the questions: How does time relate to the ontological analysis we performed above?

In the existential analytic, the world was explained from the perspective of being. That is, there was no attempt to explain beings as objects, but only in their disclosure within the structure of the being of Dasein. In the same way, we are to look at time, in its normal usage, as something objectified from within the being of Dasein. We are not to look at time as something separate from Dasein, but, in the first instance, at temporality as an essential part of the being of Dasein or even that which constitutes Dasein and then, how time can become conceived as something present-at-hand within this structure. The first process, then, within this exploration, is to understand the nature of Dasein more fully in its essential nature.

### **Dasein, care and temporality**

Dasein is not based on a substance<sup>5</sup> in the normal sense, but on a 'self-substance'<sup>6</sup> "whose Being has been conceived as care." (Heidegger M. , *Being and Time*, 1962, p. 351) With Heidegger, then, we will first direct our investigation at care as it is on care that the being of Dasein is based. It might seem that this investigation does not necessarily have a direct bearing on either language or thinking; this assumption would be mistaken. If the analysis of Dasein is understood ontically and that the terms used are, in some sense, beings, then the thought would be correct, but the analysis of Dasein is being taken ontologically and in this way the terms do not reflect beings at all and so, when the background and ground of language is investigated, it is not an investigation of what is most proximate followed by something less proximate and which has less of a bearing on language, but the entire investigation is, not only about terms or beings proximate to language and thought, but whatever is being said about what appears to be proximate things are actually terms referring to the same 'thing' (where 'thing' should not be thought of as a being, but as an ontological aspect or point of view).

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5

The translators of *Being and Time* point out that substance should be taken here in a very broad sense and could be thought of as the continued subsistence.

6

It is pointed out in this translation of *Being and Time* that "self-substance" might be translated as "self-subsistence".

## Care

We are told that “the Being of Dasein means ahead-of-itself-Being-already-in-(the-world) as being-alongside (entities encountered within-the-world). This being fills in the signification of the term ‘*care*’.” (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 237) As we discovered above, in the understanding, possibilities for being are projected ahead; that is, Dasein projects itself into its own potentiality for being. Possible ways that Dasein can be have already been projected and these can take the form of either authentic or inauthentic possibilities. For our explication of time, we need not be concerned with the difference in these different possibilities and so, need not, for now, be concerned either with how Heidegger claims that care comes to light in anxiety. These are beyond the scope of this restricted exploration, no matter how vital they may be on the overall analytic. For now, we will only go as deep as care and anything else will be dealt with as needed.

We are reminded that “Dasein is an entity for which, in its Being, that Being is an issue.” (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 236) The being at issue here is what leads to care. We have discovered that it is in the understanding that potentialities for being are projected. In self-projection the potentiality for being of the self is projected. The understanding, then, as something that has already happened means that the self has already been projected; the possibilities of the self have already been disclosed by the understanding. The potentiality for being that is an essential a part of Dasein is “Dasein’s ‘Being-ahead-of-itself’.” (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 236) This being-ahead-of-itself is not

something that is just a property of a subject within a world, but it is something that belongs essentially to the whole of Dasein's constitution; it is being-in-the-world. The referential totality of significance that includes the for-the-sake-of-which as, not a separate part, but an essential constituent, means that the world does not consist in objects and potentialities as two separate things within the world, like two sets, one of things and another of associated potentialities, but rather, a single totality of being-ahead-of-itself-already-in... This, Heidegger says, implies that, "Existentiality is essentially determined by facticity." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 236) This facticity is not solely a thrown potentiality-for-being-in-the-world, but is within the world of concern; it essentially includes falling as well as being alongside those ready-to-hand things of one's concern.

### **Temporality**

Although in the exploration of temporality here, language will not be brought in explicitly, it is assumed that, as Dasein is temporal, language, if a part of Dasein, must also be temporal in its essence. Any essential feature of Dasein helps clarify our picture of any other feature of Dasein as they are all features of a single ontological totality. The illusion that there are different 'things' or 'concepts' being addressed is because of the language used, or, at least, because of the hearing used to listen to what is said. It seems as though Heidegger is using the assertive or calculative talk that is normally used, but it should not be heard as such. In order to understand what Heidegger is trying to say, we must hear what he says in an ontological rather than an ontic or calculative way.

*“Temporality gets expressed in a phenomenal primordial way in Dasein’s authentic Being-a-whole, in the phenomenon known as anticipatory resoluteness.”* (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 351) Beginning from this statement, we will explicate Heidegger’s ideas of temporality. The fundamental parts that constitute the structure of Dasein are unified in temporality; that is, the fundamental constituents of Dasein are all essentially temporal and are modes of temporalizing temporality. If this is the case, then the existential analytic performed in the earlier could be repeated in order to explicate what was disclosed there in terms of temporality. The first thing that must be done, however, is to explore the meaning of temporality and, to do this, our initial path will be with Heidegger and his investigation into anticipatory resoluteness.

In trying to understand anticipatory resoluteness, the first step will be to determine what is to be understood by ‘anticipation’ and what is being anticipated. In anticipation, Dasein discloses for itself in its potentiality for being. This can be extended to a disclosure for potentiality of being towards the end, that is, towards death. Here a deeper understanding is needed of death; what does death mean if it is to be authentically understood?

By ‘death’ we should not assume the usual meaning that is assumed, but should come to an ontological explanation. Death is to be understood as “the possibility of the impossibility of existence – that is to say the utter nullity of Dasein.” (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 354) To understand what Heidegger means by this, we must first understand nullity. The explication of ‘nullity’ can be



traced from the phenomenon of 'guilt.' There lies within guilt a 'not' or a 'lack.' The ontological character of this 'not' must now be addressed. We will allow the assertion from Heidegger that the being of guilt is based upon a lack, not because no grounds are given for this, but the tracing back any further will mean that the establishing of this will take us too far away from our primary objective. It should be remembered, of course, that guilt is meant in a way that does not just include the normal present-at-hand definitions of guilt; Dasein is not something present-at-hand, but has a character of its own. If the lack is in some way caused within Dasein, we cannot think of the cause being of the same character as the lack or that there is something lacking in the cause. The basis of the lack need not have a nullity of its own, within it, from which it is the basis. In fact, *"Being-guilty does not first result from an indebtedness [Verschuldung], but that, on the contrary, indebtedness becomes possible only 'on the basis' of primordial Being-guilty."* (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 329) Dasein, as thrown into its own 'there', projects itself into its 'there'; it projects itself into the possibilities into which it has been thrown. The self has to create a basis for itself but can never actually identify this basis, so, as it exists, it takes itself as its own basis. "To be its own thrown basis as that potentiality-for-Being which is an issue for care." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 330) But in being a basis Dasein always must lag behind itself as projected possibilities; it never can exist before its basis. Its basis is something projected and something not yet and so something that exists only as projection. Dasein, as a being itself, is a self that has been thrown. As projection, Dasein only takes on certain possibilities; that is,

given all possible possibilities, Dasein is only projected into a subset of those possibilities. This means that it has been cut off from the set of other possibilities. Dasein is constantly *not* this set of other, closed off, possibilities. This being the case, then, the projection is not only determined by the nullity of the basis for itself, but also, as a projection, it is based on a not. In falling, that is, in being subsumed into the 'they', Dasein covers up the nullity of its basis and of its projection. But, while it is subsumed within the 'they', it feels the call from care; that is being guilty. The call calls forth Dasein into the possibility of its taking over from the 'they', existing as the thrown entity it is and calls Dasein back into its thrownness so that it can understand the nullity of its own basis. Dasein's guilt is to bring itself back from the lostness of the 'they' into its own possibility for being.

Having sketched out what is to be thought of with nullity as the baselessness of Dasein, we can move back to our consideration of death. In thinking about death, we must first not assume that death is what we normally take it to be; it is not the end of a physical thing. We have to think about the ontological features of death rather than our ontic assumptions. Taken ontologically, death gives the possibility of the finite. The possibility of end of the possibility of Dasein's self projection gives the possibility of finitude. The possibility of the finite is required for the possibility of the ontic. We can have no beings in the ontological. Beings require the finite in order to exist as distinct beings. Ontologically, then, death is not the end of the physical body of a person, but the possibility that offers the possibility of the world and all things that are in it.

Death, in the sense required, is the completion of the being of Dasein. Dasein, as the constant projection of its possibilities, can never be complete as long as possibilities are being projected; that part of the constitution of Dasein, its projection, never arrives except at the end of Dasein, when there are no more possibilities. So Dasein can only actually be complete and whole when no more possibilities can be projected and this is in death. Dasein is made aware of this nullity which dominates it primordially and utterly in authentic being-towards-death. It is being-towards-death in this way that constitutes authentic anticipation; not a being towards a physical death, but a being towards the finite based on its own finitude.

When we move onto resoluteness we discover that it is “as anticipation of death – resoluteness becomes authentically what it can be.” (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962) Heidegger tells us that, “By ‘resoluteness’ we mean ‘letting oneself be called forth to one’s ownmost Being-guilty’.” (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 353) We discovered above that guilt is a two-way calling from care; a calling forth from the ‘they’ and a calling back into its own possibilities for being. From this, resoluteness would be the allowing oneself to come face to face with the calling from the ‘they’ into our own authentic possibilities that are not influenced by the ‘they’. Resoluteness only becomes authentic in anticipation of death because it is in anticipation of death that Dasein is fully aware of the nullity that lies both at the heart of its own basis and in its own projection. Anticipation of death or finitude, allows both of these nullities to be illuminated in the being of authentic Dasein.

For the most part, Dasein is inauthentic and, in this state where what is seen is only what the 'they' see, the present-at-hand, there is no possibility of seeing temporality as this is something discovered only in anticipatory resoluteness; this state requires that Dasein is being authentic. Therefore, temporality need and does not correspond to the ordinary understanding of time. In trying to disclose temporality, Heidegger re-examines the analysis of Dasein in order to interpret those structures that have been shown to constitute Dasein in a way that demonstrates that they are related in temporality.

In anticipatory resoluteness, we are at base, being in anticipation of our own distinctive potentiality for being; we are facing our own possibilities in the ontological. In this way, Dasein is able to come towards itself as its own projection and can face its own possibilities as being possibilities. Dasein can come towards itself as itself and, as such, can exist. The allowing of itself to come towards itself "is the primordial phenomenon of the *future as coming towards*." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 372) This is true in both an authentic and inauthentic being-towards-death; both of these modes are possible only with futurity. Futural does not mean something that is yet to come, but is the potentiality of Dasein's own being coming towards itself. In anticipation, Dasein is authentically futural. Anticipation is reliant on Dasein itself coming towards itself and therefore, Dasein, as coming towards itself, is itself futural. Futural, as possibilities, can be seen to be ontological and so Dasein is, itself, essentially ontological.

In anticipatory resoluteness Dasein understands its own essential being guilty and so, in existing, takes over being guilty in terms of being the thrown basis of its own nullity. By the taking over its own thrownness, Dasein is taking over itself as it already was. This is possible only if the futural Dasein is able to be its “ownmost ‘as-it-already-was’ – that is to say, its ‘been’”. (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 373) It is only by coming to itself as a having been that Dasein can come towards itself in such a way that it comes back. The anticipation of the totality of possibilities allows the coming back to Dasein’s ownmost been. As essentially futural, Dasein can be authentically its having been. From this, it can be seen that ‘having been’ comes from the essential futurity of Dasein.

In anticipatory resoluteness the ‘there’ is disclosed as the current situation in which things read-to-hand become available to circumspective concern and so it available for use. Being able to become circumspectively concerned with entities in the environment, requires that they first become disclosed in their possibilities and so to become present in the environment. Resolute being alongside in an environment is only possible if entities in the environment have been made *present*. By coming back to itself futurally, resoluteness is able to be in the state of being present. The ‘having been’ stems from the future in such a way that the future which is passing towards the ‘has been’ is released from itself into the present. “This phenomenon has the unity of a future which makes present in the process of having been; we designate it as ‘temporality’.” (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 374) This unity and so temporality allows Dasein to manifest

things in the present. Temporality can be regarded, therefore, as an aspect of the ontological totality that allows the same as the ontological analysis given earlier. Heidegger summarises what he means by temporality as: “*Temporality reveals itself as the meaning of authentic care.*” (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 374)

### **Discourse and temporality**

Although we now approach the relationship of discourse and temporality, it should be remembered that we are still not addressing language explicitly. As detailed earlier, discourse is not language. This, however, does not mean that discourse is not language in a sense that they are all essential features of Dasein so that they are all ways at looking at the same ‘thing.’ With these possibilities in mind and with the use to which the term ‘discourse’ will put to later, a more full understanding of discourse is required in all its aspects.

Before embarking on trying to understand the relationship between discourse and temporality, it is necessary to understand the term ‘ecstasis’ as this is used frequently in Heidegger’s thoughts concerning temporality; in addition, a brief diversion down this path might make the ideas behind temporality a little clearer. ‘Ecstasis’ is from the Greek *έκστατικόν*. There exist a number of meanings that could be associated with the word including: inclined to depart from; excitable; out of one’s senses; able to displace or remove; and causing mental derangement (Liddell & Scott, 1996). From these possible definitions, a meaning must be constructed that would fall in line with our understanding of Heidegger’s

use of the term. In order to explain the use of this term, we are told that, "*Temporality is the primordial 'outside-of-itself' in and for itself.*" (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 377) This appears to point firmly in an understanding of 'ecstasis' as being "the ability to displace or remove" oneself. The modes of temporality, the future, the having been and the present can be characterised as a towards oneself, a having been of oneself and a letting oneself be alongside and encountered by. Each of these modes is called an ecstasy of temporality and so implies the meaning of directing oneself towards a mode of temporality. The self is displaced so that it is directed in a certain way within overall temporality. But temporality is not prior to any ecstasy; it is the presenting by way of the temporizing unity of the future, the having been and the present.

### **Tenses**

Tenses within language do not come from the talk about time as something talked about in addition to the subject of the talk; that is, when we talk in tenses, the tenses are not something added onto the fundamental language, but are an essential feature of the structure of discourse from the start. Our talking does not include tenses because it is performed in and over time; it is tensed because it is itself something temporal; it is grounded and has its being in the unity of the ecstasies. Whenever there is any talk about anything, this comes from the Articulation of the understanding; it is already projected and futural. But, language must talk, for the most part, about things and, to make those things visible, they must become something in the present. Along with the future and the present, the having been must be included from, at least, state-of-mind which

is essential for the ability to make anything public; even for Dasein itself. Language, in basing what is said on the understanding, state-of-mind and falling, is by these very bases, something that is, through and through, temporal and reflective of the temporal unity.

It is necessary, here, to make a brief diversion to explore the meanings of 'awaiting,' 'repetition,' 'forgetting' and 'moment of vision.' This exploration will not only broaden our understanding of what will be said about language, but also temporality.

Heidegger tells us that, "The inauthentic future has the character of awaiting." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 386) This is to be contrasted with authentic future's characterisation in anticipation. In anticipation, Dasein lets itself come towards itself in its ownmost potentiality for being. Inauthentic future is characterised by Dasein's coming towards itself, not as itself, but as the 'they-self.'

In the authentic coming towards itself that is the characteristic of anticipatory resoluteness, there is, at the same time, a coming back to Dasein's ownmost self which is that self that has been thrown into its own individuality. Within the ecstasis, Dasein is able to see what it really is; that is, it can see itself as itself without being hidden within the 'they,' so that it is itself, not a they-self. Heidegger writes, from this ground, that, "If Being-as-having-been is authentic, we call it repetition." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 388) On the other hand, Dasein can forget itself in its ownmost thrown potentiality for being.



Forgetting is not an absence or a lack of remembering, but something positive in that it is an ecstatic mode of Dasein's having been. This ecstatic mode of forgetting is one in which Dasein backs away from its ownmost having been or its authentic having been. This backing away closes off ecstatically that from which Dasein is backing away and, therefore, closes off itself, that is, its authentic self, too. Having forgotten is the state in which Dasein is for proximally and for the most part and it is only in this state that anything can be retained. This is done in a concerned making present which awaits and so, what is retained are those things that have been encountered in the world, but things that do not have the character of Dasein.

When the present is held in authentic temporality and is itself authentic it is called the 'moment of vision.' In this state, Dasein is carried away to all those possibilities that are encountered in the situation and take these as possible objects of concern at the same time holding this state in resoluteness. The moment of vision, though, should not be thought of as something within time in the conventional sense; that is, within a time where an event happens and passes away in a compressed series ofnows, or as something present-at-hand. Within the moment of vision nothing happens. It is an authentic present that permits the encountering of that which is present-at-hand or ready-to-hand within time. The inauthentic ecstatic mode is known as 'making present.' In this ecstasis, the understanding temporises itself in an awaiting which makes present. Returning back to our exploration of language, we find that the understanding is

grounded in anticipation and awaiting, that is, it is grounded in the future. State-of-mind in repetition and having forgetting is grounded in the having been. Falling in making present and the moment of vision is grounded in the present. At the same time, the understanding is a present which is becoming a having been; the state of mind temporises itself as a future which is making present; and the present leaps away from a future in the process of becoming a having been or is held on to by a future becoming a having been.

Thus we can see that in *every ecstasis, temporality temporalizes itself as a whole; and this means that in the ecstatical unity with which temporality has fully temporalized itself currently, is grounded the totality of the structural whole of existence, facticity, and falling - that is, the unity of the care-structure.*" (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 401)

Temporality is not made up of a sequence; the future does not occur after the present which does not occur after the having been. Instead, temporality temporizes itself such that the future makes present in the process of having been and time, as we normally think of time, has no place at all. Temporality is an aspect of the ontological totality that allows the manifestation of things.

### **Time and temporality**

How are we to understand time and tenses as they normally appear in day-to-day language, that is, what is the relationship between time and temporality? Within the normal everyday understanding of time, time is taken into consideration without any heed being given to the ontological basis of temporality. So, when

we talk in our normal day-to-day way, language is blind to temporality. Heidegger claims that, “All Dasein’s behaviour is to be Interpreted in terms of Being – that is, in terms of temporality.” (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 457) With this in mind, what must now be shown is how Dasein temporises temporality and the sorts of behaviour by which it relates itself to time; that is, how Dasein includes time in its considerations.

In the normal course of events, Dasein comes across time in its day to day dealing with the world; in dealing with what is present-at-hand and ready-to-hand. As time is encountered within this environment, it too is assumed to be something present-at-hand, or, in that horizon in which everything is either present-at-hand or ready-to-hand, time takes on this characteristic and so becomes something present-at-hand. This ordinary conception of time is the result of primordial time being levelled off. We must address ourselves to how this levelling off takes place in order to understand what is normally thought of about time and how it is related to its primordial roots.

In concerned circumspective common sense the ground is that of a temporality that has the character of retaining and awaiting. In this way of being, there is a ‘*then*’ that can be either explicit or implicit, but always present. This ‘then’ refers to, “that something else is to be attended to ‘*beforehand*’, that what has failed or eluded us ‘*on that former occasion*’ is something that we must ‘*now*’ make up for.” (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 458) The ‘then’ can be, depending on the concern, an expression of awaiting, retaining, or making present. Within the

'then' there is, expressed or, more normally, unexpressed, a 'now-not-yet' or a 'now-no-longer.' These make present either that which is awaingly retentive or awaingly forgetful. The horizons in which these modes express themselves are as the 'on that former occasion' as '*earlier*,' 'then' as the '*later on*' and 'now' as '*today*.' The relational structure of the 'on that former occasion,' the 'then' and the 'now' is called, by Heidegger, '*datability*.' There are two reasons for these implicit terms when Dasein expresses itself about the objects of its concern. The first is that, in addressing itself to something, it too is disclosed and expressed as something that is alongside the ready-to-hand. The second is that the very action of expressing necessitates a making present and would not be possible if this was not the case. "The making-present which awaits and retains, interprets *itself*." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 460) This is made possible by the ontological structure of Dasein which has already disclosed itself in each case and, as such, can interpret itself in the Articulation of discourse. "The making-present which interprets itself – in other words, that which has been interpreted and is addressed in the 'now' – is what we call 'time'." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 460)

Awaiting understands itself in terms of the 'then' and, by making the awaiting present, which makes the understanding of the 'then' present in the 'now,' the 'and-now-not-yet' has been already made implicit, the 'then' is the 'now' in the 'and-now-not-yet.' There is a difference between the 'now' and the 'and-now-not-yet.' This difference becomes understood as the 'until-then.' This 'until-then' is Articulated in interpretation as 'in-between' where it is a time and a relationship to

datability. This relationship is expressed by 'during-this' and 'meanwhile.' Once a 'during' has been created, this can be further articulated which will yield more 'thens'; in fact, this could create the compact series of 'thens' of Zeno's paradoxes as entities created in time as it interprets temporality and makes it present. The lasting that is disclosed in this structure is the time that is the product of temporality's self-interpretation. The making present creates a 'during' with a span. This happens because, in this way, the making present has disclosed itself as the stretching along of historical temporality despite the concealment of this to itself. This datability structure is not only applicable in duration, but also in every 'now,' 'then' and 'on that former occasion.' The width of the span depends upon the event that is the subject of the interpretation. The duration of a 'now' is the duration of the activity to which it is related in the expression of the now and this is the case for both the 'then' and 'on that former occasion.' In this way, time dates itself in terms of the environment with which one is concerned.

Dasein can concern itself with time in relation to environmental dating which basically always happens "within the horizon of that kind of concern with time which we know as astronomical and calendrical *time-reckoning*." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 464) In time-reckoning there lies 'real' time; that is, the public time that is used by Dasein in expressing itself or the time that is made public. The public nature of this expression need not, of course, be considered something that is expressed to others, but something that is public to the general ontological structure of Dasein that includes the 'they', but only potentially

includes others as things ontic. The thrownness of Dasein is the cause of the existence of this public time or the reason for there to be any public time. In this public time, Dasein encounters the present-at-hand and ready-to-hand that are in the world and, Heidegger tells us, it is that “entities which are not the character of Dasein, shall be called entities ‘*within-time*’.” (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 465) Dasein, in its awaiting for its potentiality for being, has to concernfully deal with whatever has involvement in the scope of this potentiality; that is, it must deal with things that have a bearing with it reaching its potentiality.

Heidegger claims that Dasein needs sight in order to deal concernfully with entities present-at-hand and ready-to-hand and, this need for sight means that, as the day allows Dasein sight and night takes it away, day and night have a special significance. Because of this special significance, Dasein dates time according in this most natural way because of the distinctive effect that day and night have on Dasein’s circumspective potential for being in the world; the effect they have on Dasein’s awaiting its potentiality for being. Thus, it is the sun that provided the first way that Dasein dates; that is, Dasein used the day for dating in the first instance. Because of the natural and public nature of day and night, the day is public and so can be used by others. As something universally available with the shared environment, the day becomes the universal primordial measure of time. To be able to have public datability, that which is used to provide the datability must be available to all simultaneously. Dasein, as being something thrown into the world and giving itself time, something that reoccurs regularly must be found that is ready-to-hand, public and available to Dasein’s making

present awaitingly. This thing is the clock of whatever type, from the earth's orbit of the sun, the earth rotation, the phases of the moon, the movement of a shadow thrown by a stick, and so on. All of the aspects described above, together, give us 'world-time' as something which is dateable, spanned and public.

Heidegger tells us that since Aristotle, time has been seen as something to be counted. Time is a continuously changing pointer that is made present in a series of 'nows.' Each now is on the brink of being a 'no longer now' and each now has just been an 'about to be now.' "The world-time which is 'sighted' in this manner in the use of clocks, we call the '*now-time*'." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 474) This, the ordinary understanding of time, means that time is revealed as a succession of nows. The nows come into being and pass away simultaneously. They are understood as things present-at-hand and, in this way, they are Articulated and made present. At the same time as themselves being present-at-hand, the nows co-exist with other entities that are present-at-hand; they are encountered with each other. "Nows are seen ontologically within the horizon of the idea of present-at-hand." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 475)

The nows, though, are made up of a compressed series so that there is always a further now between two nows. This presents a problem if time is looked at from the perspective of the making of the nows things present-at-hand: either one must address the problem of the continuity of time in some way, or one must just

leave it alone and unaddressed. Whichever course is taken, world-time is concealed in its actual structure. This concealment is manifest in the necessary conception of world-time as something spanned. This is also the case with datability, of course, but, datability has an ecstatical foundation that world-time lacks. Time should not be thought of as something spanned so that it has been stretched by the ecstatical unity that is the public expression of temporality, but should be thought of as the stretching out of a temporality that cannot be a part of any continuity of things present-at-hand. The spanning should be thought of as the condition that allows access, or makes access possible, to anything continuous that is to be taken as something present-at-hand. In order to conceive that which is in flux, it is broken down, or broken up, into pieces, each of which is some distinct entity that is present-at-hand. That which is broken up or articulated need not be a series of distinct entities in itself, but has to be seen as such through the articulation in order that it can be brought into the world of the present-at-hand. As we have seen earlier, temporality temporalizes itself primarily in the future, but this is not the case for our ordinary understanding of time. As it is ordinarily understood, time has been made into a series of present-at-hand entities; "time is seen in the 'now', and indeed in that pure 'now' which has been shorn in its full structure—that which they call the 'Present'." (Heidegger M. , *Being and Time*, 1962, p. 479)

### ***Developing the understanding of language***

Discourse articulates the disclosedness of the 'there.' The 'there' becomes disclosed by understanding, state-of-mind and falling being related to the future,



the present and the having been. This implies that discourse is not tied to any particular ecstasis but the unity of them. Heidegger says that discourse is expressed, for the most part in language and, in so far as talk is about things in the environment, it has to be concerned about things present in the environment and made public as things present within time

The idea that language is primarily for communication was addressed, in part, earlier. However, if we change emphasis and say that, instead of being one mode of language, it is the predominant mode of language, then we might get a different impression of the nature of language. Even if we were to say that communication is the only role of language, we need not change our earlier view. What would have to be understood is what is meant by communication. Communication could be considered as a way in which that which is Articulated in discourse is made known; but, made known to whom? If we say, for example, to others, as in other people, we are straight away turning our backs on the ontological analysis we performed. We cannot say that language communicates to other people, because these would be beings and have no status in the ontological analysis of being, it would be an entirely ontic assertion. What we are able to say, is that language, as solely communication, brings forth or spotlights things disclosed by the Articulation of the 'there' in discourse. The 'object' of the communication does not have to be specified as there are no 'objects;' all that can be understood by communication is a wider idea than would be usually thought. In this sense there is no subject and object, just a disclosure and highlighting that enables something Articulated from the 'there' to be brought out

and 'objectified.' Saying this, language need not be thought of as a thing at all; that is, language need not be something that acts in some way to disclose and highlight entities, but could be thought of in the same way as discourse. In this case, that which has been highlighted in language has already been highlighted. When, in the normal course of events, we think of language highlighting entities disclosed from the 'there,' this disclosure and highlighting has already taken place, the signs used to make this highlighting public in the way in which this is normally thought, that is, the act of making noises, marks and so on, is just the making present of the ontological structure. The making public has to be understood as a public act, but it does not follow that, in an existential ontological analysis, the phenomenon of talk need be interpreted in this way at all. From this we have the possibility that talk could be that part of the existential ontological structure that allows what is disclosed and Articulated in discourse to be made public to the 'they' as another part of the overall structure. The making public should not be thought of as an act, but as allowing the 'they' to be a part of Dasein.

The possibility derived from the way that time is made present in its normal conception, implies that language in some way influences discourse; that is, if time is understood as time rather than temporality in discourse, then this implies that discourse is not only grounded on the understanding, but also on the possibilities of making public and the 'they.' If discourse is predominately in the ecstatic present because language predominately has this character, then this implies that the relationship between language and discourse is reflexive. If this

is the case, then language could not be something ready-to-hand and would have to be something in the basic ontology of Dasein. We would then have to say that either language is something additional to the already analysed ontology of Dasein, or that language is a mode or aspect of something already disclosed in this analysis. As we have seen, Dasein is an ontological totality. Language, as an essential part of Dasein, would not be something in addition to the ontological totality, but an aspect of that totality. In order to understand the nature of language, we have to be prepared to look for language, not as something added as such, but as a way of regarding what we have already seen in Heidegger's ontological analysis of Dasein.

### **Chapter 3: Pursuing the essence of language**

Our engagement with *Being and Time* in the previous chapter has given us indications about the nature of language for Heidegger, but these need to be expanded. In this chapter, the possibilities of language will be explored and an understanding offered that will be used henceforth. This chapter will explore the meaning of 'language' from dictionary definitions allowing us to reflect on 'language' as we already understand it or, at least, to take dictionary definitions and shake them in the hope that some meaning might be glimpsed or, if not, in the hope that the definitions can be made to become signposts to a mode of thinking used by Heidegger to address the subject.

Having done this, Heidegger's writings on language will be examined from his larger body of his work. This will again try to allow the text to speak freely without the constraints of presumptions. The aim is to allow our thinking to travel on the road towards a Heideggerian understanding of language without stopping at features we create on the way.

#### ***Dictionary definition of language***

The first port of call in understanding 'language' will be the dictionary. We want to understand 'language,' not in terms of the definition given in the dictionary, but allow the definition to point towards the direction we should be looking if we want to discover the essence of language. The dictionary is used, not as a source of unquestioned and complete definitions, but as a map that can point us in the direction we might travel to understanding the source of the terms we question.

The dictionary gives us the definition of language as, “Words and the methods of combining them for the expression of thought.” (Onions, 1973) This definition must now be unpacked and each of its elements understood. The initial term to be examined will be ‘word.’

### **Word**

‘Word’ is defined as, “An element of speech: a combination of vocal sounds, or one such sound, used in a language to express an idea (e.g. to denote a thing, attribute, or relation), and constituting an ultimate minimum element of speech having a meaning as such.” (Onions, 1973) On the face of it, this definition offers little more than the everyday understanding of word or even a more restrictive view than we normally have. After all, it confines itself to acts of speech and these we normally take as the physical process of exciting the vocal chords and moving the mouth and lips to make certain sounds. However, we need not take this for granted, in which case, the definition certainly offers a great deal that can be unpacked. In order to unpack the definition, the term ‘speech’ must be examined. We must ask ourselves if it can only mean the physical act of speaking or can it mean something else.

We are told that, ‘speech’ is “The act of speaking.” (Onions, 1973) This is simple enough. But what can ‘to speak’ mean? The dictionary tells us that, ‘to speak’ is, “To be expressive or significant to make some revelation or disclosure.” (Onions, 1973) This definition gives a possible understanding of ‘speak’ on which we can ground our exploration. However, we must not be too hasty; we must ensure that

this definition is not completely incompatible with the initial definition of 'word.' On the face of it, the definition of 'to speak' does contradict, if not the whole of the definition of 'word,' then certainly the first part. In order to make the two definitions compatible, some way has to be found of making "a combination of vocal sounds, or one such sound" compatible with "To be expressive or significant to make some revelation or disclosure." The former definition is definite and tells us that speech is a specific act; the latter definition does no such thing and allows us to consider any act that has a certain goal an act of speaking.

We can resolve this apparent impasse by looking at the goals rather than the methods. The definition of 'speak' gives us the goal of the act of speaking; the definition of 'word' gives us both the goal and a method of achieving that goal. If we want to resolve the two and want to be permitted to use 'word' in a way that is not restricted to only the physical act of speaking using body parts, we must make our understanding of 'word' something more than just the specific physical act credible.

The definition of 'word' could be split into two parts: "An element of speech: a combination of vocal sounds, or one such sound" and "used in a language to express an idea (e.g. to denote a thing, attribute, or relation), and constituting an ultimate minimum element of speech having a meaning as such." The core of the second half of the definition is, 'to express an idea.' This is the goal of a word. Examples of 'idea' are given as, "a thing, attribute, or relation." So the second half of the definition says that the goal of the word is the point something

out. There would seem to be no problem in saying that this goal could be achieved through different means. We can and do point things out using a multitude of methods. We could, most simply, point at something using our finger. The question is: Is this most basic form of pointing something credibly thought of as a word?

In terms of mathematics and set theory, there would seem to be no problem here:

Intuitively, if  $f$  is a function (or map, or mapping) then  $f$  assigns to any object  $x$  at most one object  $fx$  as *value*. The class of all objects  $x$  to which the value  $fx$  is assigned by  $f$  is called the *domain [of definition]* of  $f$  and denoted by 'dom  $f$ '.

The *graph* of  $f$  is then the class  $\{ \langle x, fx \rangle \mid x \in \text{dom} f \}$ . Note that the graph of a function is a class of pairs. But not every class of pairs can be a graph of a function: a class  $G$  of pairs is the graph of a function iff for any object  $x$  there is at most one object  $y$  such that  $\langle x, y \rangle \in G$ .

From an extensionalist point of view, two functions are identical if they have the same graphs.

(Bell & Machover, 1977, p. 27)

In order to understand the full implications, we must also understand,

A function (AKA map or mapping) is a class  $f$  of ordered pairs satisfying the functionality condition: whenever both  $\langle x, y \rangle \in f$  and  $\langle x, z \rangle \in f$  then  $y =$

z.

(Bell & Machover, 1977, p. 27)

And,

Let  $f$  be a function.

(i) The domain of  $f$  is the class

$$\text{dom } f \stackrel{\text{df}}{=} \{x : \exists y, y \in f \text{ for some } y\}$$

(ii) If  $x \in \text{dom } f$ , then the *value of  $f$  at  $x$*  – usually denoted by ‘ $fx$ ’ – is the

[necessarily unique]  $y$  such that  $\langle x, y \rangle \in f$ .

(iii) The range of  $f$  is the class

$$\text{ran } f \stackrel{\text{df}}{=} \{fx : x \in \text{dom } f\}$$

(Bell & Machover, 1977, p. 27)

From this we could say: if  $x$  is the thing to be pointed out and  $y$  is the thing pointed out, then  $f$ , that which links the thing and the pointed out thing, is the word. It would appear to be quite uncontroversial that a word might be thought of as an ordered pair; the linking of the thing and the pointed out thing. If this is allowed, then the totality of words, of ordered pairs, would have to be the totality of words, that is, language. Therefore, from an extensional perspective, language and words making up a language are nothing more than a function and ordered pairs making up that function.



If it is accepted that a word can be thought of in this sort of way, there is the second half of the problem, that is, is it acceptable to consider words and that which words do in an extensionalist way? However, even if it is not accepted that we can consider terms in a set theoretical way, we can still regard words in either an extensionalist or an intensionalist way.

The term 'extensionalist' is given the definition:

The extension of a predicate is the class of objects that it describes: the extension of 'red' is the class of red things. The intension is the principle under which it picks them out, or in other words the condition a thing must satisfy to be truly described by the predicate. Two predicates ('...is a rational animal', '...is a naturally featherless biped') might pick out the same class but they do so by a different condition. If the notions are extended to other items, then the extension of a sentence is its truth-value, and its intension a thought or proposition; and the extension of a singular term is the object referred to by it, if it so refers, and its intension is the concept by means of which the object is picked out. A sentence puts a predicate or other term in an extensional context if any other predicate or term with the same extension can be substituted without it being possible that the truth-value changes: if John is a rational animal, and we substitute the co-extensive 'is a naturally featherless biped', then John is a naturally featherless biped. Other contexts, such as 'Mary believes that John is a rational animal', may not allow the substitution, and are called intensional

contexts. (Blackburn, 2008)

The question is if terms have an extensional or intensional character; that is, do we look at a term as what it points to, or do we use a term as what it means? The answer would seem to be that both are the case. We can understand terms in both what they pick out and how the picking out is achieved. In our looking at the term, 'word,' we seem to be trying to look in both ways. When we look at 'word' in a set theoretical sense, we would seem to be concerned with the extensional aspects of the term; when we are concerned about the way the term achieves its function, we are thinking in an intensional sense. If this is the case then we must decide how we should be trying to understand this term and others.

In the context of our normal day-to-day use of language, our relationship to terms is ambiguous. We use terms in the hope that their extensional features are successful in pointing out certain things. However, when we use those terms we often select them intensionally, or, at least, believe we do. In our attempts to understand terms here, we are not using those terms as we do in our day-to-day speech. We are trying to define terms in a technical or logical way using their dictionary definition as the primary guide. We are using terms, not as we normally do, but metalinguistically. Our exploration of these few terms calls upon us to talk about terms in a way that allows us to see those terms as things that can be used in a technical or scientific investigation, not in a way that we normally use them in normal conversation. We are trying to use terms in an extremely calculative way. Of course, Heidegger condemns this way of thinking,

but we have no choice at this point other than to ground the terms we use in calculative thought. In order to allow ourselves to think beyond our normal day-to-day talk, we must first develop a tool that is sharply defined and so can prevent a drift into the irrational; we must base our talk on the highly logical or mathematical in order to highlight and even go beyond the limits of the calculative. In this way, we must consider our definitions of the terms we use mathematically. If this is done, it seems justifiable using extensional thinking when talking about those terms and so we can take 'word' to include the set of all atomic activities that point things out. If our definition of 'word' is that which points things out and no more, we are justified in saying that 'word' is any pointing to things and the physical use of the vocal chords and mouth in this activity is something incidental; it is an example of 'word,' not the full extent of the term.

It must be admitted that this is a jump. We have taken the definition of 'word' and included non-verbal activities in our redefinition. As this is the case, our redefinition could be dismissed as straying too far away from the dictionary definition. In defence, though, the redefinition does not seem to take us very far, if at all, from how we normally use 'word.' We often do not think of words as being more than mere vocal noises. We may want to include, for example, written marks in the definition and even gestures as well as some or all artistic activities. This does give some defence for our redefinition, but there is a further defence that could be used. We should consider what the word actually is by what it does and how a word actually functions.

The concern is now that, in taking 'word' mathematically and ignoring a major part of the dictionary definition, we are going too far beyond normal day-to-day usage of terms. In order to confront this, it has to be shown that this is not the case and that we already do use the term 'word' in the way that we propose its use. The particular element of the definition we are concentrating on is the understanding that a word can, "express an idea (e.g. to denote a thing, attribute, or relation)." In order to confront this and to allow 'word' to include more than just vocal noises, we must look closely at one of the implications of this part of the definition and an implication that does, indeed, prevent 'word' being thought of as anything beyond a vocal expressing or, perhaps, a written sign. This implication is that the word expresses a thing and, to do this, becomes a proxy for that thing. The task now becomes one of examining the link between 'word' and 'proxy': Is a word necessarily a proxy or can a word be something else?

When we use terms in a normal day-to-day way, we very rarely use them as a proxy for a thing. There are exceptions, of course; we might say, 'Olga' to refer to a particular person and so a word appears to become a definite description and so a proxy. But is even this the case? If someone says 'Olga' in a normal way, what does the term point at? At best, we can say that it points to a set of all things that might be associated with the term, 'Olga.' That includes anything, person, animal, even boat or car, that might be associated with that term. However, for the most part, when we use a term like 'Olga' we understand what thing is being pointed out. This happens because of the context of the term's use. In this case, it cannot be claimed that the term, 'Olga' itself is a proxy for a

thing, but only that, at best, 'Olga' is a proxy for a set of things. If a word is something that can "express an idea (e.g. to denote a thing, attribute, or relation)," a word can certainly not be a single term. In order to pick out a thing, a host of disparate devices might be used, but rarely if ever a single term. If this is the case, then 'word' cannot be a single vocal noise. In our day-to-day interactions, we, at the very least, use a collection of terms to pick something out and, more often, use both a collection of terms as well as other aids such as gesticulations. As this is our normal experience, what can be said of words as proxy?

A word is sometimes thought of as a symbol, but a symbol is often not a symbol for some individual thing. A symbol is, "Something that stands for, represents, or denotes something else (not by exact resemblance, but by vague suggestion, or by some accidental or conventional relation); *esp.* a material object representing or taken to represent something immaterial or abstract." (Onions, 1973) This definition points towards our earlier understanding of 'word' in set theoretical terms. A symbol need not stand for something specifically, but can stand for a class of things. As such, the symbol does not point to or represent any specific thing, rather, it points to the abstract in which there can be things. If we understand 'word' as 'symbol,' we are not understanding 'word' as a specific thing with a one to one relationship to another specific thing, rather, we are understanding 'word' as a pointer towards a region; a class containing possible things. 'Symbol' is being understood as a thing, but the symbol does not point to another thing, rather, to a class and so to the abstract. If we go back to our

example of 'Olga,' we could say that 'Olga' does not, of itself, point to any specific Olga, but that 'Olga' points to a class containing all possible Olgas. If we wish to point out a specific Olga, we will have to give more than just 'Olga,' we must, by some means or another, for example, by giving a predicate or attribute, pick out an individual; we must specify the specific Olga either explicitly by using other symbols and so hope to form an intersection containing one Olga, or implicitly by using the context of the use of the initial 'Olga;' that is, by having an initial domain that contains only a single Olga.

If a word is an atomic thing that, "expresses an idea (e.g. to denote a thing, attribute, or relation)," 'Olga' cannot be a word. 'Olga' does not, if used alone, point to any one thing. When we use 'Olga,' it is used as a part of a wider environment that includes other means of communication which, taken together, can point to a specific thing. If we take the definitions of 'word' and 'symbol' we find that they are incompatible. Symbol can, and usually does, point to "something immaterial or abstract." The action of a word is to, "denote a thing, attribute, or relation." As this is the case, a word can be made up of symbols put together in such a way that they eventually point to a specific thing.

This thinking on how a word actually works shows that the dictionary definition is not as firm or as obvious as it at first appears. A word does not, for the most part, consist of a single term as listed in the dictionary. If a word is something that picks out a thing, then, at best, a word must be a collection of terms and, commonly, is a collection of a variety of activities that work together in order to

pick out a thing. This means that we must read the first part of the original definition of word as an example rather than a universal rule. It is conceivable, but unlikely, that a word is ever a single vocal noise, but the making of vocal noises could be thought as a possible manifestation of a word. However, to achieve its goal of picking something out, any means of pointing are equally acceptable and are communally used in our day-to-day activities.

When looking at Heidegger's use of 'word,' we seem to have a problem. Heidegger uses 'word' ontologically and, as we have seen from our explication of the ontological, if he wanted to speak of the ontological, he must be willing to speak of the abstract. In our dictionary definition of 'word,' 'word' points to a specific thing whereas 'symbol' points towards the abstract, so, surely, Heidegger should have used 'symbol' rather than 'word'? However, this is not so. Heidegger uses 'word' to be that which denotes a thing; he used 'word' conventionally. It is correct that, in Heidegger's use of 'word,' the 'word' allows a thing to manifest from the abstract, but is this way of taking 'word' any different from our dictionary definition?

In the dictionary definition of 'word,' nothing is said about the source of the thing before being denoted by the word. We are led to believe, or could assume, that the source is already present as a thing, but is this justified? We have a choice. Either the thing to be pointed out by the word is already present, or it is not present and only becomes present because of the word. The first option sounds implausible. If the thing is already present, then there would be no point in

pointing it out; we would be pointing toward that which is already the subject of our attention. The alternative gives us a choice: either the thing already exists as a thing but is not the subject of our attention or the thing does not exist at all and only comes into existence by being pointed out by the word. A way that this dilemma might be resolved is to use the abstract. The thing, before it has been pointed out by the word, is in the abstract. In the abstract, as we have seen, there are no things as such, but there is the possibility of things. The thing, before it has been pointed out by the word, does not exist as a thing, but only as the possibility of becoming a thing. Before the thing has been brought to our attention, we cannot say that it exists; on the other hand, we cannot say that it does entirely not exist. In the case of the thing and the thing not pointed out, the thing exists as it is; the thing not pointed out is ready to exist as soon as it has been pointed out. The thing that has not been pointed out cannot be said to be absolutely nothing. By saying that it does not exist, we are not saying that it is void. We are saying something positive. It does not exist now, but can exist in the future. In terms of temporal logic:

$$\exists x(\neg x)$$

x is not now.

$$F \exists x(x)$$

at some time in the future, x.

The thing does not exist at all now, but it will at some time in the future. To put



the situation more exactly, we could say:

$$\Box \neg \exists x(\neg x)$$

$x$  does not exist in any possible world now.

$$\Diamond F \exists x(x)$$

there is a possible world in which  $x$  might exist in the future.

The second pair of formulae shows that the thing might never exist. This is the case if the thing is never pointed out and so never becomes the object of attention. Although it is possible for the thing to exist, it is never necessarily the case that it will exist. The first of the pair of formulae would seem to be wrong. We are saying that there is no possible world in which the thing can exist before it has been pointed out. But, we have accepted that the thing can be pointed out at some time in the future and so, surely, it must exist in some world before being pointed out in our world. However, the necessity of the thing not existing now is down to the frame on which we are basing our game. When we speak about what exists now, the worlds to which we have access consists of our own world and any specific thing from another world that has a link with us now by means of a pointing out. Therefore, if  $x$  is pointed out to us from another world, then  $x$  exists. But, even if  $x$  is pointed out to us, we might not take  $x$  as existing or might misunderstand and take, say,  $y$  as existing. As this is the case, we are only able to say that there is then the possibility that  $x$  exists. If there is no pointing out occurring and  $x$  does not already exist within our world, we can say that  $x$  does

not exist and, because we currently have no access to any other world,  $x$  necessarily does not exist.

So, a word points something out from the abstract and makes it a thing that can be the object of our attention. The thing does not exist before being pointed out, but there is the possibility of it being pointed out and so coming into existence. The dilemma is only an apparent one. The thing does not exist as a thing before being pointed out, but does exist as a possible thing, as do all possible things.

We have followed the dictionary definition of 'word' and found that it is justifiable to think of 'word' as that which brings things from the abstract so that they can become objects of our attention. We have also found that the necessity for words to be only vocal noises is not a necessity after all and, if a word is to perform its task, a word is usually not, if it ever is, a single vocal noise.

We can now go back to our original definition to discover another feature of 'word.' Our definition said, "An element of speech: a combination of vocal sounds, or one such sound, used in a language to express an idea (e.g. to denote a thing, attribute, or relation), and constituting an ultimate minimum element of speech having a meaning as such." What should be noted is that no mention is made of any communication. We found that the term usually implying communicating, to speak, is defined as, "To be expressive or significant to make some revelation or disclosure." Although we usually assume 'speech' to mean communication, it actually need only mean the making of a revelation or disclosing. As such, there is no necessity for 'word' to be a part of an act of

communication at all. All a word has to do is to reveal or disclose something or to express an idea. Surely, it could be complained, to express something is to communicate it? This complaint should be addressed before we can have licence to move on. To express is, "To portray, represent." (Onions 1978) This says nothing about communication at all, unless it is assumed that there is a necessity that, if something is portrayed or represented, it must be portrayed or represented to someone else. However, even if it is accepted that a something need not be portrayed or represented to someone else, the obvious question to ask is: Who is the something portrayed or represented to?

In trying to prevent the idea that, when something is expressed with a word, the expression need not be an expression to another person, we seem to have allowed ourselves to fall into dualism. Either something is expressed to someone else, or it is expressed to the homunculus. If we look a little more closely at the terms, 'portray' and 'represent,' we find from their dictionary definitions that portray is, "To make a picture, image, or figure of," (Onions, 1973) and represent is, "To bring clearly and distinctly before the mind." (Onions, 1973) Although we might be able to make these two definitions coherent with each other, we can, just as easily, make them incoherent and so make the original definition of 'express' not yield a single definition, but an example and a definition. We would, in this case, be saying that the essential meaning of 'express' is, "To bring clearly and distinctly before the mind," and the way this could be done is by making a, "picture, image, or figure." In other words, we are saying that the function of expressing is, "To bring clearly and distinctly before the mind," how this is done is

of lesser importance and of no importance if we consider the term purely extensionally. If it is accepted that the meaning of a term is better understood as the result of the action of the term, that is, if we use an extensionalist understanding of the term, then we must address the term, 'mind.' The things expressed are brought before the mind. From our earlier contemplations, we found that we have some options when considering mind and these options largely depend on whether we accept dualism or not, or even if we wish to allow that dualism might not be correct. If we are a dualist, we can say that the mind is to be roughly equated with a homunculus. If we are not dualist, the mind becomes empty or reality itself.

In the case of 'represent,' we can either say that something is brought clearly before an empty mind, or something is brought into reality. It appears somewhat strange to say that something is brought before the empty mind. If something is brought before an empty mind, then we must understand that something is brought before nothing. That would make no sense or be a null action. Being in front of nothing says nothing at all. The implication is that the mind is empty, but there is something behind the mind. That is, in a dualistic understanding, something is placed in the mind before being placed before the homunculus. This understanding would be saying that something is placed before nothing which is accessed by the homunculus. Although one stage has been lost in that we no longer have a virtual world, we are still left with the homunculus. We have made the access to the thing by the homunculus immediate because we have removed the mediation of the mind in which it must first be constructed, but we

are still left with a form of dualism. As this is the case, there is no alternative if we wish to reject dualism, or, at least, give an alternative to dualism, other than to take the mind to be reality.

It seems deeply mysterious and not very helpful to say that something is brought before reality; what could this possibly mean? This implies that reality itself is a mind and so the homunculus has escaped the confines of the head or body of the person and jumped into the whole of reality. However, if the mind is reality, then the action of representing must be thought somewhat differently. A 'real' thing is something, "Having an objective existence; actually existing as a thing." (Onions 1978) The difficult word in this definition is 'objective.' 'Objective' is defined as, "Existing as the object of consciousness; considered only as presented to the mind." (Onions, 1973) The second part of this definition is informative. If the thing is "only presented to the mind," and the mind is reality, then the thing is presented to reality; that is, to be objective, the thing is present in reality. So, a real thing is a thing in reality. Without a dualistic prejudice, this definition, then, is circular and cannot help us. We must, therefore, contemplate the second half of the definition, "actually existing as a thing." This, too, seems a little circular. As we have seen earlier with our investigation of 'thing,' a thing is any object of whatever sort. When we say that a thing is "actually existing," we are only saying that that the thing is. What we are saying using our earlier temporal logic, is:

◇  $\exists(x)$

$x$  possibly exists now.

We say possible and not necessarily because is it possible that the thing does not exist for another world to which we have access. In our world,  $x$  exists, but in another world with which we communicate,  $x$  need not exist.

An actually existing thing, then, is any sort of thing that makes up the reality in which we currently find ourselves. When we say that mind and reality are the same, we are saying that any thing which currently exists for us is both real and in the mind. As they are the same, if a thing is in the mind, it is also in reality and vice versa. The question now is: Is this plausible?

It would seem to be necessary that, if we do not want to be dualists or want to put an alternative to dualism, we have to consider the mind to be reality. But is this step a step too far? What we are saying when we say that mind and reality are the same is that we are not sensing reality and projecting what has been sensed into a virtual theatre to be viewed by a homunculus, or even saying that a homunculus directly perceives reality; we are saying that we are in reality. By doing away with the homunculus, we are forced to do away with any mediate access to reality. We are directly in reality and a part of reality. We are left with two alternatives: either we accept dualism and accept somehow the infinite regress that it implies; or we accept that we are in reality and that, what we call mind, is reality. The objection that this is a form of idealism is easily defeated as idealism is born of dualism and still makes reality, in some way, other from mind. When saying that mind and reality are the same, we are saying that mind is a

concept imposed on reality. There is no mind, only reality. This is said to emphasise the difference between mind as something in the head or the soul, and mind as the totality of what exists. We are saying that mind is not in the head, the soul, the brain or anywhere else specifically; we are saying that mind, as reality, is reality and located everywhere.

If we now return to the original problem of bringing before the mind, we find that all we can be saying is that the thing becomes the object of attention. The thing exists in reality. If this is the case, then the action of the word is to bring a thing into reality from the abstract. We find that there is no need to have communication at all. The primary function of a word is to point out a thing so that it comes from the abstract into the real; that the word allows the thing to exist.

### **Thought**

Returning to the original definition of 'language,' we are told that 'language' is defined as, "Words and the methods of combining them for the expression of thought." We will now contemplate 'thought' to see what this might tell us.

'Thought' is defined in the dictionary as, "an item of mental activity." (Onions, 1973) If we retain some species of dualism, then a thought would be an item of activity within the brain, the soul, or the thinking substance, but we are trying to allow that dualism, given its problems, is not necessarily the case. In this case, as we have seen earlier, we are forced to the conclusion that the mental is the same as the real. This helps us forward, but not far. We can now say that we

are talking about something to do with reality. If we go back to the definition, we find that it takes us further as it uses the term, 'activity.'

If we take a closer look at 'activity,' we find that it is defined as, "The state of being active," (Onions, 1973) which leads on to 'active' being defined as, "Originating or communicating action," (Onions, 1973) which leads on to 'action' as being, "A thing done, a deed," (Onions, 1973) and, finally, deed is defined as, "That which is done, acted, or performed by an intelligent agent." (Onions, 1973) Given this series of definitions, the question must be asked: What is done, acted or performed by an intelligent agent in reality when a thought takes place? The term that will make us hesitate is 'reality.' It has been shown earlier that the mental must be the same as the real if we are to get past dualism, but this is not a normal way of thinking, so, for now, it would be better to return to a normal way of thinking and take the mental to be our usual usage even though this does allow dualism. After examining this section, we can return to our understanding of the mental as the real. The revised question will therefore be: What is done, acted or performed by an intelligent agent in the mind when a thought takes place?

In an unreflective way, we might say that, what is done in the mind when thinking takes place is the production of ideas. We could, at this point, explore the myriad of different understandings that have been given of 'idea' throughout the history of philosophy, but, in doing this, we will be going down paths that we are not yet able to tread; we do not need, at present, to understand the great thinkers, only



to understand the very basics. We can, for now, merely use the dictionary to tell us that an idea is, “The immediate object of thought or mental perception.” (Onions, 1973) The definition points back to our definition of ‘thought,’ but it is not entirely circular. By pointing back to thought, we can now say that what are acted on when thought takes place, are ideas. But, more than this, the definition tells us that ideas are the ‘immediate’ objects of thought and adds that thought can be considered a type of mental perception. Therefore, ideas are the most immediate objects of our mental perception as well as being the objects of the activity of thought. Additionally, we can take from the definition the understanding that ‘thought’ and ‘mental perception’ are the same in some way. If this is done, then ‘thought’ must be seen in two ways: as “an item of mental activity;” and as “mental perception.” If thought can be taken in the two ways, can these two understandings be reconciled and, if they can, will so doing tell us more about thought?

In both cases, there is something missing, but something we have already found, that is, ‘idea.’ As an item of mental activity, the activity will have to be an activity of something and, we have discovered, the activity is an activity on ideas. At the same time, perception has to be a perception of something and, again, as has been discovered, the immediate object of mental perception in the idea. The two ways of understanding thought, then, can be seen as two ways that thought relates to ideas: it can both act on ideas and perceive ideas. Thinking, therefore, is the state of being with ideas.

Up until now, thought has been contemplated from a dualist perspective. It is now time to contemplate the nature of thought without assuming dualism is true. As we have seen, if this is done, the mental becomes the real. A first reaction to this might well be that there can be no thought if there is no separate realm of the mental. If thought does not take place in the soul, or brain, or spirit, or something other than the physical, how could it be at all? This objection must be confronted. If we say that the mental is the real and that there is no space for a separate mental realm, where do those things we normally consider to be mental go? Where are the imagined things, the constructs and the like if they are not in the separate world given to us by the dualists?

Concern over these issues is a reflection of a certain understanding of 'real.' It is based on the idea that the 'real' is the physical and the physical is something separate from things normally considered to be purely in a nonphysical world. However, the 'real' is, "actually existing as a thing," (Onions, 1973) and, as we have seen, a thing is "That which exists individually (in the most general sense, in fact or idea); that which is or may be in any way an object of perception, knowledge, or thought; a being, an entity." (Onions, 1973) Using these two definitions, there is no room for a second realm. If the real is the totality of existing things a thing can be any object of perception at all, then every existing thing must be included in the real. Although the dictionary definitions we have used have shown that we need not have a separate spiritual world and that dualism is not necessarily the case, there are still concerns that might be expressed. For example, if everything that we previously supposed to be

'mental' is now real, what is the status of those things imagined or dreamt? Surely they too must be real? This presupposes that everything in the 'real' is of the same nature. Something imagined is real, but real with different attributes from something we take to be real like the computer or book in front of us. Although this might be seen as allowing dualism in by the back door, it is not so. All things are real and, having an attribute that gives them a different status from another thing does not make them unreal, it just makes them real with a different status. For example, Sherlock Holmes is a fictional character. When Sherlock Holmes is brought to mind, he comes to mind in just the same way as Napoleon comes to mind with the one difference that Holmes has an attribute 'fictional' set, whereas Napoleon does not have that attribute set. When we say things about Holmes, we can make true or false assertions according to the stories written about him and even according to deductions made from those stories; when we talk about Napoleon, we can, in the same way, make true or false assertions about him according to the stories written about him as well as deduction from those stories. There is no difference in the status of Holmes and Napoleon other than each has a different attribute. They are both equally real if taken, not in a dualistic way, but in a logical one because we can say nothing about something that does not exist. We cannot say that Holmes is a fictional character if there is no 'Holmes' to be the possessor of the attribute, 'fictional.'

This might be accepted, but there are still issues needing to be addressed. If it is accepted that all things are existing and so real, surely there must be a divide between the physically real and the logical constructs we have been considering?

Surely there must be a computer or a book in front of me now that is more than a logical construct?

This takes us back to 'word' and the word's action of taking a thing from the abstract. All things come from the abstract. The computer or book in front of you is a real thing in as far as it has been taken from the abstract and has become a thing. As a thing, it is as real as any other thing, but attributes of things differ from one thing to another. We cannot say that any one thing is any more real than another because we can talk about all things equally. What we can say, though, is that some things are physically real or concrete things whereas other things are not. This still does not make one set of things more real than another set of things; it only makes one set of things the possessors of different attributes from another set of things. This all rests on the assumption that we take 'real' to mean all that exists. If 'real' is not taken in this way and is taken as a subset of all that exists, for example, all that exists and believed to be physical or concrete, we cannot argue, but we can consider what taking 'real' in this way would mean.

If 'real' is taken as, for example, "all concrete things," what would be the implications? We would have to be saying that there is a realm of the concrete. Instead of taking things from the abstract, we would be taking them from the concrete. The things we take in this way, would be absolute things; fixed by their being already concrete things. It would have to be assumed that there is a world of concrete things and a further world, our own world, where these concrete things are taken for what they are. This does not only imply a dualism, but also

allows scepticism. Dualism is required because we have the world of the concrete and the world where we take the concrete for what it is; we perceive the concrete. Scepticism is given room because we have no way of saying that, what we take as the concrete is the actually concrete or what we take as the attributes of the concrete are really the attributes of the concrete within its own realm. Even with these difficulties, the idea of a separate concrete world has still not been refuted but only shown to be problematic. A further issue with having a world of the concrete is the status of that world and the things in it. If things are already things in the concrete, we have to say by what means they have been made into things.

When we perceive a thing, we perceive it as a thing; we perceive a tree as a tree, a cloud as a cloud and so on, even until the near abstract – that is, we take, for example, a beam of light as a beam of light, a feeling of warmth as the vibration of tiny particles. We take some of these things as things even though we cannot perceive them. Even if we can perceive things, we take things as things but we need not. We could take a trinket tray as a trinket tray or we could take it as the top of a box being used as a trinket tray. In the film, *The Gods Must be Crazy*, some Bushmen who have never come across Western society come across a Coca Cola bottle that has been thrown from an aeroplane. Never having come across such a thing, they use it in a variety of ways. What can be taken from this? Is the Coca Cola bottle essentially that for what it is made, or is it essentially what it is currently used for? It might be held that the Coca Cola bottle essentially is that for which it was made. That would be fine, but what

would we then say of other things that were not made by people? What would we say of natural things? If we want to assert that things exist as they do independently of how we take them, then they must have been given what they essentially are by something. We would seem to be drifting into the idealism of Berkley (Berkeley, 1734). If things exist as things in some concrete reality beyond our own reality, then, in order to be things and held as things, they must have been given their status by the divine, or, at least, by something beyond the human. We could accept this and embrace Berkeleyan idealism. But if we want an alternative to this view, we must reject a world of the concrete beyond our own world. In that case, the concrete does not come from the concrete world of absolute things, but from an uncountable class of possible things. It is the act of taking a possible thing from the abstract into the real that makes that thing become the thing we take it for. If this is accepted, then the Bushmen who take the bottle as a tool, a musical instrument, or whatever else, are all equally correct. The thing is the thing it is to us. We take the thing from the abstract – we take the mysterious Coca Cola bottle that appears from nowhere – and we take it as something. The thing is not a thing in the abstract as it has not been taken as a thing; the thing becomes a thing only when it is taken as such.

The nub of the problems might be thought of as logical. The question is if a thing can be a thing without any predicates. Can a variable exist alone? A variable is only a place holder. It has no existence beyond its being the nexus for relationships. A variable without a relationship cannot be as there would be no way that we could get any handle on it. When the Bushman finds the Coca Cola

bottle, even though it is totally alien, it never is relationship free. Its shape, shininess, position on the ground and so on, are all relationships. As such, a thing is always seen as something and so there is no thing without an 'as', its relationships. Because of this, the 'real' consists in, not absolute, static and eternal things, but things that have been given a status in the act of picking them out as things. The thing is only its collection of relationships and the relationships are united by the picking out of the thing. A way of looking at this would be to say that the abstract is not a set of things in waiting, but the abstract is a set of possible relationships. We do not pick out things from the abstract, but take relationships and unite these relationships to form things.

If it is accepted that all things are real things, what of thought and ideas? Thought becomes the manipulation of the ideas and ideas become things. When we say 'manipulation,' we mean the changing of relationships of things. When thinking takes place, relationships are altered and tested. A relationship is added – for example, a thing seen in the distance is recognised as a dog – or changed – a thing in the distance is seen as a sheep and no longer as a dog. We lose the understanding that ideas are things and, instead, we understand that ideas, as the units of thought, are relationships and things only the combinations of these relationships.

### **Expression**

The final word in our definition of language, "Words and the methods of combining them for the expression of thought," to be examined is, 'expression.'

Again, we will turn to the dictionary in order to give a definition that can act as a guide in our contemplations. 'Expression' is defined as, "The action of manifesting by action or other external tokens." (Onions, 1973)

The primary function of expression, then, is to manifest. To manifest is, "To make evident to the eye or to the mind." (Onions, 1973) When something is expressed, therefore, it comes in to view. We become aware of the thing. When we contemplate what this might mean for 'language,' we see that language has the function of making things apparent and, if we are not to assume dualism and therefore consider the mental as the real, making something apparent would be to make something exist. In this sense, it can be seen that language creates things or allows things to become real. From our earlier explorations, this should come as no surprise. We have already found that, by using dictionary definitions and vulgar usages, an unwillingness to assume dualism and deductive reasoning, the function of language is to create things and, as things are all things, to create reality itself.

In doing this, though, some of the meanings of the terms used have been stretched from normal usage. This does not mean that those terms have lost their common meanings, far from it, it means that the terms have retained their essential meaning, the meaning that allowed for the common interpretation, but have lost some of the restrictions placed on them and that obscured their essential meaning. The justification for doing this is that the view that has been taken of the meaning of terms is extensionalist. We are not concerned so much



with the intension we have when using terms, but are more interested in the effect of using those terms. This can be justified by the claim that we are engaged in a science and the terms we use in undertaking that science can be seen as functions. In the normal way of using functions, we are interested in the sets produced by those functions and not in intensional aspects of them. The claim is, then, that in using terms as proposed here, we are not using them in a trivial way or reinterpreting them for our own convenience, but are trying to understand those terms in a logical and scientific way; we are saying that the way in which we use terms is a way that is not unscientific but scientific *in extremis*.

So far, we have made little mention of Heidegger and have chosen instead to concentrate on simple definitions found in the dictionary. In doing this, the terms have become highly scientific and we have based our understanding almost to the level of set theory. What has to be done now is to bring the understandings discovered here face to face with a Heideggerian understanding of those same terms. If this is done, we may be able to understand more about the terms we are using and the way in which Heidegger himself used those terms.

### ***The status of language***

In *Being and Time*, Heidegger tells us that “Language can be broken into word-things which are present-at-hand” (Heidegger M. , *Being and Time*, 1962, p. 204) and that language as a totality of words is “something we come across as ready-to-hand.” (Heidegger M. , *Being and Time*, 1962, p. 204) What is the type of thing that is being shown here? Is it showing something necessary about

language or a perspective on language? In this section, the nature of language will be explored from, for the most part, the thinking discovered in *Being and Time*.

Taken at face value, what Heidegger tells us above seems purely ontic and so, as such, we must go back and examine this ontic perspective on language and discover its ontological foundation. To do this, we have no need to follow what everyone knows to be words or language; we must forget what everyone knows and examine what is said without any claims to prior knowledge, even with forgetting any prior knowledge we might have. What we are examining must be looked at as if for the first time. With this in mind we can look again at the statements. To start with, the statement “Language can be broken down into word-things which are present-at-hand” will be analysed.

As language is what we are trying to understand, this will not be looked at now, instead, the first thing to be examined is the term ‘word.’ We are told that words are things present-at-hand and, so, already can see that we are in the sphere of the ontic. The term ‘word’ is being used to indicate beings in the world. From this statement, we have shown that words are beings in the world and they, as word-things, constitute language. There has been nothing said about them being grounded or based on language, so we can see that language is also a being in the world; something that is constituted by word-things. Words come into disclosure by the Articulation or articulation of language. Whether we want to use Articulation or articulation depends on whether we want to consider language or

words. If we view through the lens of Articulation we see language as the thing in its entirety and words as those things disclosed when we cut at the joints but leaving language as a whole in view; when we look using articulation, we find words as things in themselves, as separate and autonomous entities, but lose site of that from which the words have been articulated, that is language.

If words are looked at as things articulated from language, then, all we have left are things present-at-hand. The from-which of the words has been stripped from the significations associated with the word. As things purely present-at-hand within the world, the full significations of words is lacking; we understand that words go to make up language, but all we can understand by language is the totality of words; a totality of entities within the world. To try and understand 'language,' then, these already stripped back entities have to be reconstituted into that from which they came, but, as they are being looked at from the perspective of an articulation, that from which they came is now lost; the totality goes to make up 'language,' but we have no idea what sort of thing 'language' might be. Having put ourselves in this position, there is no alternative but to build an understanding of 'language' by re-joining words into a whole that can be called 'language.' The problem is, of course, that having lost our original 'language,' we have no plan or blueprint to guide us; 'language' must be built from the totality of words, but what the totality should look like has been lost, like trying to put together a jigsaw with no guiding picture, an impossibly difficult jigsaw to boot. What is needed is some sort of guiding principle that would appear, at least, to make the project seem possible; some way of thinking that

allows us to make sense of present-at-hand entities that are encountered within the world. The thinking that comes readily to hand is that of a scientific-logical investigation. A methodology that has become so widely used that it now seems absurd to question it. By basing the reassembly of 'language' on a scientific-logical methodology, eventually we will achieve our goal of understanding what 'language is. Each present-at-hand entity can be fitted into the overall structure one by one and, by ensuring the correctness of the structure, the pieces can be fitted into the structure from different angles and in different places; we can perform experiments on the pieces to ensure that our overall structure is heading in the right direction. In this way, 'language' becomes based on logic; 'language is seen as an extension of logic and 'language' correctly used is language used logically. There are problems: words are often used in ways outside the rules laid down by the blueprint; they fail to fit together seamlessly or, sometimes, even at all. The language obtained by this exercise becomes an ideal language; one that is able to represent the whole of the world. But this ideal language is built on the basis of technicity. It allows everything worth knowing to be known, but cannot deal with anything beyond what is present-at-hand. Language, instead of being discovered as it is in itself, has been constructed in the image of the guiding principles that were used to find it. Anything found outside the limits of the guiding principle, any language use that is not logical, can be either explained by a modification to the model that allows the rogue element to be subsumed, or be dismissed as a bad use of language and, as such, not really language at all. But is this the only way? With the never-ending difficulties and problems of fitting in

exceptions, is this methodology the best way of understanding language?

The alternative way to understand 'language' is to view words as that which is disclosed through the Articulation of language. We can see that words come as things present-at-hand from language, but we do not lose sight of language in so doing. We allow language to be there; something already ready-at-hand that is made up of things present-at-hand. To understand the nature of language from this perspective, we have to understand the essence of language and, from this understanding, words will spring forth of their own accord. The difficulty is to understand the essence of language. In the second quotation from *Being and Time* above, we see that language is something ready-to-hand. 'Language,' therefore, is something with the totality of significations and for-the-sake-of-which that is associated with the ready-to-hand; 'language, in this conception, is a tool for something.

From this initial foray into the landscape around 'language, we are left with a choice of two methodologies going forward; we can assume logic is the underlying ground of language, or we can make no assumptions and seek the ground of language on the basis of the essence of language. Using the former method, we have already decided the meaning of 'language;' we can never hope to discover on what 'language' is based other than the basis by which we perform the investigation. If we take the latter route, we have to set out on a path of our own making, but, even though the path is seldom trod, we still can keep in mind our destination, not of a pre-conceived ground of 'language,' but to initially

understand the essence of 'language,' what it is that language does, and from this ground, build a full understanding of the nature of 'language.' We will, with Heidegger, take this path, but, having decided to take this path, we can see that we have not, as yet, even set foot on it; we have no idea of what 'language' actually is or is what direction to travel in order to find an answer.

The objection could be made that, by basing the study of 'language' on the ontological analysis of *Dasein*, we are no longer understanding 'language' with a thoroughness that is given by scientific study; that is, the basing of 'language' on a logical model. We might or might not be able to disclose an understanding of 'language' within an ontological structure, but we will never be able to grasp a knowledge of 'language' that is of the same standing as the knowledge possessed by the sciences. This is true if the standard is the standard of scientific logical thought. However, the scientific knowledge that is obtained on the basis of a scientific methodology is only based on a posit and, as such, ungrounded. The objection could be put in this way: If we do not base the study of 'language' on a logical foundation, then we have no hope of any scientifically rigorous understanding that is worth its name. But what does this mean? The scientific method attracts us with three calls: it bases what it discovers on a causality that can be modelled or simulated with logic; what it discovers can be used in a calculative way to recreate and predict what is found; and it is based on the posit on which it bases itself and this posit is something that thought within the science cannot go beyond. This can all be accepted and yet a objection still made of the accepted scientific investigation of 'language.' We have already

seen that an assumption that 'language' is based on logic is ungrounded; the essence of 'language' is not logic, but the expression of discourse, or, at least, can be traced towards a source in being. The usefulness of a scientific way investigation in laying down logical rules that can subsequently be followed to predict and explain cannot be doubted, but we are not looking for that which is most useful in our day-to-day lives, but that which is most in keeping with the essence of 'language' whether the result of this is useful or not or can even be achieved. The grounding on a posit only manages to ground what is said on the basis of the initial posit. Because, for now, nothing beyond the posit can be thought, it does not follow that what is now the posit is forever thus or even thus for all. The posit is only thus for the form of thinking being employed in its discovery. Being able to think of no better explanation that based on a posit does not necessitate that the posit is a universal truth, just as, because someone might not be satisfied with the scientific explanation of the history of the universe from its inception to its contemplation by man, it does not follow that God, as an explanation with only one difficulty, that of the existence of God, is better or worse than other explanations that might have more difficulties; they are separated only by the truth found disclosed within the being of the holder making the claim to either possibility.

The immediate goal is to decide what 'language' is for; the for-the-sake-of-which of 'language.' Heidegger tells us that, "discourse is expressed by being spoken out, and has always been so expressed; it is language." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 211) Our path towards an understanding of 'language' is

heading, then, back towards discourse. By bringing in discourse, we do not bring in something that causes 'language' or has any ontic relationship with 'language,' by calling on discourse, we are pointing to the ontological foundation of 'language.'

The first objective on our path will be to understand what is being said with "expressed by being spoken out." 'Expressed,' is from the Latin, *exprimō* which can mean to portray, depict, to produce a likeness (Glare, 1968). If we address ourselves to these interpretations of express, immediately there is a movement away from what is conventionally called language. When something is portrayed, depicted or a likeness is created, then we appear to be within the sphere of works of art rather than an analytic language. However, the use of language as words understood in a conventional way is not excluded; we can use words to depict or portray something as we can use art. What can be said is that 'express' calls for the widest understanding of language; language, as expression, is something that can use the full width of possible behaviours that can be understood.

Having said that expression calls for behaviours, what is meant by behaviours? In the normal course of events and in our common sense world of the ontic, behaviours are physical activities; movements of the body that produce certain effects. The effect that might be considered in this instance are such things as talking, writing, pointing, painting, making music, as well as such things as the behaviours and gestures that would be associated with the human as animal.



This full breadth and more can be thought of that which could be understood by expression. What we could now seek is the ontological basis of such a diverse spectrum of ontic phenomena. This is started by considering the essence of expression: What is expression for? Whatever is expressed in expression is expressed for the sake of others. The essence of expression is making public. With this clue, we can now seek the ontological ground of expression. As the making public of something, it is the making accessible for the whole of the discourse and understanding. In this way, what is disclosed in the 'there' can be raised up and brought to the fore. Expression calls forth parts of the totality of significations in order to bring that part as something to care about; as the subject of concern. But what of others? Surely, expression is a communication to others? This is true in the common sense ontic world, but others as other beings are not ontological. We did speak of the Others in the ontological analysis of *Dasein*, but this Others is never to be confused with the ontic other of other beings. Others are not other people or even other beings of any type; the Others is a part of the ontological structure of *Dasein* and, as such, is not a thing or made up of things at all. The Others is a way of looking at being; the Others is an interpretation of a face that being presents us when we think of being in a certain way. In this case, what does making public involve? There can be no such thing as making public to Others as, as an essential part of being, anything within being is already within the Others. We have to understand the ontological foundations of making public.

Public, from *publicus*, can mean common to all or universal. (Glare, 1968) To

make something public, therefore, is to make it available universally. In our ontological thinking of being, to make public would be to make available to all the faces that being can present to us. The making public of something discloses and raises up the something so that the something is predominant for being. This implies that the making public is that by which the ontic and the ontological meet; the making public allows the ontic to spring forth from the ontological structure of *Dasein*. It is in the making public of a being so that the being can become something for being. If the making public of beings is the expression of language, then what language expresses is the whole of discourse, "Discourse is existentially language." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 204) 'Language' is then disclosed as the bridge that allows the passing of the ontological to the ontic; it is that by which beings can be disclosed and discovered. It should be emphasised that 'language' here is not the common sense notion of the making of noises or marks; these are modes of the ontic or common sense character of language, but 'language' here is far wider; it is the making public from the ontological; it is that which allows beings to be. When we say "that which allows beings to be," it should not be taken as meaning that beings can only come into existence with the saying or thinking of terms, but that beings come into existence through 'language' but makes no other claim on 'language.' When looking for the essence of 'language,' we are looking for what language does at the most primordial level and it is here, at its most essential level, that we get an initial understanding of 'language.' 'Language,' as that by which beings can be, is discourse made public. As was discovered with

discourse, language should be taken in a wide sense. In the same way as discourse can be envisaged as a face of being, so too can language.

### ***Towards language***

From the preliminary explorations of language taken in general terms from *Being and Time*, the investigation will now move on with Heidegger in his later thinking. This does not mean that Heidegger's understanding of 'language' changes, but that he moves forward by mapping out more of the terrain of what was said and considers the implications of what was said in *Being and Time*.

The wide, indeed, boundless ontological basis of 'language' explored above needs to be honed and made clear within Heidegger's thinking. The basis of language and the understanding of language at an ontological level brings us back to being, but, in order to understand the nature of that which springs forth from this basis, we need to go with Heidegger on the path he maps out on the way to language. Although what is said appears as though language is being talked about in a restricted way, this does not mean that it is necessarily the case that we have to assume that language is only this restricted mode of the common sense ontic understanding of language; indeed, what Heidegger tells us is more understandable if a restricted view of language is not assumed and that, when language is contemplated, the wide view of language is taken; language should always be considered from its ontological basis rather than making up our minds on the nature of language before the question has even been formed and so that the original question can never be asked.

Heidegger asks, “when does language speak itself as language?” (Heidegger M. , *The Way to Language*, 1982) That is, when is it we can use language to speak about itself? Language itself, for the most part, withdraws. When we use language, we talk about something, there is a subject, but the subject is not language even if it appears that it is language about which we are speaking. If language is talked about in terms of the underlying logic of language or in a philological sense, then it is not language that is being discussed, but logic or philology; language has already withdrawn and allowed the constructs that have been built in the name of language to come to the fore; language itself has been forgotten. When, then, does language speak of itself? Heidegger tells us that language does not speak of itself when we assume we are considering language, but when we go beyond language; that is, when we have no word for what we want to say. Even in this eventuality, it is not a direct consideration of language, but a hint in the direction to the primordial nature of language. A hint, though, is better than nothing, so this direction will be taken in order to try and use the hint to understand something about the essence of language.

Heidegger uses an interpretation of a poem, *The Word*, by Stefan George.

#### The Word

Wonder or dream from distant land

I carried to my country's strand

An waited till the twilit morn

Had found her name within her bourn –  
Then I could grasp it close and strong  
It booms and shines now the front along...  
Once I returned from happy sail,  
I had a prize so rich and frail,  
She sought for long and tidings told:  
“No likes of this these depths enfold.”  
And straight it vanished from my hand,  
The treasure never graced my land...  
So I renounced and sadly see...  
Where word breaks off no thing may be.

Of particular significance, at least at this stage of our journey, is the last line,

Where word breaks off no thing may be.

In a common sense reading, the line would imply that the word or name of the thing is needed for the thing to be. This understanding would be too hasty. By thinking in this way, we are already thinking in a mode that restricts our understanding of language before we even pose, let alone address, the question.

The line in George’s poem, “Where the word breaks off no thing may be,” calls to mind two areas where we might start our initial investigation: word and thing.

The first question we will address speaks about 'thing.' Heidegger takes the word-thing to be used in a wide sense. A thing is a being. As we can see from our earlier investigations, anything in the world of the ontic is a thing or a being, therefore, a thing can be any being from a table to a god, from a premise to a step in a deduction, all are things or beings. When we talk about things here, we are talking about anything that can be disclosed from the 'there;' the whole of interpretation and discourse. What the poem says is that, "The word alone gives being to the thing." (Heidegger M. , *The Way to Language*, 1982, p. 62) This would, on the face of it, seem a ridiculous idea. How could a mere word allow a thing to exist? How can my calling the table a table make it be and, without my so naming it, the table does not exist at all? Surely the real, the thing, is prior to the word?

Looking at the final line of George's poem that tells of, rather than that which is renounced, the sphere in which the renunciation enters; "it names the call to enter into that relation between thing and word which has now been experienced." (Heidegger M. , *The Way to Language*, 1982, p. 65) If taken in this way, then the 'may be' in the line becomes an imperative; the poet is denying the being of anything beyond the word. He is denying himself what he previously thought to be the case. The poet is saying that, before, he thought that there did exist things beyond words, but now he is imposing on himself a renunciation of such a belief. The poet has undergone an experience in which he sees that it is the word that allows a relationship to be forged with the thing. He has seen that it is only the word that has disclosed the thing as the thing that it is. The word is

seen as that which carries up and allows the thing to shine forth. In this way, the calling of the poet is a calling to the word; that which is “the bourn of Being.” (Heidegger M. , *The Way to Language*, 1982, p. 66) George has entered into a relation between the word and thing, but this is no relationship in the sense of a relationship between two entities in the normal way; the thing is seen as a being contained within the word; the word becomes the thing.

If looked at as a whole, George’s poem tells of the experience the poet has had with the word until his final proclamation of self-denial. He tells of his previous relation as that of coming to the spring of language and always having been given the treasure he was seeking; always finding the word that allow the thing to be spoken and to contained within it the gift of the word. Before, the poet felt confident. His poems would flow forth with a seemingly never-ending stream of gift from the well. The word and the thing would come fused from a cornucopia and allow him to produce the poetry in a way in which he felt the power offered by the seemingly endless supply of combination of word and thing; of word-things. But the well dries and the cornucopia is found wanting. The word-thing is no longer given to him. On coming to the spring with the thing to be carried by a word, he is given the news by the goddess:

No like of this these depths enfold.

There is no word given for the thing he has; nothing can found that will call the thing into the openness. Without the word, the thing cannot be brought into the realm of the poem; it is lost and disappears from the poet’s grasp. But this

realisation and renunciation does not mean that the poet cannot compose successfully, it is only a realisation of the bounds wherein he can compose. He no longer expects to be gifted words whenever he goes to the cornucopia, but with this acceptance he can go forward.

What must now be asked is what this has shown us about language? The encapsulating of things within words that, by so doing, allows the things to be present in words can be combined with the wide understanding of language detailed earlier. In this understanding, language is the way in which discourse expressed itself; it allows whatever is discovered to come forth and be seen. The function of language is of the same nature here. The word is that by which things discovered in discourse can come forward. The problems with finding words to express that which has been discovered in discourse is the problem of allowing what has been discovered to shine forth; without the gift of the word to hold the thing, no thing can be seen and, if not seen, it cannot exist at all. Of course, when contemplating poetry, we are within the realm of words, of noises and marks, but this is still an oversimplification. Noises and marks or other physical actions are the only way by which calculative thinking can know language as something that occurs within the realm of beings. They, in no way, can be thought to describe what language, or even, words are essentially. When poetry is discussed, we naturally fall into the trap of confining our understanding of the nature of language to a calculative understanding, but, even within poetry, we forget that poetry speaks of the unsaid in noises and marks as much, or more, than what is said. It is in this unsaid where poetry has its power and it is in this unsaid that language



brings forth and allows to be seen that which is in discourse. We have not been able to delimit the understanding of language in any way as yet; it is still that by which discourse expresses itself and, as such, stretches as wide as being itself.

### ***The nature of language***

Heidegger asks about the nature of language, but taking this at face value already destroys the search before it can even begin. In its obvious meaning we already know the nature of words and what language means, but this must be questioned. When the nature of language is sought, the whole of what is looked for must be understood, or at least, recognised. What is nature? What is language? How do nature and language belong together? No matter how careful we try and be, we are stuck with the problem of the question already assuming too much. "Every posing of every question takes place within the very grant of what is put in question." (Heidegger M. , *The Way to Language*, 1982, p. 71) When a question is considered, it is not the putting of the question that should be thought about, but a paying attention to what is given by the question. Thinking calls for going to what is at the root; the ground of what is being asked. When we search for the meaning of 'nature,' we search for the foundation of all that is; of the totality of beings. So, when the question is addressed in a thinking way, it reforms itself; we are no longer asking a calculative question, but have been drawn up into a new way of asking. We see that language has to be considered in its founding nature. We come to see that what is being sought is an explanation for the slogan: "the being of language – the language of being." (Heidegger M. , *The Way to Language*, 1982, p. 72) This inversion is not meant

to be a definition, but a map to guide us on our way to an understanding of language. Within this thinking, the word is that which allows beings to be, “If the word did not have this bearing, the whole of things, the ‘world,’ would sink into obscurity.” (Heidegger M. , *The Way to Language*, 1982, p. 73)

Heidegger claims that the essential nature of language cannot be expressed in words. By words is meant the saying that is used to talk about the nature of language. As such, ‘word’ already has a meaning and this meaning conceals the essential nature of ‘word.’ The meaning of ‘word’ expressed here is that of a term used to indicate a concept and so ‘word’ is drawn into calculative thought. Language is being used in a certain sense: the calculative form of speaking of concepts and the ontic. We are not at a point to assert that language is essentially of this type, but, when we use language to speak of language we do, for the most part, treat and consider language as though this was the case. When language is confined to terms that indicate things or beings, there is no way of using it to talk of anything beyond this type; we cannot talk directly of that which allows beings to be in the first place. If language withdraws when an attempt is made to talk about what is most essential to language, then any saying in which we might indulge ourselves to talk about language would be fruitless; “language holds back its own origin and so denies its being to our usual notions.” (Heidegger M. , *The Way to Language*, 1982, p. 81) In this case, we cannot any longer use the slogan of “the being of language - the language of being” unless it is perceived in a different light. Instead of the two occurrences of the term ‘language’ saying the same, the second occurrence would have to say something

different; something “in which the withholding of language - speaks.” (Heidegger M. , The Way to Language, 1982, p. 81)

We have found that language withdraws if an attempt is made to use language to talk directly about language. The way forward, therefore, cannot use this mode of thought, but a fuller mode of thinking. Far from any notion that a calculative way of thinking can allow us to see the essence of language, we must enter into the realm of thinking and allow language to come to us. “We speak of language, but constantly seem to be speaking merely *about* language, while in fact we are already letting language, *from within* language, speak to us.” (Heidegger M. , The Way to Language, 1982, p. 85) Our using language and listening in a thinking way allows the essence of language itself to be glimpsed. To allow language to speak for itself, Heidegger enters into dialogue with poetry; he talks about the language of the poem and the experience the poet has with language. This is not because the poet will tell us anything directly about language, but the mode of thinking of the poet is closely linked with the mode of thinking of Heidegger; linked, but, by no means, the same. By using the work of the poet, Heidegger tries to ensure he resists the impulse to be drawn into anything other than a full form of thinking; he uses the poem as the beeswax to stuff his ears or the rope to tie himself to the mast lest he falls victim to anything like to siren calls of calculative thinking.

If we look back at the last line of George’s poem again, we can see a problem that has until now been overlooked. If no thing can be where the word is not,

how can the word be? The word, in our normal conception, is a thing; it is something that is discovered in discourse. Are we now suggesting that the word is not a thing at all? That the word is of a different nature than things? This is the only way of seeing the issue as long as we are trapped in a calculative frame of mind. To understand and forge our way ahead, we must press our thinking out of its accustomed and comfortable mode and into a new, strange and broad landscape in which an understanding might be had. The poet suggests that, "Word and thing are different, even disparate" (Heidegger M. , *The Way to Language*, 1982, p. 86) and it is now our aim to take this difference into our thinking. The word as that which allows the thing to be can have no being. On the face of it this statement flies in the face of what everyone knows. After all, is not the dictionary full of words? No. The dictionary is full of terms, not words. The dictionary contains no words at all. The dictionary cannot allow words to speak as words. The word is the nothing, the no thing, that allows the thing to be. Because of what the word gives, the thing is. As with the word, the 'is' has no being. The 'is' too is in a different realm from things. The word and the 'is' belong that which is there but have no being. The word is what gives being. It is the giving of being, allowing the thing to be, but it *is* not, it is not itself anything. To understand the word, "Our thinking, then, would have to seek the word, the giver which itself is never given, in this 'there is that which gives.'" (Heidegger M. , *The Way to Language*, 1982, p. 88)

This way of thinking is beyond what can be said in a calculative mode of thinking. In calculative thinking, that which does not have being cannot be thought about;

cannot exist in any sense at all. But the word is that which gives being but does not have being. To approach an encounter with language, therefore, we cannot do so with a calculative methodology; a methodology that “is in fact the utmost corruption and degradation of the way” (Heidegger M. , *The Way to Language*, 1982, p. 91) because being submerged into this narrow thinking hides what it purports to seek; hides it in what it already knows to exist and how it already knows the world to be. In the thinking in which we can approach an encounter with language, we have to let go of what is given by a methodology. We must not follow a barren predetermined path, but think within a region. The region of our thinking is wherein thinking is free; where that which is hidden is free and allowed its place. In thinking, that which we seek is allowed to come to us. We do not try and force a path to the encounter by plotting a predetermined path, but the path we follow is one given by the call of what concerns us. Thinking does not use the dictionary definitions of words or the meaning that everybody knows and ends in themselves, but allows that which is normally hidden within the richness of words to come forth and call us in the saying of language. We use the dictionary as a guide to an area of understanding and allow what is in this area to talk to us. We use a dictionary, not to make the meaning of words familiar to us, but to make words strange and new. The words becomes only signposts and nothing at all in themselves.

Heidegger tells us that, “Poetry and thinking are modes of saying.” (Heidegger M. , *The Way to Language*, 1982, p. 93) Saying is related to the word *saga* and, in this sense, means to show. In this term, saying is a showing; an unconcealing.

Saying is that which lays out what is in found in the 'there;' it brings forth and speaks of that which is found in discourse. Saying brings light to the world; brightening, concealing and extending our worlds.

### ***The being of language: the language of being***

To continue the exploration of the realm of language, we require a guiding beacon. This will be the *being of language: the language of being*. To examine the slogan, it must first be split it at the colon. When this is done, then it can be seen that what is said by the words in each part is different. In the phrase before the colon, language is the subject and what is to be determined is its being. What is being said is that what is to be understood as the essence of language is the language of being. But, in the second half of the slogan, being has a different meaning. It is no longer the essence, but it is a verb; it has now become persisting in presence. Being is here what concerns us; it is what withdraws and makes wake for beings to be. The slogan tells us that, "What moves all things moves in that it speaks." (Heidegger M. , *The Way to Language*, 1982, p. 95) But, we are left with questions the answers to which we still have to come to terms with. We need to ask: What are we to understand by essential being? How does essential being speak? What is meant by to speak? The slogan has provided a hint of the direction in which we must travel or the region of thinking in which an answer must be sought, but it has not, of itself, given any answer. We have found that we should be looking in that land where poetry and thinking dwell together; where poetry and thinking are neighbours. As such, poetry and thinking abide near to one another. They are near because they are both concerned with

saying. If poetry and thinking are neighbours by virtue of their nearness as saying, then nearness itself must manifest in a way as does saying. "Nearness and Saying would be the Same." (Heidegger M. , *The Way to Language*, 1982, p. 95) This appears to be a strange, or even, absurd thing to claim and this should not be lessened in the least. To allow thinking to proceed, we must put ourselves in a strange land; what is normally held as common sense must be abandoned or, at least, examined to its own ground. We must allow ourselves to see beyond the conceptual.

Heidegger paraphrases the slogan in a new way as, "what concerns us as language receives its definition from Saying as that which moves all things." (Heidegger M. , *The Way to Language*, 1982, p. 95) This guide is not a guide towards, but a guide away. It points away from the traditional understanding of language into a different region in which our thinking is to inhabit. Although we are beckoned away from the traditional understanding, it would be a mistake to throw it out without a thought. Traditional understandings do have much to tell us and contain truths. We can take in the traditional along with that which is hinted at in the slogan. The pointing away from the traditional is not something exclusive, but can include the traditional along with thinking and poetic understanding. In this way, our traditional understanding will be addressed in as far as we address it from that land wherein poetry and thinking lie side by side. The traditional ways of thinking are to be regarded from the perspective of a form of thinking or way of hearing that is beyond calculative thought. Language, then, is normally thought of as an act of speaking. It is an action performed through

the utilisation of the speech organs. "Language is the tongue." (Heidegger M. , The Way to Language, 1982, p. 96) The vocal part classically forms a part of a totality where letters are the signs for sounds; the sounds point to mental experiences; and the mental experiences point towards things in the world. This is the structure in outline that Heidegger wants to keep in front of us as that traditional understanding of language. Although this basic structure has been refined and improved, it has, he asserts, still the same underlying structure.

Language as that which is represented by speech in the normal sense of vocal sounds is certainly a correct thing to say. The sounds are indeed an ontic representation of language. Saying this does not belittle this face of language or imply that the meaning or sense content of language has priority. The difficulty comes in the examination of language as the study of these ontic manifestations. The character of the sounds associated with language is restricted as things physiological and the major part of the sounds of language is lost; the experience of the sounds of language is hidden in the assumed knowledge of the physical. The calculative study of the sound of language cannot tell us anything about the experience had with these sounds. The sound of language is more than the carrying of meaning associated with sounds; there also exists the tones, the ringing and singing of language, the tremble and the forceful, all of these are beyond the calculative analysis. Trying to talk of this fuller character of language is hampered by the constant beckoning of calculative thinking; that thinking which has been with us for so long and has been so successful in the giving birth to technology; but has covered and hidden so much at the same time.



We are told that, "Language is the flower of the mouth. In language the earth blossoms towards the bloom of the sky." (Heidegger M. , *The Way to Language*, 1982, p. 99) The blooming of the earth is the letting shine forth of what language allows to be discovered in the 'there.' That which it has let shine forth can flower and blossom in being and can become a part of concern. It is in the word where the sky and the earth meet and encounter one another; the word lets what is in the earth flower and rise up. When the sound of the word is seen as that which discovers and makes the world appear, the calculative concealment of words as something physical starts to slip away; the sound of language as the sound of the creation of the world is far from the analysis of the sound of language as waves in the air. Although this way of thinking of the nature of language might appear strange, it actually speaks of simple phenomena that can be pointed to, that is, it is in the phenomena of poetry and thinking that we can glimpse the sound of language as it essentially is.

Language as saying shows and makes appear; it makes appear in the "lighting-concealing-releasing offer of world." (Heidegger M. , *The Way to Language*, 1982, p. 107) Saying and nearness are the same as it is in both saying and nearness that fourfold allow the world. Language, then, is not an attribute of humans, but belongs to the movement of the fourfold. In saying the fourfold is realised and maintained. Saying allows the fourfold to become face-to-face and maintains them there in so far as it holds itself in reserve. We are concerned with language in that we can speak only as a response to language; we speak because of what language has already done. As the mover which holds the

fourfold in the nearness of its face-to-face encounter, then, saying is that which can give the word 'is;' it is what confers the 'is' and allows what is to be. In saying, the 'is' is disclosed and from this disclosing can become thinkable. Saying is that opening that moves to allow the nearness of the fourfold to be gathered together, but not in talking; not in something that makes any noise at all. The silent gathering of the fourfold by saying is "the language of being." (Heidegger M. , *The Way to Language*, 1982, p. 108) As the ringing of the word decays into silence, that which is left is the 'is.' It is the decaying into silence of the word that leads back to the way of thinking and the essence of language.

### ***The fourfold***

In the aforementioned thinking, we talked about the gathering of the fourfold, but gave no understanding of what constitutes this. Because of this, we will have to take an apparent diversion so as to give some brief outline of the fourfold. This is necessary for an understanding of language; if the saying is the gathering in nearness of the fourfold, then, unless we have some sort of idea of the realm of the fourfold, we have gained no understanding at all of saying and, by extension, of language. To start on our way to discover the fourfold, we will first explore the land wherein lies building and dwelling. In this region we will discover how building and dwelling call on the fourfold so that, by exploring building and dwelling the fourfold will manifest itself as a necessary part of the region of building and dwelling.

This exploration will be performed along with Heidegger. This could raise the

objection that Heidegger basis his exploration on, for the most part, German words. When he traces back the meanings of building and dwelling he does so by tracing back the meaning in their German roots. This objection, however, would be a mistake. The point of tracing the words back is not to trace them back to their first dictionary meaning, it is, by tracing them back into their older and unfamiliar meanings, we bring ourselves into the strange and unnerving world of thinking; we let the words speak of their origin in the silent voice of language. With this in mind, tracing back the German words for a non-German speaker is, if anything, better than performing the same journey for the German speaker. The non-German speaker already has a tenuous grip of the meaning of the German word; already a start has been made to set free what the word says so that its essence can be glimpsed. For the German speaker, this exploration is in constant danger of being clouded by a pre-existing knowledge of the meaning of the word; the word has to be prised from the grasp in which it is held by the German speaker's conceptions. To enter into thinking relationships with words and to reach an understanding of the essence of words, the conception that springs up and covers the essence needs first to be stripped away. In this way, the value of walking with Heidegger on his journey to discover the essence of building and dwelling is as pertinent to the non-German as to the German speaker.

## **Dwelling**

Firstly, we will explore what it is to dwell and how building relates to dwelling. An understanding of dwelling will both help in and initiate our search for the fourfold,

but is essential in a mapping of the terrain that contains all of the ontological foundations that tell of the relationship of man and being.

It could be said and with some justification that, "Dwelling and building are related as end and means." (Heidegger M. , Building, Dwelling, Thinking, 2001, p. 146)

This, even with its element of correctness, obscures the essential meanings.

Language itself calls on us to listen to the more essential meanings of these words, but we must listen to the still call of language in order to hear what it speaks. We must pause to listen and ask ourselves, "What, then, does *Bauen*,

building, mean?" (Heidegger M. , Building, Dwelling, Thinking, 2001, p. 146)

Heidegger tells us that in Old English and High German, *buan*, or building, means to dwell. The original meaning of *bauen*, to dwell, has been lost, but

Heidegger tries to glimpse it in its use as a part of *Nachbar* or neighbour. In Old English, this is *neahgbur*. That is, a combination of *neah*, or near, and *gebur*, or

dweller. We therefore end up with near-dweller. From the relatedness of *buan* and *bauen*, we are called on to hear the relatedness of building and dwell; that is,

we hear that building and dwelling are somehow, at ground, occupiers of the same region. Heidegger claims that the old word *bauen* is the source of the

modern word *bin*, as in *ich bin*. This freedom given to *bauen* allows *bin* to call us.

*Ich bin* says "I dwell." I am in so much as I dwell. When "I am" is spoken, it tells of I dwell; the manner in which I dwell on the earth. To be a human, a mortal,

means to be on earth in anticipation of death; being human is dwelling. But *bauen* not only means to dwell, it also means to protect in the sense of cultivation

or nurture. Building in this sense does not construct anything as such; it is what

allows that which it built to grow and to flourish of its own accord. So we are left with two senses of building: building as nurturing and building as construction. This dwelling and building is the habitual way of being for man. Man dwells as of habit; it is our *Gewohnte* way of being; that is, we are accustomed, familiar, used to it (Muret, 1891). We are so familiar and close to this way of being that it recedes as something that can be seen. If we look in the right way, we can see it, but this needs us to make everything unfamiliar and everything worthy of note. From this we can take that man dwells, not essentially, but as an attribute of man; it is not a part of the essential being of man that he dwells, but that it is something that man does. The listening to the silent speaking of language has shown us three things: building is dwelling; dwelling is the way man is on earth; and building in terms of dwelling signifies both protective nurturing and constructing. From thinking about building as dwelling, we are called on to hear the nature of building associated with dwelling. We build as a result of dwelling. Because we dwell, we build.

We have now to address the nature of dwelling. We have, that is, to answer the question: What is the essence of to dwell? The Old English word, *wunian* means to dwell, but the Gothic meaning from which the Old English is derived speaks of how it is with this dwelling. In the Gothic understanding, it means, “to be at peace, to be brought to peace, to remain in peace.” (Heidegger M. , *Building, Dwelling, Thinking*, 2001, p. 149) Peace, taken as the German *Friede*, gives us the free and the German *frei* means to keep from harm of danger or to protect. When something is freed, though, it is not just released in a negative sense, that

is, it is not just not held, but it is freed in as much as it is put in the place where it should be. Freeing, in this sense, is something positive. To dwell, then, is to remain at peace within the freedom or within that place where the thing dwelling has its nature. “*The fundamental nature of dwelling is this sparing and preserving.*” (Heidegger M. , Building, Dwelling, Thinking, 2001, p. 149)

Human beings dwell, then, in the sense described in a sparing preserving way on the earth. On earth means under the sky and this implies staying before the gods as well as being with each other as humans. “By a *primal* oneness the four – earth, sky, divinities and mortals – belong together in one.” (Heidegger M. , Building, Dwelling, Thinking, 2001, p. 149)

### **The earth**

The first part of the oneness that is the fourfold to be addressed is the earth. The earth is “the serving bearer.” (Heidegger M. , Building, Dwelling, Thinking, 2001, p. 149) From the earth springs forth what is. The earth is the source of beings. The earth might be thought of in terms of, or based on, the Indefinite Dyad, not as unformed matter as a thing out of which formed beings are created, but as an ontological region from which beings can take form. If we take the Indefinite Dyad as the unformed matter from which all things come, then we have a hint towards an understanding of the earth. The unformed matter is not something corporeal; not something that can be pointed at; not an idea; not a thing at all. The Indefinite Dyad from which all things are formed is an ontological region of the fourfold and so cannot be a thing or even thought of as something in the

same realm as things at all. When things are formed from the Indefinite Dyad in this sense, we are giving a description of the formation of things within being; the creation of beings within being. This has nothing to say about the formation of entities in the universe; that is, independently of the being of being. The matter of the Indefinite Dyad is not matter in the physical sense, or even in some sort of mental sense; the Indefinite Dyad is proto-matter within being; it is what gives there to be anything from which to form anything within being. The anything that is formed is any thing that can be. From the earth is formed the universe, both physical and mental.

But saying that the earth is the source of beings implies already the rest of the fourfold. If we think of the earth as the undifferentiated matter, in the widest sense, from which beings can be formed, we must already have the rest of the structure of the fourfold. The earth is that part from which beings can be, but, being as such already speaks of the sky into which beings can spring forth; already speaks of the immortals that speak of the for-the-sake-of-which; already speak of the care of the mortal in the being finite. The earth should not be thought of as a thing. When we talk of the earth in this sense, we are speaking in an ontological way; a non-conceptual way. We cannot speak of the earth as a being because it is a part of source of beings. It is not a being nor even a concept because it is a part of that in which beings are grounded and a concept is itself already a being. The earth, in the same way as the structure of Dasein, can only be talked about indirectly with terms that are taken as things that can be defined in dictionaries or point only to other things. All that can be done to talk

about the earth, is to hint at it. The terms read in the description of the earth, or the whole of the fourfold, should be understood in an ontological way; non-conceptually. When we talk of the fourfold, we are no longer within the world of beings, the ontic, we have jumped into the world of the ontological, the world in which beings are grounded.

### **The sky**

The next part of the fourfold is the sky. This is where that which has sprung from the earth can spring and be seen. In the sky are beings that have been wrested from the earth. The beings that can be seen are all beings in the broadest sense; that is, it includes all things, all concepts, all ideas as well as what we normally think of as physical things. The sky is that ontological region wherein the beings that have been formed from the earth, the Indefinite Dyad, can be or exist. It is not an area in a physical sense; it has no size or shape as even the concepts of size or shape can be only by being formed from the unformed matter of being and so allowed to be in the sky. The sky is the disclosing of all that is. In the sky there exists,

the vaulting path of the sun, the course of the changing moon, the wandering glitter of the stars, the year's seasons and their changes, the light and dusk of day, the gloom and glow of night, the clemency and inclemency of weather, the drifting clouds and the blue depth of ether.

(Heidegger M. , Building, Dwelling, Thinking, 2001, p. 149)

This description Heidegger gives us of the sky does, at first sight and taken



literally, give a description of the sky as we normally experience it, but this is not how it should be read. The description of the sky should be read ontologically, that is, in a way that relates to a poetic reading or a reading where the terms are taken to be pointers towards their own roots. For example, “the vaulting path of the sun” is not meant to describe the physical progress of the sun in a physical sky, but it represents the possibility of space and time. “The vaulting” gives us space; it, as the arc of the sun in the sky, implies there is distance. “The path” of the sun gives time. In order for there to be movement, there has to be both space and time. Further to this, the path of the sun that allows the possibility of day and night and the public division of time as was laid out in *Being and Time*.

But the sky already necessitates the remainder of the fourfold. In speaking of the sky, the source of the beings disclosed is already talked about; the mortals have already been implied; and the immortals have already been necessitated. Without the earth there could be no sky; with no earth there could be nothing in the sky and with nothing in the sky the sky could not sky. The sky allows beings to be visible, but beings are not visible in the sky, but because of the sky. The sky is not a region or area in a physical sense; it is not spatial or temporal in any way. It gives spatiality and temporality because these are beings, but does so in a non-spatial and non-temporal way.

### **The gods**

The third region of the fourfold is the divinities. The region of the divinities is that ontological region that beckons forth. It is that region that pulls forth beings as

their potentiality for being. It is the for-the-sake-of-which that allows beings to strive for what they can be; what pulls them towards their nature. The realm of the divinities is that region that calls on the earth in order that beings might be. This calling might be thought of as the calling of the Form; the Form fashions beings out of the formless Indefinite Dyad or the earth. As with all of the fourfold, the divinities, whether thought of as Forms or not, does not represent beings or concepts; the Forms are not ideals in the sense of concepts into which the earth can be drawn, but is an ontological region. It is that region that allows concepts and Forms to spring forth as concepts and Forms. The gods are the limit case representations of beings and, far from being examples of beings of the kind of which they are the limits, are not only not examples of the being, but are not even beings of any type at all. As such, they occupy a different realm from the beings for which they represent the limit. "The divinities are the beckoning messengers of the godhead." The divinities as the limit cases of all beings that call beings into their form, calls them to be what they are in themselves. The divinities are not separate, they are not disparate Forms, but lead to the simplicity of their unity into one. Any objection that their unity would be impossible if the divinities that make up the unity were contradictory would be to misunderstand their realm; it would be to put them into the realm of beings, into the ontic, rather than into their true realm of the ontological; the founding ground of beings.

The divinities, though, are a part of the fourfold. They are not an accident or attribute, but are an essential part of it. Without the gods, the fourfold would not be that which brought about the being of beings and, as such, there would be no

being; no fourfold at all. The gods need the earth for, without the earth they could not form; they could not form the ontological region of earth into the ontic realm of things. The gods need the sky; they form the Indefinite Dyad into definite things in the sky. Without the ontological sky, there could be no calling and forming as there would be nowhere into which such action could take place.

### **The mortals**

The final of the fourfold to examine is the mortals. This implies identification with man, but this identification should not be made too hastily. “The mortals are the human beings,” (Heidegger M. , Building, Dwelling, Thinking, 2001, p. 150) that is, not man, but human as the animal with the possibility to be man; the *animal rationale*. The possibility for man to be man is the possibility of man having the unified simplicity of the fourfold. But this should not be confused with man as an entity, the realm of the mortals is ontological; it is the ontological region in which the possibility of the other three can act. The region of the mortals is that region in which death can occur and so allows the finite. “To die means to be capable of death as death.” (Heidegger M. , Building, Dwelling, Thinking, 2001, p. 150) To be capable of death as death is not to be capable of death in a physical sense, but in the sense that death is the end. By saying that in the region of the mortals death as death is a possibility, what is said is that being must already be possible within that region. If death as death is possible, then being is possible as it is only within the structures of being that death as death can exist. So, by saying that the region of the mortals is that region that can experience death as death, we are saying that it is that region that can hold and nurture being. “The mortals

are in the fourfold by *dwelling*,” (Heidegger M. , Building, Dwelling, Thinking, 2001, p. 146) that is, dwelling in the sense above; dwelling in the sense of preserving. The mortals give the preservation of the fourfold in its essential presencing.

By the preservation of the fourfold, the mortals preserve essential presencing. But without any of the fourfold, this would could not happen. Each of the fourfold needs and implies all of the others. Without any of the others, they would not be lacking or deficient, but could not act as they do at all. Without any of the fourfold, there could be no presencing; no experiencing; no being. It cannot be stressed too much that the fourfold and what makes up the fourfold are not beings or concepts or anything of the sort. The fourfold and all of its apparent structure is on an ontological level in that it gives rise to the possibility of beings. When we use the term ‘structure’ we are already covering and concealing the nature of the fourfold with calculative language. In trying to understand the fourfold it is necessary to approach the problem in an ontological frame of mind; in a way that does not assume the terms are talking of beings and so in a way that the terms used can be freed to silently speak of what cannot be said in calculative language.

### **The fourfold, Dasein and language**

Heidegger has only one thought. The fourfold and Dasein imply and necessitate each other; they are not identical, but are part of a single thought. By talking of Dasein, Heidegger already speaks of the fourfold; but talking of the fourfold, he

already speaks again of Dasein.

Having gained some notion of the region into which the fourfold lies, we can revisit language and saying in this light. Saying “relates, maintains, proffers, and enriches the face-to-face encounter of the world’s regions.” (Heidegger M. , *The Way to Language*, 1982, p. 107) When we say that saying relates, it can be seen that saying is that by which the fourfold is able to act as such; how the action of each of the regions of the fourfold can relate to each other. The earth relates to the sky by giving of itself as the Indefinite Dyad and allowing beings drawn out by the divinities into their forms under the care and nurturing of the mortals. The simplicity of the oneness of the fourfold is held together by their being related in saying. The saying is nothing like those terms used in calculative language, but is in the realm of the fourfold; it has been drawn into the realm of the ontological or the ground from which beings can spring.

Heidegger says that saying maintains the encounter with the fourfold. Maintains is to practice habitually, to continue or persevere, to keep in good order. (Onions, 1973) The fourfold is something that is habitually concerned with saying. By habit we could understand the characteristic mode of growth (Onions, 1973) so, when we say that saying is habitually concerned with the fourfold, we could understand this as implying that the fourfold takes on its mode of growth because of saying; saying is that which allows and calls the fourfold to act as it does. We are already hinting towards the idea of language being the house of being, but will not pursue this notion now. The next understanding of maintain is to continue

or persevere. This is a difficult understanding to reconcile with the nature of both speaking and the fourfold because, by saying continue or persevere, we are already implying something temporal, but, in the region of the fourfold and saying, there can be no temporality as temporality is something ontic; it is a product of the action of the fourfold and saying; it springs out from the combination of the fourfold and saying, not as something caused by them, but as something that can grow out of their ontological grounding. However, we need not think of 'continue' or 'persevere' ontically, but think of them as a hint towards the ontological. In this case, continue and persevere hint at the possibility of the combination of saying and the fourfold allowing the futural projection that allows presencing. Although this can be read as something temporal as it uses a temporal vocabulary, it should be remembered that, at this level of thinking, time times timelessly; time, here, is what gives the possibility of ontic time and is not itself temporal. The final aspect of maintain explored here will be the keeping in good order. From this could be understood that saying keeps the fourfold in good order. Saying, then, is that which ensures the fourfold remains as it is and, as it is, allows the world to exist. This hints at why man, in the view of Heidegger, is the only animal that can have being. If saying keeps the fourfold in good order, then, without saying, the fourfold would have nothing to keep it as it is and would fall apart. As we have seen, any individual region of the fourfold requires and necessitates the others, so, if any part of the fourfold is not kept in good order by the action of saying, then the whole of the fourfold would fall and, with it, the world itself.

The exploration now draws us to understand the way in which saying proffers the face-to-face encounter with the world's regions. To proffer can be understood as the act of offering something or the movement in beginning something. (Onions, 1973) As before, the implications of these definitions will be considered in light of the relationship of 'proffer' to the fourfold. If considered in terms of the act of offering the understanding would be that saying offers something to the fourfold, but what is it that saying offers? The answer is that saying offers itself. It offers itself "in that it holds itself – Saying – in reserve." (Heidegger M. , The Way to Language, 1982, p. 107) This has now brought in the difficulty of the meaning and implications of saying keeping itself in reserve. What is meant by "in reserve" here? To reserve is to store up for some time or occasion. (Onions, 1973) In this sense, saying stores itself up for some time or occasion so that it enables the fourfold to act as that which forms the world. Saying says, but is not exhausted in the saying; rather, it says and keeps itself for further saying. Saying allows the fourfold to manifest the word or the being of beings, but, in the saying that manifests one world, there is the possibility still remaining within saying to manifest other worlds. If these worlds are considered to be ontic totalities, then saying allows or makes possible for there to be a compressed series of worlds. Saying allows the manifestation of the world by its action on the fourfold, but, by holding itself in reserve, it also give the potential for these to be an infinite number of worlds. This already makes clearer our next understanding of proffer being the movement in beginning something. This implies that saying is that which initiates to action of the fourfold in the formation of the world. Whether we

think of the world as a compressed series or as a world in flux, saying is that which initiates and makes possible, not only the initial formation of a world at all, but of all subsequent worlds or any change to the world. The totality of the fourfold makes possible the world, but saying gives the impetus to this possibility; it is the moving force for the fourfold.

The final word in the quotation to explore is enriches. To enrich can mean to fertilize as in to fertilize the soil. (Onions, 1973) From this understanding, we would see that saying fertilizes and makes richer the fourfold. Saying is that from which the fourfold receives its richness. Saying allows the infinite breadth and depth that are possible to manifest in the world. Because of saying, there can be a universe of beings; not a static universe, but a universe of flux. That which is in the world can always be added to thanks to the fertilizing nature of saying. The world can include all beings; it contains all physical beings and non-physical beings. It might sound as though that the enrichment given by saying is no different than the Forms given by the immortals, but there is a difference. Saying does not give the Form of beings, but offers the possibility for the Forms to call forth beings; saying is the movement that calls on the simple unity of the fourfold to manifest beings and so the world. The enrichment that saying offers is the provocation of the fourfold to yield beings; to give the universe of beings that make up the world and all possible worlds. Saying does not speak of beings or of anything as a being; it speaks by moving the fourfold, that is, stimulating the fourfold so that beings can spring forth. Saying stimulates the fourfold “and does so soundlessly, as quietly as time times, space spaces, as quietly as the play of



time-space in enacted.” (Heidegger M. , *The Way to Language*, 1982, p. 108)

Saying as that mover which holds the fourfold regions that constitute the world in their face-to-face encounter gives us the ‘is.’ In this we are saying that saying, by being that way-making movement that hold the fourfold in their face-to-face encounter, is that which allows beings to be what they are in themselves. In saying the ‘is’ can do as it does because without saying the fourfold are disparate. The ‘is,’ by bringing the fourfold together and holding thus allows the ‘is’ to reflect the unification of beings as they spring from the singularity of the fourfold. We are told that, “An ‘is’ arises where the word breaks up.” (Heidegger M. , *The Way to Language*, 1982, p. 108) The word breaks up when it falls into silence; the silence that is the stillness of the founding source of the word in saying and the holding of the fourfold. The tracing back of the word back into this silence is the path that leads towards ontological thinking; it allows thinking to be at the level where it belongs and from which all other activities can be seen.

Language is the saying of the simplicity of the fourfold. We are those who are concerned with language, we “who can speak only as we respond to language.”) (Heidegger M. , *The Way to Language*, 1982, p. 107) We respond to language as the saying way-making movement of the fourfold that gathers and enables the being of beings. We respond to language because language is the movement that allows the fourfold to create the world. We do not use language other than in an ontic sense. It appears that language is something that is the servant of the speaker, but, in tracing back language to its ontological foundations, we find that

language is not just something man has, but is that which allows being and the being of beings; language is a part of the essence of man as the *animal rationale*. Language calls on man because language is the moving force of the creation of all beings.

We can now trace language back from its ground as saying moving the face-to-face regions of the fourfold towards a common sense understanding of language; the understanding of language that everyone has. The primal understanding of language is at the level of being. It is an ontological understanding. This is what allows the ontic to be. From this most basic language springs beings. They are given into this ontological realm, but their being given hides the realm from which they spring. Although the action of being, its withdrawing and giving, is that which is closest to us as the holders of being, we are usually only concerned with beings. Rather than seeing the spring from which beings flow, we can only see the beings; the water that issues from the spring. The ontological foundation gives us all beings, everything that is. From all that is in the material world to all that is in the immaterial world. From tables, planets, stars and gods, to logic, art, space, time, love and hate. Being also gives us the possibility to use language as it is conventionally understood. Language at this level becomes the noises and marks related primordially to the source of beings, but, on the surface, related to beings. This aspect of language becomes self-absorbed or, at best, being absorbed. It comes to speak only of beings and forgets its roots. It forgets about them, but the roots are still there; it is they that still give life and nurture even this language. In this forgetting, words become chatter. They obscure the

depths from which they spring and become a glittering and sparkling surface, but, like the shimmering surface of a piece of water, can only hint at the depths that lie below. They can hint at what is in the depths, but we are able to plumb those depths only if we allow the surface to tell of the depths; only if we read the surface in a certain way that is aware, that allows, what lies beneath to be contemplated, only then can it be glimpsed by what can be seen of the surface. If we listen in an ontological way, we try to plunge the depths towards the source of beings. We take words seriously and listen to what they say at a primal level. We remember that the sparkling surface is just that and that it obscures the depths of meaning offered in thinking talk. This is where thinking and poetry come to be close to one another. Both thinking and poetry require a mode of listening that tries to see beyond the surface glare. By taking what has been said poetically or thoughtfully and seriously, by listening to it in a thinking way, we can use poetry and, even more, thinking as a guide into the depths and towards the source; towards being itself. Poetry is related to thinking in that it points beyond the surface of conceptual language. If poetry is considered seriously, what poetry says on the surface is only taken as what it hints at in the depths of its meaning. Ontological thinking is taking this mode of understanding to an even deeper level; to go beyond the depths to the very ocean floor of meaning, but not even the floor as something solid, it is more akin to going to the source of the spring; to the hole, to the nothing, that lies at the very heart, but that nothing from which everything flows.

### ***Language is the house of being***

Having laid out a sketch of the nature of language, or that way of thinking that is needed if we wish to contemplate language, we will explore this in relation to Heidegger's famous saying that, "Language is the house of being. In its home human beings dwell." (Heidegger M. , Letter on "Humanism", 1998, p. 239)

The slogan, "Language is the house of being" will be examined word by word in view of the exploration undergone above. The first term to look at is 'language.' Language should be regarded in the sense laid out above; that is, language is not the common conception of language that is the making of noises or marks, it is not the conceptual activity that is normally thought of with the term 'language,' instead, we are going back to the understanding of language that is disclosed in the ringing silence that echoes when the sounding of the conceptual saying of the word disperses. This is the understanding that language is the saying that moves and holds the fourfold. In this sense, language is that which allows the flow of beings from the receding of being. Language stimulates the manifestation of beings and is neither a being itself nor even a totality of beings or any set of beings.

Being is the ontological totality that brings about the being of beings. As such, being is not itself a thing, but that which gives of things. Although being is perfectly simple because of it being ontological rather than ontic, this simplicity does not prevent it from having a number of features. The features are the faces of being; they are ways that being could be thought of. They are not separate

things as such, but, in considering being we create features that we ascribe to being so that we are able to grasp it as a thing. This speaks of our limitations and the limitations of the terms we are forced to use. The number of these features cannot be limited and, as such, are infinite as we are able to create features from the source of all features *ad infinitum*. The features or faces of being are all essential to being, not as attributes in a conventional sense, but as signposts that point towards their common source in being. Being, in the way we are looking at it here, is seen as the unified oneness of the fourfold; a unity held and stimulated by saying. All of these apparent concepts are not concepts at all, but are at a level below and beyond concepts; they are the actions that allow all beings, including concepts, to be discovered.

'Language' and 'being' can now be joined by 'house.' The first step on this road is to have some understanding of 'house.' A house is a dwelling place. From this we can understand that language is the dwelling place of being. Dwelling is the sparing preserving, so language is that which spares and preserves being. To spare is to leave in its nature, to return it to its being. From this interpretation, language leaves being in its nature, it returns being to its own source. If attention is now turned towards preserving, this can be understood as the keeping safe or the taking care of so that language keeps safe and takes care of being. Taken all together, language is that which takes care of and keeps safe being by freeing it into its own nature, that is, into its essential nature. The taking care of being by language is the holding of the fourfold; the freeing of being is the movement of saying that induces the fourfold to disclose beings. Language is the house of

being in so much as it is language that holds the fourfold in their face-to-face meeting and by its movement releases beings into being. It is in language that being can occur and function at all. Without the sheltering movement of language there would be no being; being would be set adrift and its revealing and disclosing of beings would stop.

The second part of the slogan says, "In its home human beings dwell." This highlights the relationship between human beings, language and being. Home says something different from house. Home is the dwelling in which one habitually lives or which one regards as one's proper abode. (Onions, 1973) This gives us two different but related interpretations of home: where one normally dwells; and one's proper abode. We will take the second of these first and give some thought to one's proper abode. Proper is, in this instance, belonging to or relating to the person or thing distinctively or exclusively. (Onions, 1973) That is, proper is that which makes the thing or person what the thing or person is; it is the essence of the thing or person. From this, we see that this meaning of home indicates an essential or natural attachment between the home and that whose home it is; the home is where the one whose home it is belongs by their nature. The tie between the language and man is an essential one; language is an essential feature of man. The first meaning of proper gives us the idea of that place where one normally dwells. From this, the language is where the human being normally dwells. But, if the human being dwells essentially in language, how could language be anything else other than where the human being normally dwells? The answer to this is that human being can be thought of in two senses

depending on which understanding of home we take. If we take it as being the place where the human being normally dwells, then the human being is, for the most part, the thing that dwells within language; but if we take it in the sense of being an essential feature, then we are no longer talking of the human being in the same way, we are talking of the human being as man; the *animal rationale*. From this simple sentence, we have been given the possibility of the human being as well as the essential feature of man. The human being does, for the most part, have language. Man has language as an essential feature. This gives the possibility of the human being not being man if the human being does not possess language, not language in the sense of a set of sounds and marks in the normal way, of course, but in the sense of that which protects and nurtures the fourfold; that which allows being. To be thought of as man, the most essential feature is the possession of language and so being. The human being, as an animal, is just a thing, a being amongst beings, but when the human being has language and thereby can become that which holds being, the human being becomes man. Man has the ontological ground and giving spring of being and, as such, is on a different plain than things. Man is essentially the possessor of language and is not essentially the human being. The human being is that which we, when we think ontically, think of as man, but this is to get everything upside down; man springs from the ontological foundations of being and is not an ontic construct; a phantasm of calculative thought.

When man is at home he is freed for his nature; he is his essential self. Man is his essential self when he is within the house of language and being can bring

about beings. In this state, he moves from being a human being, that with the potential for being, to being man, the possessor and keeper of being.

### ***Language, Dasein and the fourfold***

We have discovered that language, at its most primordial level, is given as both the existential manifestation of discourse and that which holds and by its movement allows the fourfold to create the world. Although these seem at first glance to be very different notions of language, the difference should be examined. The apparent difference need only be a difference of the ontic or conceptual understanding of language and not supported by the ground of language.

As has been shown, discourse is that totality of signification and understanding is made public with language. Language, then, is that which enables what is already in the structures of Dasein to be brought to the fore; to be available to the whole of Dasein. If we take language in the other sense of being that which holds and moves the fourfold; that which allows the fourfold to bring forth beings. The essential feature of both of these understandings of language is the same: language is that which enables beings to be; it is that which brings forth beings so that they are disclosed for being. The way this happens in both cases might appear different, but is this so? Although they might appear different, this is only the case if the essence of the action of language is different. In both cases, language is that which allows the being of beings. Any difference, then, would have to be in the from which that beings are made visible; that is, if the ways of



thinking are different, then Dasein and the fourfold would have to be telling of different things. From a calculative way of thinking, it seems obvious that they talk of different structure, but we are not thinking in a calculative way. If the different ways of thinking are thought of in an ontological way, then we would have to be thinking at a grounding level, but both of the notions are already the ground. We are, in both Dasein and the fourfold, considering that which grounds all; we are considering being itself. If this is the case, then either being as expressed by the description of Dasein is different from the understanding of being from the understanding of the fourfold, or both understandings are pointing in the same direction. The structure of Dasein gives an understanding of the possibility of being as does the structure of the fourfold, but, even with the apparent differences, is it the case that, in the same way as was discovered with Nietzsche's constant recurrence of the same and the superman, that the thinking in both cases imply and necessitate each other?

We need to ask: "How does what is ownmost to language arise in the essential swaying of be-ing?" (Heidegger M. , Contributions to Philosophy (From Enowning), 1999, p. 352) Heidegger gives few clues about language in *Being and Time*, but we can still glean some understanding from both this work and beyond. To get to a most primordial understanding of language, we would have to trace language back to its source, but its source is being; that is, if language is a being then that being has sprung from the action of being; if language is a part of being, an ontological feature of being, then language is being because being is a simplicity so all features of being are essential features. What has to be done

is to “think this be-ing in such a way that we thereby simultaneously remind ourselves of language.” (Heidegger M. , Contributions to Philosophy (From Enowning), 1999, pp. 352-353) We have to avoid what is already known about language and to address ourselves to language in a way that allows the essential nature of language to come through. If this is done, then we come to conclusion that:

When the gods call the earth and a world resonates in the call and thus the call echoes as Da-sein of man, then language is as historical, as history-grounding word. (Heidegger M. , Contributions to Philosophy (From Enowning), 1999, p. 358)

What Heidegger gives us in this quotation is the unification of Dasein, the fourfold and language. Language is that which resonates the fourfold: it calls on the gods, the Forms, to shape beings out of the earth, the Indefinite Dyad, so that they can spring forth into the world, the sky where all that is can be seen and all of this echoes throughout man, the mortal, the finite, Dasein. It appears that language is that which embraces and resonates so that different things can interact and by their interaction cause beings to be, but this would be a total misunderstanding. In talking about Dasein, the fourfold and language, we are only talking about being; about an absolute simplicity; the simplicity of the no things but that allows things.

When we think about the nature of language from the writings of Heidegger as the creation of things from the ontological, we are tempted to think of the

ontological and the ontic as separate areas bridged by language. The ontic is not beyond as such as there is no beyond the ontic. The totality of the ontological and ontic is a singularity. Language does not act as a bridge as there is nothing for it to bridge; it allows the ontic to manifest. We could wonder from what the ontic manifests, but it does not manifest from anything. The ontic manifests because of the possibilities offered by Dasein. As this is the case, Dasein is a totality; it is the ontic and ontological. Dasein becomes the world that has been made manifest from its own possibilities. Language, by being the totality of words and word-things constituting the ontic from the ontological, becomes the world. As this is the case, language, in its full sense that is necessitated by and necessitates the ontological, becomes the same as Dasein.

## **Chapter 4: From the essence of language**

At this point, something of the thinking on the way to language in Heidegger has been discovered. We have seen that Heideggerian thinking cannot be conceptualised and so arguments that use logic as a deductive system in support of his stance cannot be made; he seeks to think prior to the conceptual and so concepts cannot be taken as ends, only as starting points.

In this chapter, language will be set against other terms using the same mode of thinking that seeks to go towards the most primordial. The character of language, truth and thinking will be explored as well as their relationships with one another and their basis. This will lead to an understanding of what thinking of concepts read as indicators to their own essences might achieve.

### ***The nature of Dasein***

Dasein is in each case me, but we would be assuming too much if we said that the 'me' here is a human animal. Instead, Heidegger takes an understanding of man at an ontological rather than an ontic level. The 'me' in this case, is not an ontic human, but an ontological totality from which the 'me' as an ontic 'man' can emerge.

However, Friedman, for example, says, "It is of course in *Being and Time* [...] that Heidegger finally works out the desired 'subjective logic' with a *concrete* subject - the so-called existential analytic of Dasein." (Friedman, 2002, p. 189) Friedman goes on to assert, "Dasein, the concrete living human being" (Friedman, 2002, p. 189) and "Dasein necessarily exists in a world: a world of concrete spatio-temporal objects existing independently of it." (Friedman, 2002, p. 189) By

saying this, Friedman appears to be saying that Heidegger assumes the existence of Dasein as just a thing, all be it, as special thing. But if Dasein is just a thing, how could it be, at the same time, the ontological? By making the assumption that Dasein is just a thing, further problems manifest which Friedman points out. He tells us that, because of the understanding he puts forward of Dasein, Heidegger is either trying to describe the concrete reality of empirical human beings in their concrete and empirical character or Heidegger is trying to elucidate the 'essence' or nature of the concrete human being by means of an 'essential analysis' of that nature, in which case Heidegger, too, must perform the 'eidetic' reduction and abstract from all questions involving the real existence of the entities under consideration. Thus, either Heidegger falls prey to the charge of naturalism and psychologism or his "existential analytic of Dasein" is in the end no closer to actual concrete reality than is Husserl's phenomenology. (Friedman, 2002, p. 189)

To address this dilemma, Friedman comes to the conclusion that, "Dasein's 'essence' is 'existence.'" (Friedman, 2002, p. 190) In this way, Friedman takes Dasein to be concrete in as far as it is concrete existence and so the study of Dasein would be the study of existence. He goes on to say that Heidegger is investigating "a living practical subject - a subject that is essentially temporally finite and hence necessarily engaged with its historically given environmental situation." (Friedman, 2002, p. 191) This does not seem to go together with the earlier statement. The problem is that the assumption is being made that existence is the existence of something rather than existence being just

existence. An ontic thing has been posited at the outset and has obscured the ontological investigation that Heidegger was trying to understand with his examination of Dasein. Although we can agree that Heidegger was examining Dasein and the essence of Dasein is existence, it is a step too far to assume that this existence is the existence of a thing; this would be trying to examine the ontological from the perspective of the ontic.

Having said this, we can take from Friedman that Heidegger was examining the essence of Dasein and that essence is existence and so, taking existence to be being, the study of Dasein is the study of being. Further, being itself is the potentiality for beings and so we can take the study of Dasein to be the undertaking of fundamental ontology. We have, therefore, arrived back at where we started. We have discovered that an investigation of the essence of Dasein would be doing fundamental ontology. We cannot assume that Dasein is a thing at all because that is not the essence of Dasein. We could examine beings derived from ontological possibilities, but, as Friedman says, that would be, “trying to describe the concrete reality of empirical human beings in their concrete and empirical character.” Even Friedman’s much more careful idea of Dasein being a “living practical subject” could be interpreted as a step too far as it could be interpreted that it assumes a concrete subject. Dasein, then, is essentially the ontological totality. We can talk about practical activities performed in the world, but these should not be assumed to be the activities of a subject as such, but activities that talk about their own essence. A taking up of a hammer should be considered in what it says about the ontological, not from the perspective of a

concrete subject, but in what the action says about its own ontological basis.

If we are engaged with fundamental ontology how should we think of the terms we use in such an investigation? Terms are always ontic in nature in our normal day-to-day use of them, so how should we think of those terms when we use them to do fundamental ontology? As soon as we use a term, then because of the nature of terms, the term would cover up what we are trying to talk about. As Streeter asks, “how does one gain access to the question of the meaning of Being without also engaging in the corruption of covering it up, especially since one must put into words – and thus flirt with the possible corruption that attends the mere recitation of assertions – the very investigation that seeks to do the uncovering?” (Streeter, 1997, p. 414) The solution is to understand the nature of the terms used, not in a normal ontic way, but ontologically. They can no longer be thought of as proxies or signs of things, but as pointers to areas of possibilities. Instead of meaning definitions found in a dictionary terminated with a full stop, a term is only a starting point “marked by this incompleteness, and it must remain incomplete.” (Streeter, 1997, p. 416)

If we take the terms we use to talk about Dasein in such a way, what are the implications? The terms should no longer be thought of as referring to a definition ending in a full stop. If we use a term such as ‘language,’ that term should not be thought of as indicating just the definition found in the dictionary or our normal understanding of the term, but should be thought of as the starting point from which we discover its ontological ground whether our initial understanding comes from the dictionary or from our normal understanding. This

is how we must talk about Dasein. Because Dasein is an ontological totality and not just an ontic thing, we must put ourselves into a position where we understand what is said about Dasein ontologically and so we speak about Dasein in terms that are starting points for our thinking rather than fixed and predefined things.

The nature of Dasein, then, is not to be thought of in the same way as we think about things; we should not think of Dasein as something that exists at all in the normal sense. Dasein cannot just exist in the world because Dasein is both the ontic world and the ontological source of that world. When we talk about Dasein, we talk about ourselves, not ourselves as anything at all, but ourselves as our totality. When we speak about Dasein, we must, therefore be prepared to speak at a level appropriate to Dasein. When we use a term, we must be ready to allow that term to be a starting point for our thought rather than a reference to a thing. 'Dasein' should be thought of as the beginning of a journey into thinking about oneself.

When we are engaged in talking about Dasein ontologically, we have to leave ontic concerns behind and be prepared to seek the essence of Dasein. We can use terms that show faces of Dasein as pointers on the start of our journey. To this end, Heidegger wrote:

From the essence of Λόγος [...], the essence of Being is determined as the unifying One, Έν. Parmenides thinks this same Έν. He thinks the unity of this unifying One expressly as *Μοῖρα* (fr. VIII, 37). Thought from



within the essential experience of Being, *Μοῖρα* corresponds to the *Λόγος* of Heraclitus. The essence of *Μοῖρα* and *Λόγος* is thoughtfully intimated in the *Χρεῶν* of Anaximander. (Heidegger M. , The Anaximander Fragment, 1984, p. 55)

By starting with language and taking it back to its essence, we find the basis of the world. We find that, “organism and environment enfold into each other and unfold from one another in the fundamental circularity that is life itself.” (Varela, Thimpson, & Rosch, 1993, p. 219) This creative activity is the activity of primordial language. “Language comes first to language, i.e. into its essence, in thinking. Thinking says what the truth of Being dictates; it is the original *dictare*.” (Heidegger M. , The Anaximander Fragment, 1984, p. 19)

By allowing a thinking to travel from Dasein, it comes to include language. This does not give an understanding of Dasein as an assertion, but the journey of thought itself becomes an understanding of that which cannot be understood in terms of assertions.

### ***Language and Dasein***

If Dasein should be talked about using terms that refer to no ontic thing but are, rather, starting points for our thinking, what about ‘language’?

The first problem we have when talking about language is that we are talking from within what we are talking about. What we are doing is the same as if we were trying to talk about logic from within logic; trying to talk about physics from within physics; trying to talk about theology from within theology. All of these

activities can be attempted, but all are doomed to failure. When we attempt to talk in this manner, we are unable to see what we are trying to talk about. We have no perspective from which we can view the overall structure. In order to talk about language, we must find a perspective from which we are able to view the overall structure of language from its ground up. If we set out to do this, we must be prepared to talk about language from a perspective beyond language but, from this perspective, the terms we use must themselves be thought of in a different way.

We can start from our normal understanding of the term or take a dictionary definition, but we should not stop there. This way of talking cannot talk about language itself but only modes of language; instead of thinking about the totality of language, we would restrict our self to talking about a part of language. Although these can be our starting points, we cannot put a full stop after them but have to allow them to carry on to speak of the whole of language. We have no choice but to use terms, but have to find a way that those terms can speak to us from beyond the confines of terms as they are normally used. Brogan highlights this when he says, "Heidegger emphatically rejects any call for a new language, even though our language is the language of metaphysics, the language of beings. What is needed is not a new way of speaking but a new way of listening. What he calls for is that we say the language of beings as the language of being." (Brogan, 2013, p. 43) The terms we use when we speak are the same terms, but we hear those terms or allow those terms to speak, not as references to things, but as starting points for authentic thinking.

Vandevelde points out that, “we wish to make Heidegger intelligible without flattening out what he says – refusing to choose between the poet or the thinker.” (Vandevelde, 2014, p. 254) The sort of thinking Heidegger performs as a thinker is not the type of thinking that can be flattened out. Poetic thinking might be said to be close to the type of thinking in which Heidegger was engaged. We must listen to the silence surrounding the terms and not restrict ourselves to only being concerned with the terms themselves.

When we listen to terms, we should listen to the silence. This sounds absurd, of course, but it is only in the silence that terms can speak to us authentically. In our normal day-to-day talk, we use terms. Terms spring from each term so that what we say is filled with terms. Each term is taken as a pointer to a thing and so each term, although linked to other terms, has a full stop. Each term is taken as complete in itself. We do not normally allow the terms to be taken at a deeper level because we are so engrossed with the terms and their use and relationships. It is only in silence that a term can speak to us authentically because it is only in silence that we are not just concerned with a series of terms that speak of only themselves. In the gap between terms lies authentic thinking. When we speak in our normal way, we desperately fill all the gaps with terms and cover up authenticity. But, even here, there does lay, unnoticed, authenticity in the gaps between the terms. In order to think authentically, though, it is to the gaps we should attend rather than the terms themselves.

Brogan tells us that authentic listening, “calls itself back from both a failure to listen to itself and from a listening to the they-self.” (Brogan, 2013, p. 35) If we

have to turn away from the they-self, what is this they-self from which we must turn? The they gives us what we know. We use terms in such a way that we use them as one uses them correctly; as dictated by *das Man*. When we use terms in this way, we understand what they mean: they mean what everybody already knows they mean or they mean what the dictionary tells us they mean. In this way, we listen to terms only in so far as we hear them as variables that have relationships with other variables. We turn our talking into logic that has no interest in anything beyond itself. We do not notice that terms can be and are more than just variables because we use them correctly according the the-they. When we listen authentically, we listen to our self. Our self, in this case, is our self as Dasein. We listen authentically when we allow our own ontological ground to speak for itself. As Heidegger tells us that, "reticence Articulates the intelligibility of Dasein in so primordial a manner that it gives rise to a potentiality-for-hearing which is genuine." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 208)

When we wish to talk about Dasein or about any feature of Dasein, we are trying to think beyond ourselves as we are Dasein. The problem we have with speaking or thinking about Dasein is like trying to speak about any world from within that world; a problem highlighted by Skolem's paradox. We cannot hope to have a view of Dasein from any perspective that is not already trapped within Dasein. We can only hope to describe Dasein as a self-description. But, being aware of this difficulty, we must also be aware that we normally always trap ourselves within worlds of our own making. By listening to the silence, we are able to glimpse a little more of the totality of Dasein. We are able to understand

the status of those worlds even if we are still trapped within a world of a different sort. Listening to silence is a listening that allows us to hear beyond the curtain of terms. We allow ourselves to look into the gap between the curtains rather than looking at only the curtains themselves.

The problem with this listening is that it is, of necessity, not a listening to terms at all, but a listening that allows itself to hear beyond the realm of terms. Because of this, “this mode of discourse is so often parodied as nonsense and being dumb.” (Brogan, 2013, p. 39) From the perspective of a mode of thinking that is confined to terms and assertions, this is the case. If one allows oneself to think beyond terms, then one is saying nothing using terms. When one speaks using terms in this mode of thought, one is not using terms as they are normally used. The terms used are not pointers to things at all, but invitations to look into the gap between the terms. From the point of view of a thinking that confines itself to only terms, then, one is talking nonsense. Because one is not talking about things at all, one is saying or referring to nothing.

This is the problem with considering Dasein and all features of Dasein. We are trying to talk about fundamental ontology and that requires us not to be talking about things, including concepts, but about the totality and source of those things. We therefore have to be struck dumb. We can talk in terms, but must hope that those terms are heard authentically.

In our silent contemplation of language, we can hope to glimpse the totality of language. Vallega-Neu writes, “The privileged position of words derives from the

fact that all grounding of being, all opening up of a concrete site of being happens in language, such that language has a more originary sense than uttered words.” (Vallega-Neu, 2013, p. 127) To see the totality of language, we must be prepared to look beyond terms and into the source of those terms. We must look past the spoken word towards the origin of the word.

As we have seen from earlier chapters, language is a disclosing of beings from being. This character of language speaks of Dasein. Dasein is the ontological totality that allows beings to be disclosed. Language, then, is an essential aspect of Dasein; when we contemplate language we, of necessity, contemplate Dasein. From this understanding, we can move on towards an understanding of how language and so Dasein relates to other, apparently different ontic concepts. Heidegger talked about language, truth and thinking. These can be taken, not as an endpoint, but a starting point. Just as ‘language’ can be taken in a normal everyday way in order to discover its essence, the same can be done with other concepts. We hear the concepts, not as self-contained things, but as mere pointers that we can follow, not just to the essential nature of that concept, but to the essential nature of Dasein itself. We will now contemplate the essential nature of truth and, from this, how truth relates to our overall fundamental understanding.

### ***Truth as ἀλήθεια***

In order to understand the essential nature of truth, Heidegger starts from our normal understanding of the term. He takes truth as *veritas est adaequatio Intellectus ad rem*, as a pointer to its own essence or the starting point from

which the nature of truth might be discovered. Wrathall points out that, “Heidegger’s primary interest in propositional truth is not to redefine it but to discover what makes propositional entities capable of being true or false.” (Wrathall M. A., 2011, p. 43) We do not wish to give a new definition of truth, therefore, but we wish to seek a grounding for our existing understanding of truth. If we consider truth to be the correspondence of a thing a content of intellect, where would this take us? Correspondence has often been taken to be a correspondence between some sort of mental representation and a fact, but this is far from adequate in that it fails to address the groundings of either ‘mental’ or ‘fact.’ Until these terms have been addressed, the definition tells us nothing.

The idea that truth is the correspondence of a content of the intellect as an assertion to a fact can be used as a starting point in a contemplation of truth. For now, we will concentrate on the assertion side of this assumption. Wrathall writes that taking things as assertions, “allows us to see an object with a thematic clarity that is not present in our in our natural perception of it.” (Wrathall M. A., 2011, p. 20) (Wrathall M. A., 2011, p. 20) The assertion strips the thing from the totality of meaning and relationships and creates a restricted thing that is the assertion. Although Wrathall says that the action of creating assertions from a totality of possibilities is not present in our natural perception, this action needs to be examined. The assertion does not create anything additional to the thing as it manifests itself, but takes an aspect of that thing and strips away the totality. The new thing, the assertion, has a relationship to the original thing in as much as it is a possible aspect of that original thing. The new thing, the thing created from

assertion, is, itself, a totality of possibilities, but a derivative totality. It is only if we allow the assertion to be taken itself in a restricted understanding, that the original thing can be lost. An assertion, of itself, is not privative as it can point to its source; it is the way that assertion is taken that is privative. An assertion, of itself, does nothing other than highlights what is already there. It brings forward a face of the thing but, of itself, takes nothing away; the removal of the totality is performed only if the assertion is taken as an end.

Wrathall suggests that a fuller mode of encountering things is unconcealment, but, even here, he suggests that this is a privative mode. This is because, “entities are independent of us and our wishes, desires, intentions, and purposes for them, as well as our beliefs about them.” (Wrathall M. A., 2011, p. 24) On the face of it, this is a problematic statement. The suggestion seems to be that things exist independently of Dasein. If that was the case, we would be falling into a Cartesian understanding. But Wrathall uses the term, ‘entities.’ We must not think of entities as things as all. Entities must be read as possibilities. They do not exist as such, but they have the possibility of existence. When something is unconcealed, it then, and only then, exists. We then have the problem that, as Wrathall says, even this unconcealment is privative. How can we allow something to exist at all and yet be depriving it in some way? The answer is that we are not taking anything away from the thing, but we have taken the thing from the totality of possibilities. The thing is the thing it is, but it has been taken from a totality of possibilities which can become concealed behind the thing.

Wrathall further suggests that entities are independent of us. This



'independence' is problematic as, again, this would bring in a suggestion of dualism. But that would require us to understand these terms in a certain way. If we take the independence not to be an independence, not from 'us' as such, but from reality, then the problem can be solved. We are Dasein and so entities as possibilities are a part of our ontological totality. Their independence as not being part of our reality does not stop them being a part of us as Dasein, but only as a part of us that is an ontic totality. The 'us' is being used in two senses: the 'us' as our reality; and the 'us' as Dasein, an essential ontological totality. There can be an infinite class of things independent of 'us' as our ontic reality; there can be no thing or possible thing independent of 'us' as an ontological totality. The former talks about a set of things; the latter about a set of possible things.

The privation of unconcealment is not a privation of a thing or any part of a thing, but the privation of the ontological. The thing becomes the thing it is in unconcealment, but the ontological from which the thing was plucked becomes obscured. The thing has been taken as the thing it is, but the ontological grounding of the thing and the infinite possibilities offered in that grounding have been forgotten.

Wrathall goes on to suggest that a, "consequence of the independence of entities is that there is always more to entities than we can deal with." (Wrathall M. A., 2011, p. 24) If we take the terms 'entities' and 'independent' as we did above as 'possibilities' and 'ontological,' then we find that this says the same as previously. When a thing is taken as a thing, the source from which that thing has been taken is obscured. As this is the case, we pay no heed that the source from

which the thing was taken holds, not just the possibility of the thing as the thing, but infinitely more possibilities. The thing stands in front of the ontological and covers it up.

We now have to understand the nature of a fact. Hume said that, "All the objects of human reason or enquiry may naturally be divided into two kinds, to wit, *Relations of Ideas*, and *Matters of Fact*" (Hume, 1909) In Hume's sense, then, a fact is a thing that is not an idea and, further to this, because a fact is something distinct from an idea, scepticism finds a foothold.

We will start by addressing 'idea,' not in Hume's understanding of the term, but starting from a usual understanding, come to a Heideggerian understanding. We have seen that we cannot make an assumption that there is a mental and physical in an ontological study, so we cannot say that an idea is something mental, in the mind or brain, or any other such formula. We have to consider what an 'idea' is ontologically. We have to say that an idea is something real, but something real in a certain sense. When we looked at assertion, we found that it was a derivative thing based on a thing that was uncovered from the ontological. An assertion can be taken as a step removed from its source. The assertion is, to start off with, a part of the original thing, but can be torn away from the original if it is taken as a thing in itself. This taking of an assertion as a thing in itself gives the possibility of an idea. An idea, in a simple understanding, would be an assertion taken as an assertion. Although this does capture the character of an idea in part, it does not capture idea fully. An idea can be more than just an assertion. An idea is a thing undisclosed in its own right on the basis of another

thing. This has two consequences: it allows in many more phenomena than just assertions to be thought of as ideas; and it highlights the privative character of unconcealment as shown by Wrathall.

The taking of an idea as more than just an assertion requires us to examine the character of 'idea' more deeply. Because we normally assume that 'idea' is mental, we assume that there has to be a simple dividing line between 'idea' and the 'real' or 'external' world. There is, however, no place for 'mental' or 'external' in our ontological considerations. If 'idea' is taken as an uncovered thing, then an idea is real; there can be no reality beyond this real. However, we then could point out problems. We could question how an idea of a thing can be different from the actual thing, for example, how, what we take to be a sheep in the distance turns out to be a large dog on closer inspection. This, though, would be overlooking the privative nature of uncovering. When we spotted the object in the distance, that object uncovered itself. The object became a part of our world. Initially, it became a sheep. However, the mistake was not a mistaken mental representation as such, but as a result of the privation of the uncovering. The object was always a dog. When we saw the object, we saw a dog. We took the object to be a sheep only when we were removed from the ontological grounding of the object in itself. We stripped away some of the ontological possibilities of the object and took it to be a sheep. The possibility of the object not being a dog was taken from the object when we took it to be a sheep. The idea, then, is not mental as there is no mental, but the real. It is the taking something as something. This is not necessarily done at the level of assertion, indeed, for the

most part, takes place before any terms are used. Our world is made up of involvements with things that we take to be what they are. They have no other reality than the reality they have in our world, but the things that make up our world have only disclosed some of their character. In this way, an idea is synonymous with a thing. An idea ceases to require a mental realm because an idea is real.

Having said that an idea is real, we are then faced with the difficulty of fictions. We need to explain how a fiction can be real or in what sense it is real. We have seen that a thing can be uncovered from the ontological. This uncovering is a privative action. If the thing is taken as the thing that has been uncovered, then the restricted thing becomes a part of our world. The thing, even though it is real, is not a totality; it is what it is, but other possibilities of its being are covered over. That does not mean that they exist in any way, but that they do not exist even though, in a different world, they could exist. The existent thing can itself uncover a world and possibilities. We can, for example, take an aspect of the thing as an assertion, a further privation. This can uncover an assertion as either just the face of the thing, or an additional thing. By taking the assertion as the face of the thing, the thing is preserved as itself. If the assertion is not taken in this way, then it can become a thing in itself and the original thing is lost. When an assertion is taken as a thing in itself, fictions can be created. An assertion can be created from a thing and taken as a thing in itself. From that thing, further things can be derived allowing the manufacture of additional assertions.

We are then forced into taking the 'real' as a stage before the disclosure of the

thing. But this is absurd: there are no things before things have been disclosed. The ontological can contain no things as such, just the possibility of things. Things do not exist prior to their emergence from the possibility of their existence. If we say that all things are creations and do not exist beyond our creating them, then we seem to be forced into idealism, but this too would be wrong. The things are not created in the mind or soul or us as people at all. Things are disclosed in the totality of Dasein. By saying that they are ideas is to misunderstand Dasein and to take Dasein as being an attribute of a human, but this is the wrong way around. Dasein is reality and humans are derived from Dasein. Things are not ideal or in the mind or soul because all of these are equally things within Dasein and not the other way around. They are in reality, reality is not within them. The original disclosure of the thing already has the potential of being privative; the discovery of a thing in a certain way. The original thing can, therefore, allow secondary things to be discovered in a pre-assertional mode. Anything taken from derivation of an assertion can be also taken from derivations of the thing itself.

What we take to be a fiction, then, is not something unreal. A fiction is the allowing of things to be discovered on the basis removed from the ontological; that is, it takes a thing of whatever sort, and allows other things to be discovered on that basis without looking back to the original thing. They are real in as far as they exist as much as the original thing, but they have been removed from the original thing in their source.

The next issue is the nature of a 'fact.' As we have seen, all things are real, so

we cannot say that a fact is something more real than anything else. We have to look at 'fact' to discover its nature. If a thing is discovered, then that thing is real. If we take that thing to be not derivative as outlined above, we take it to be a fact. We would take the thing on which the assertion, "The ball is red" to be a fact. But, as we have seen, even this original thing is privative disclosure. The assertion, "The ball is red" is based on a thing disclosed as a red ball. The original disclosure takes a thing in such a way that assertions can be made about that thing. The thing is given a status of 'fact' if it is taken that the thing is, in some way, static as it is. This allows things to be talked about as things, but it removes us from the ontological source of those things. We can lose the essence of the thing, in the sense of the essence being the ontological ground, and take the thing as a variable to which predicates adhere.

We have found, so far, that an assertion is a certain way of regarding a thing; it preserves a face of that thing that can allow the thing to be preserved as the thing, or can be taken as just an assertion and a thing in itself. Although not itself necessarily privative, we can take it as such if we regard the assertion as a thing in itself and pay no heed to the underlying thing. We have also found that a fact is a set of possible assertions based on an uncovering of a thing. A true assertion, therefore, might be thought of as the correspondence of an assertion with an assertion from a set of assertions associated with a fact. The assertion, therefore, just picks out any of the possible predicates making up the fact. The problem is that the fact is a derivation of an uncovered thing and the thing itself is privative. The fact seeks to change the discovery of things from the ontological

that yields a world in flux, into a discovery of static facts that solidifies things.

We have been confining ourselves to 'facts' and 'assertions,' but could take both of these in a broader sense. We have allowed the view that an assertion is some sort of use of terms, but this need not be the case at all. An assertion is only a face of a thing. How that face is preserved is derivative. The taking of a hammer as a hammer is an assertion, but this needs no terms at all, just the taking of the thing discovered as a hammer. In the same way, a fact, as a set of assertions, need be associated with no terms at all. The set of assertions that make up the hammer fact need only ever be ways that the hammer is taken and never expressed or thought using terms at all. In broadening our understanding of 'assertion' and 'fact' from the restrictions of using terms and allowing them to be based on our dealings with the world, we break free from our understanding of 'fact' and 'assertion' being based on terms and logic and allow terms and logic to be based on a more fundamental involvement with the world. Wrathall points out that, "Heidegger calls these aspects of things their *assignments* or *references*. He calls the network of assignments within which we use things the *context of assignments* or *references*." (Wrathall M. A., 2011, pp. 53-54)

The problem with a correspondence theory of truth is that it comes with the metaphysical baggage of 'fact.' In the account of 'fact' given above, however, we see that 'fact' is not being thought of as a concept or, indeed, anything beyond our dealings with the world. In our sense, 'fact' is no more than our totality of our disclosed dealings with a thing. A fact is not something removed from the thing, but it is the real thing; there is nothing beyond. The difficulty with theories of

truth, such as varieties of correspondence theories, is that they assume a gap between assertion and fact or assertion and the object of the assertion. If taken in our broader sense, there is no such gap if assertion and fact are being taken as the most primordial level of the uncovering of a being. An assertion is a face of a disclosed thing at its most primordial level. If we allow assertions to become things in themselves, then the problem of a gap between thing and assertion become possible. At this most primordial level, truth becomes *ἀλήθεια*, unconcealment, not as an alternative definition of 'truth,' but the essential nature of truth. Truth is the correspondence of assertion and fact, but both assertion and fact are to be found in the uncovering of the thing. The truth is the unconcealment of the thing because, in unconcealing the thing, any assertion associated with the thing is a true assertion. Truth is the taking of the thing as something.

Having said that the basis of truth is on the discovery of the thing, how can we account for falsity? We can make a false assertion when we take something as something it is not. If we take a rubber hammer to be a normal hammer, we are making a false assertion. The hammer, when it was originally uncovered, was taken to be a normal hammer. The assertion might be the taking up of the hammer in order to drive in a nail. But the hammer is discovered to be a rubber hammer and taking it up to use in this way would be false. This appears to imply that there is a gap between the assertion and the fact or real. But this is not the case. The hammer was uncovered as a normal hammer, but, as stated above, the uncovering of a thing is privative. The thing disclosed itself as a normal



hammer, but, in the ontological totality of possibilities, there already was the possibility that it might be disclosed as a rubber hammer. When the hammer was originally discovered as a normal hammer, these additional possibilities were neglected, however, the further interaction with the hammer allows a further set of possibilities to be discovered and a hammer takes on the characteristic of a rubber hammer and the set of possibilities that goes along with such a thing. Both the original hammer and the rubber hammer were real things; they were both sets of possibilities disclosed in the disclosure of the thing, but the set changed and so the original assertion of taking the hammer to drive in a nail became false. This does not show that there is some world of the real beyond the world of Dasein, only that the world of Dasein should not be taken as static.

A definition of truth, then, must be grounded on the world and the world is disclosed, not just in terms, but in our totality of dealings with the world which includes our use of terms. Truth is unconcealment, not in the sense that unconcealment gives us a definition of truth, but in that unconcealment is describing the ontological ground that enables all definitions of truth to get off the ground. When we give a definition of truth in a normal way, that definition is ontic; when we look for the ground of that definition we find it in the unconcealment of beings from the ontological.

By taking truth to be grounded in unconcealment, Heidegger also shows the privative nature of truth. Unconcealment is itself privative and contemplating the nature of truth both highlights this and the privation of any derivation from the underlying unconcealment.

Heidegger writes that, “The question of the essence of truth arises from the question of the truth of essence.” (Heidegger M. , On the Essence of Truth, 1998, p. 153) When we search for the essence of truth from any ontic definition, we find the ontological ground. In finding the essence of truth, we find the underlying totality from which all things are unconcealed. In this way, just as with language, truth brings us to the totality of Dasein, that is, truth and Dasein necessitate each other.

### ***Thinking***

As with truth and language, we can use thought as a signpost to its own ontological essence. In order to discover the nature of this essence so that it can be considered against the essence of truth and language, we will follow the path pointed to by the signpost of ‘thought.’

The first thing to be carried out is to provisionally map out thought; that is, to get an idea of how thought is to be considered; to explore the boundaries and main topographic features. The basis for this will be the description given to discourse in *Being and Time*, but this will be taken further so that we come to see both a richer ontic as well as ontological picture of thought. However, when we set out on the journey, we would do well to keep in mind the words of Derrida when he stated that, “*In a certain sense, ‘thought’ means nothing.*” (Derrida, 1976, p. 93) We must be on our guard against falling into the trap of believing that we are on the trail of a thing that can be conceptualised or, indeed, a thing at all in any sense.

When we consider the term 'think' in normal usage, we might form the idea that 'to think' is to form representations of things in the mind; that 'to think' is, in a certain way, something necessarily to do with 'to assert.' But Heidegger tells us that "Thinking is not necessarily a representing of something as an object." (Heidegger M. , Phenomenology and Theology, 1998, pp. 58-59) Already we are confronted with the idea that the meaning of thinking is more than is normally considered the case. Having said this, it must be admitted that thinking by way of assertion is certainly a mode of thinking, but that, "Only the thinking and speaking of the natural sciences is objectifying." (Heidegger M. , Phenomenology and Theology, 1998, p. 59) To further this claim, Heidegger points out that if it was the case that thinking in the forms of assertion was the only mode of thinking, "then it would be meaningless to fashion works of art, for they could never show themselves to anyone: one would immediately make an object of that which appears and thus would prevent the artwork from appearing." (Heidegger M. , Phenomenology and Theology, 1998, p. 59) Of course, this has opened up for us a whole landscape that must be explored before we can say anything further about thinking. We need to ask: What is the status of thinking in the form of assertions? And, what other forms of thinking are there?

In addition to assertive thinking, that is, thinking that discloses those things as though they were entirely present-at-hand or naked and autonomous, thinking is also that which allows the disclosure of things in a broader sense as the totality of their significations. We might consider this form of thinking as it is manifest in works of art in some way, not that a work of art can itself indicate the totality of

significations itself, but that it can hint in the direction of such a totality; the work, by its nature, is outside the restricted and concealing nature of assertive thinking by encouraging an engagement that is wider. In this sense a work of art is that which allows a thing to be disclosed, but, instead of something stripped of its significations as just a face of the original thing, it allows at least some of the significations and involvements of projection to be disclosed at the same time. This mode of unconcealing is beyond the form of thought that is given us in an assertion taken as an assertion. Any assertion, be it verbal or non-verbal, need not itself allow anything more to be seen than a single face of the thing.

Heidegger tells us, "We must think *aletheia*, unconcealment, as the opening which first grants Being and thinking and their presencing to and for each other." (Heidegger M. , *The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking*, 1972, p. 68) Our first concern must be, therefore, to understand unconcealment. What is unconcealment and how does it allow being and thinking? What does their presencing to and for each other mean?

To explicate unconcealment, we can start by going back into what is said in *Being and Time*. Heidegger explains that to say an assertion is true is grounded on the uncovering of the entity as it is in itself. "The Being-true (truth) of the assertion must be understood as Being-uncovering." (Heidegger M. , *Being and Time*, 1962, p. 261) 'Being-uncovering,' written here with an upper case initial, was originally printed with a lower case initial and so bringing out 'being-uncovering' as an activity. The change to 'Being-uncovering' implies that a true proposition can also be understood as the understanding of being. The first way

of understanding as 'being-uncovering' can be self-disclosing of beings within the totality of being. The disclosure of individual beings within being allows the being to be seen at it is; we are able to discern it as the truth of that being. The question then arises: If the truth of the being is something that can be split off from the totality of being; are beings that individually shine forth autonomous entities? In the understanding of assertion, beings can and are autonomous, but this is the covering up and concealing that go with this restrictive form of thought. It is correct to say that assertions are able to build relationships - an assertion can be predicated and relationships to other beings can be made - but this does not alter what the action of thinking assertively does. Even with a network of explicit relationships, it still covers up the totality of what is found when a being is initially discovered. If thought about in a mode of thought that thinks the totality of discourse, then, to talk about any being, it will be necessary to include the totality of being.

We are told that "If a λόγος as *ἀπόφανσις* is to be true, its Being-true is *ἀληθεύειν* in the manner of *ἀποφαίνεσθαι*." (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 262) This claims that if talk in the form of predication is to be true then this is unconcealing by showing forth or displaying. When we speak assertively about a thing, then, if the assertion is true, it uncovers and allows to be seen that which forms the subject of the assertion. Discourse has already Articulated the 'there' so that everything that is within being is also accessible in discourse. As we have seen, assertive talk is a mode of discourse and so all assertive talk is doing is bringing forth that which is already in discourse; it is picking out and

highlighting something.

Heidegger says that “Uncovering is a way of Being for Being-in-the-world.” (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 262) Concern uncovers beings in the world and they then become that which has been uncovered. The uncovering of beings is the ground of the truth of beings, but, further, there is the truth of uncovering Dasein itself. In this case, it is not “Being-uncovering (uncovering), but Being-uncovered (uncoveredness).” (Heidegger M. , Being and Time, 1962, p. 263) The uncovering of entities is made possible in the world being disclosed and disclosedness which is made up from state-of-mind, understanding and discourse, is the fundamental character of Dasein so that Dasein is its ‘there.’ Uncovering, then, can uncover beings and, on the basis of this uncovering by seeking the grounding of the beings disclosed, being can be revealed.

Being is that which allows the presencing of that which is present; it allows what is present to become present, for things to shine forth from the earth and become distinguishable as they are and to endure. “As the ground, Being brings beings to their actual presencing.” (Heidegger M. , The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking, 1972, p. 56) The uncovering of that which is present and endures in being is the ontological basis of thinking. Being and thinking are not separate entities, but are all part of the overall simplicity of Dasein. When we consider being, we are not considering something different from thinking, but considering the totality of being from a different angle. Having said this, being and thinking are not interchangeable words. Whereas the basis of what they both say is common to each, they reflect the consideration of that basis from different

perspectives.

### **Reason**

Having sketched some sort of picture of the extent and ontological position of thinking from in the main *Being and Time*, our investigation moves on. At this point, the status of reason will be examined. The reason for doing this is that it is 'reason' that has so often and for so long has been given in the definition of man as the rational animal. By examining reason, we might be able to discover its relationship to thinking and thus be able to clarify our understanding of thinking.

Thinking as reason is the essential nature of man. Man is the rational animal and this rationality springs forth from thinking. What, though, is rationality? It would seem at first glance and without any consideration to have a relationship to assertive thinking; that is, thinking that is based on beings being made present by stripping them back to the present-at-hand. But is this all? Need rationality be based only on assertive or calculative thinking?

If we say that thinking can be equated with the discourse in the sense Heidegger uses in *Being and Time*, then we might be able to make sense of the language used here. Thinking, as discourse, represents all of the access to the 'there;' not just part of the totality of Dasein, but Dasein's entirety. If this is the case, then Dasein would be identifiable with thinking, not as synonymous words, but words by which two aspect of being revealed. When Heidegger says that, "Reason, *ratio*, evolves from thinking," (Heidegger M. , What is Called Thinking?, 1976, p. 3) it indicates that reason is a mode of thinking, just as assertion is a mode of

discourse. However, saying this does not get us much closer to an understanding of reason. What is needed is to determine the boundaries of reason within the totality of thought.

We could take, as a first clue *ratio* and try and examine its meaning. We can gather a number of meanings of the word, including: reckoning or calculating, working out, explanation, a descriptive account and concerning oneself with (Glare, 1968) The first meanings given do make *ratio* appear very much like assertion. Reckoning and calculation imply the stripping of what is being thought about not just back to the present-at-hand, but to the numeric. The entities that would have their ready-to-hand characteristics hidden in assertion have not just had their ready-to-hand, but also their present-at-hand characteristics hidden; they have been completely hidden so that they are representable by mathematics. However, calculative thinking is also used to describe assertive thinking, so we have developed a scale of assertive thinking running from thinking of things present-at-hand to mathematical thinking where the things thought about no longer exist within that thinking; the thinking is no longer about the things disclosed originally, but has gone into the world of the logical where nothing exists but the rules of that particular thinking or game. But this does let something shine out; the assertions and rules have become paramount. What has been shown is that thinking can strip down the richness of discourse so that all that is left is a series of rules related to empty variables. It is true that nothing can be thought about directly with just the rules, without any entities or beings, but a meaningful or apparently meaningful thinking can take place using just



these rules and without ever the need to go beyond the variables. In this extreme mode of thinking, thinking has become detached from the things originally revealed as things, all that is revealed in the 'there' are those logical deductions and empty variables that are associated with the game. This is a useful thing to keep in mind as it shows two things: that which is disclosed in the 'there' is not just things or entities in the normal sense, but also what is usually considered the result of an activity and not an entity at all; and this mode of thinking gives one end of the range of possible modes of thinking.

The next term to look at is 'working out.' This implies something more than thinking purely in terms of rules but a thinking that has some link with what is discovered in discourse. 'Working out' crosses the divide; we can say that something is worked out logically or mathematically, but, even in this case, it is something that is worked out and not nothing. We have a link with a being or entity in the conventional sense even if this being is totally abstract. In our consideration of mathematical thinking above, we claimed that it is separate from discourse; but by bringing in 'working out' we have been forced to include the 'what' of the working out. The 'what' of the working out in the most abstract mathematics is a mathematical entity, but, even so, it does have being in the sense that it is a concept and this concept already exists in the 'there.' However, in the existential ontological analysis of Dasein, we said that we only discovered things in the 'there' and this appears to be saying that working out allows things, concepts, to be created in the 'there.' We also have the problem of the steps in the process of working out; do they too already exist in the 'there' or is this a

process whereby the steps are created? These two problems merge into a single one. The result of a working out is no different than a step in the process of working out; it is only the last step in the working out and not something different. If this is the case, then our only problem is to discover the status of the processes. Are processes in this sense something that is carried out? It appears that a process is a description of something done within time, but this is an ontic interpretation. A process, here, is something that already exists in the 'there' and is uncovered. Working out, then, would not be something that is done, but the letting shine forth of that which already exists; the concepts of steps in the working out are already there and are only uncovered by working out. But what links one step to the next? When we work something out, each of the steps is linked by rules and these rules guide our path. But this is so only if we equate thinking with the workings of a machine. If, instead, we allow thinking to be a part of the existential ontological analysis, we find that the rules are no more than the possibilities already projected into the 'there.' The apparent rules are no more than a mode of the totality of possibilities; a mode of disclosing the 'there.' From an ontic point of view, it does look as though a processing, as in a machine like processing, is taking place, but there is no necessity to follow this path; instead, what appears to be a process, is actually the uncovering of that which is already there.

The meaning now to be addressed, is "a descriptive account." This starts to make clear a move away from calculative thinking and brings us more obviously into discourse. When we describe a being, we allow it to be disclosed; we point

towards it, if not its totality, than at least a face of it that, taken in the right way, could allow the thing itself to become disclosed. When a being is described, nothing need be done even in ontic perspective. A description does not go beyond what is described, but illuminates only that which is described. Even if a description is poetic and how it describes its subject goes far beyond the literal words or understanding of the poem, the description still only describes its subject. The going beyond the literal usages of words reflects only that beings cannot be encapsulated in words; words, in a normal literal sense, can only reflect a calculative thinking that does not reflect the entirety of the richness of the phenomenon of discourse. Moving on to examining what is to be made of 'account,' we have two possible ways that could be followed: 'account' could be a story or something that is done through time; or 'account' could be the totality of what has been disclosed. The former would mean that we would be again be stuck in the ontic, so we will turn to the latter. In this case, 'account' is the totality of beings unearthed and brought into the light that are proximate to the explanandum. The subject of the account is projected into the 'there' along with its possibilities and significations and the account provides the illumination to this disclosing. When an account of the subject is given, some of the possibilities and significations are disclosed. These possibilities and signification are in themselves beings and are already present in the 'there.' An account, therefore, does not do anything other than allow to be seen what is already in the 'there.' A 'descriptive account,' then, allows a being to be disclosed along with what is proximate and associated with the being within the 'there.' It need not be thought

of as something done, something that changes over time, but as something that is already in the 'there' that is brought to light.

Finally there is 'concerning oneself with.' This gives a conclusion and summation of what has been described above. In concerning oneself with a being, one is taking notice of that being, allowing it and its totality of possibilities and significance to be uncovered. In this way, rationality is an essential part of Dasein; Dasein is not a rational thing in as far as rationality is an attribute of Dasein, rather, Dasein and rationality necessarily follow from each other. In saying this, reason is discovered as being an uncovering of the 'there.' The ontological ground of reason is in the understanding and discourse. When it is said that man is the rational animal, then, all that is said is that man points towards man's ground in Dasein. So, 'rational animal' cannot be thought of as a definition that ends with a full stop, but a pointer to the essential nature of man in Dasein. Man as rational animal is not Dasein, but man as rational animal, if taken in the right way, is a pointer towards Dasein's own essence.

Heidegger says "Reason, *ratio*, evolves in thinking." (Heidegger M. , What is Called Thinking?, 1976, p. 3) How should we consider this claim in light of what we said about *ratio* above? From exploring the boundaries of *ratio*, we have found that it might be identified with Dasein in as much as the essence of *ratio* necessitates and is necessitated by Dasein. But, if *ratio* evolves in thinking, then would not thinking be prior to *ratio*? In the normal course of talking, this would be the case, but there seems no reason why our considerations of *ratio* and thinking need be carried out in such a way. Instead of being prior in a logical or temporal

sense, thinking could be considered prior to *ratio* in a way that *ratio* is a restricted mode or face of thinking. The problem, then, is to identify in what way *ratio* is a mode of thinking. A claim was made above that *ratio* was the same as Dasein in an essential sense and, as such, would not be restricted other than by the bounds of Dasein. This now looks suspect. However, it is true to say that the word reason, or *vernunft*, does have a restricted meaning in normal usage; that is, it implies some sort of logical rules underpinning the associated thinking. This restriction of reason brings to mind what was said earlier about assertion. To be logical requires a restricted mode of discourse to be used. This restricted mode of discourse is the same as the restricted mode of discourse with reason in its normal usage. If we allow reason to spread itself to its full extent, as was done above, reason can cover the whole of Dasein, but, if we use the term in its normal, restricted, usage, it, instead of being synonymous with Dasein, becomes more akin to assertion. The restriction, though, is a false restriction. It is as though the totality of Dasein was being viewed while wearing blinkers rather than some actual independent entity was being viewed. The totality of Dasein need have no modes or restrictions itself, but the way one regards Dasein can have restrictions; it is one's ontic way of thinking that is making beings appear where there are none and where there cannot be any. In order to understand the relationship of *ratio* to thinking and the rest of Dasein, the way in which the term '*ratio*' is understood and used in this context must be made clear; that is, *ratio* is an arbitrary restriction imposed by the language used on the totality of being; it carries no weight beyond the ontic that is forced on thinking by the use of

language as terms. By trying to understand what *ratio* means nothing has really been achieved; it could be used to mean anything from logic to the whole of Dasein. However, what we have discovered is that it is possible to reduce what we normally think of as disparate concepts like reason, thinking and so on, back to a common ontological ground in being. Having done this, we have shown that these concepts are not ontologically different, but differ only in the way they are viewed.

For many years, indeed, for millennia, man has straddled the divide between *animus* and *anima*. *Anima*, as the characteristic quality of animal life, against *animus*, the mind or soul. (Glare, 1968) It is true that man can be conceived of in the sense of *anima*, but this understanding is one that hides the essence of man. The conception already draws any thinking on the essence of man into the realm of assertive thought; already, before even starting, the nature of man is covered up and hidden to the investigation. Even though this species of thinking can allow that man is a, or the, rational being, it has still started from the assertion that man is a being in the first place. Heidegger claims that it is in the sphere of this restricted type of thinking that both philosophical and scientific anthropology reside. They start by looking at man as a being and then try and overlay this with refinements so that man becomes something definite; but, having started with an idea of man as a living thing and basing everything on this idea, no fundamental movement away from this type of thinking is possible and the essential nature of man is lost. The way that Heidegger sees anthropology working is not just somewhat mistaken, but has turned everything on its head.

Instead of starting with a living thing and then making refinements, the starting point should be the essence of man. The groundwork of any such study should be to discover the essential nature of man and, from this foundation, thinking can progress on sound and secure ground.

### ***Thinking of nothing***

Heidegger tells us that, “every metaphysical question always encompasses the whole range of metaphysical problems.” (Heidegger M. , What is Metaphysics, 1998, p. 82) Every metaphysical question actually asks the whole range of metaphysical questions and every such question has to include the questioner within the problem; metaphysical enquiry must be posed from the essential position of existence. The positive sciences, all sciences from physics and mathematics to history and theology, concern themselves entirely with beings. All of these positive sciences are equally rigorous and pursue their goals with the same dedication, but their goals are dependent on their grounds; on what is posited that allows the science to be what it is. The goal of scientific thinking, whether spoken explicitly or not, is that “What should be examined are beings only and besides that – nothing; beings alone, and further – nothing; solely beings, and beyond that – nothing.” (Heidegger M. , What is Metaphysics, 1998, p. 84) The question is: What about the nothing? Has consideration of the nothing, that which is ignored by science, anything to say about thinking?

Science deals with beings. The nothing is an anathema to science. Within the study of beings, the nothing cannot even exist within science; it cannot even be ignored as it can never be even so much as considered. The nothing is that

which science does not wish to question or even acknowledge, but, even if it wanted to contemplate the nothing, how can science even talk about it? How can we question the nothing? As soon as we ask the question, we have posited the nothing as a being and so our questioning in the normal way of thinking and our search has been foiled before it can even start; before the question has even been posed. This way of thinking, though, is what has been laid down in scientific thinking; in the thinking that has fallen under the illusion that logic is the founding essence of thinking. To think about the nothing, thinking must be performed in a different way and not be confined to a single restricted mode.

We are already familiar with the nothing; it is the “complete negation of the totality of beings.” (Heidegger M. , *What is Metaphysics*, 1998, p. 86) To embark on a journey down the path so indicated would first require the totality of beings to become accessible, but how are we, finite beings, to address a concept like the totality of beings? If we form the totality of beings into a concept and negate that concept, all we have done is to create a negated concept; it is still a concept, still a something and not yet nothing. The real nothing in scientific thought is that concept of an existent nothing, a thing that is not and so an absurdity.

We are surrounded by beings, but we can never hope to understand all beings. Although we concern ourselves with regions of beings for the most part; that is, beings that we group into that world in which we currently concern ourselves, we are aware of the totality of beings as a shadowy hint below and beyond what is currently concerning us. This “as a whole” becomes more visible, Heidegger tells us, in authentic boredom. The kind of boredom that is being considered here is



not the kind that is associated with an activity in hand - a book, a play and so on - but the kind that permeates the whole world so that everything, all beings, are affected by the all-pervading boredom. Another way that the hint of the totality of beings becomes apparent is in the joy of being with one whom we love. But in these ways of becoming confronted with the totality of beings, we are even less likely to be able to put ourselves in the position of being able to negate this totality in order to perceive the nothing.

The mood in which we do get a fleeting glimpse of the nothing is in anxiety. Anxiety not in sense of anxiety about something, a kind of fear in the face of something, but a pure anxiety where that about which one is anxious is not a thing at all; there is no object of the anxiety, not because there is just no determinable object, but because of the impossibility of ever determining the object. In this type of anxiety, one feels uncanny. When overtaken by this state of mind, all beings slip away into the depths of indifference. We cannot hold onto anything and when this feeling of having no hold on beings takes hold of us and remains, the nothing becomes manifest. In anxiety, we too, as beings, slip away; in this floating state where nothing remains that we can grasp and keep hold of, all that remains is pure being.

The nothing is revealed in anxiety, but not as a being, a thing, something that can be grasped. The nothing is encountered "at one" with the totality of beings. The nothing is disclosed along with the slipping away of beings so that the nothing rises as beings fall. The essence of the nothing is that repelling nature toward beings as a whole. In its repelling towards beings, the nothing shows beings in

their strangeness as things that are absolutely different from the nothing. With the contrast against the nothing, beings show up as what is not nothing. Against the nothing, beings can be seen in their full clarity as something and so it is the nothing that makes the manifestation of beings possible. The essence of the nothing that nihilates is that it makes possible and brings before Dasein being as beings. “Da-sein means: being held out into the nothing.” (Heidegger M. , What is Metaphysics, 1998, p. 91) Because Dasein holds itself out into the nothing it becomes beyond the totality of beings; it becomes transcendent. If it was not the case that Dasein was transcendent in this way, then there would be no way for it to be able to take a stance towards either beings or itself. In this way we can start to understand the nothing. It is not a being amongst beings, not even in the same realm as beings, but it is that by which being, the being of beings, is made possible for Dasein.

The nihilation of the nothing is that from which the ‘not’ springs forth which, in turn, is from where negation is grounded. Thinking must be aware of the ‘not’ in order to see what is susceptible to negation and so negation must follow from the ‘not.’ The ‘not’ itself can only become apparent along with what grounds it which is the nihilation of the nothing in general and so the nihilation of the nothing itself. From this it can be seen that negation springs from the nothing and not the other way around. This being the case, that is, all negation requiring the nothing, the whole of logic rests on an unobserved ground of nothing. Logic is seen not as the basic mode of thought that it is so often assumed to be as this understanding ignores that on which it is grounded, that is, it ignores the nothing. Logic is left

with a question it cannot answer: the question of the nothing it, itself, relies on and that of which it, itself, cannot speak.

“Metaphysics is inquiry beyond or over beings that aims to recover them as such and as a whole for our grasp.” (Heidegger M. , What is Metaphysics, 1998, p. 93) It is in the contemplation of the nothing that this study is situated; that realm beyond beings. For a long time, thinking of the nothing has been expressed in the ambiguous proposition *ex nihilo nihil fit*<sup>7</sup>, but, in using this proposition, the nothing itself has not been addressed. The understandings of the proposition vary from the ancient idea of the nothing being the unformed matter; matter that cannot take on an aspect and so becomes something envisaged but with no thought being given to the lack of ground for thinking of being in this way, to the Christian idea of *ex nihilo fit – ens creatum*<sup>8</sup>. In either case, the problems of being and nothing are not addressed and this lack therefore overlooks seemingly insurmountable problems concealed precisely where the questioning fails to explore.

Hegel said that, “Pure Being and pure Nothing are therefore the same,” (Hegel, 2001, p. 36) but not in that both being and nothing agree in their indeterminacy and immediacy, but because they manifest as something finite in transcendence of Dasein being held out into the nothing. The question of the nothing is that in which the whole of metaphysics properly resides; it pervades through all of

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<sup>7</sup> From nothing, nothing comes to be.

<sup>8</sup> From nothing comes – created being.

metaphysics, forcing us to address the origin of negation and, from this origin, to question the legitimacy of the position of logic. From this way of thinking, another understanding springs forth from *ex nihilo nihil fit*, one that says *ex nihilo omne ens qua ens fit*<sup>9</sup>. Beings as a whole can only come from the nothing of Dasein. Because the nothing is in the ground of Dasein a feeling of strangeness can take us which pulls forth a feeling of wonder that is the manifestation of the nothing and necessitates the why that calls for a grounding of all things. Because of this ability to question and ground, our destiny is gifted to science. Metaphysics is possible only because Dasein is able to go beyond the occurrence of beings held out into the nothing. “Metaphysics is the fundamental occurrence in our Dasein.” (Heidegger M. , What is Metaphysics, 1998, p. 96) Philosophy, what elsewhere Heidegger calls thinking, starts with our contemplation of the fundamental possibilities of Dasein. For this, space must be allowed for the totality of beings and we allow ourselves to be released into the nothing. That is, we free ourselves of the restricted mode of thinking that have hitherto held sway; those modes of thought that are blind to their own unfoundedness and impossibility. They turn their backs on the totality of thought that could provide a ground, delimit their spheres of influence and give them true legitimacy.

Although our contemplation of thinking has mapped out the extent of thinking in part, the essential nature of ‘thinking’ has not yet become clear. To address this, the definition of ‘think’ given in the dictionary can be used as a starting point.

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From the nothing all beings as beings come to be.

This says that to think is to “conceive in the mind, exercise the mind.” (Onions, 1973) This has pointed to toward paths to be explored: conceived in the mind; and exercise the mind.

When we consider the phrase “conceive in the mind,” we are called towards language. Language was the laying out and setting before. When we conceive, we generally conceive things and so thinking would be the conception of things. To ‘conceive’ is only “taking into the mind” (Onions, 1973) and so the definition could just be ‘conceive;’ that is, thinking is conceiving or taking into the mind. However, as we have seen before, ‘the mind’ should not be understood as something in addition to reality; there is no real and a separate mental as these are just ontic constructs. The ‘conceiving’ of ‘thinking’ can therefore be reinterpreted as the manifestation of beings or the disclosing of beings of whatever classification we might give them. Thinking, as far as this part of the definition is concerned, is disclosing. A problem then comes to light because, as we have seen in mapping out the extent of thinking, that thinking can include more than just things and that we can also think of the source of those things which is not itself a thing at all. In this way, thinking becomes more than just the result of the action of language as the disclosing of things, but includes the source of those things as well as the things themselves; that is, thinking can encompass both the ontic and ontological.

The second part of the definition of ‘thinking’ is to “exercise the mind.” We could view this again as describing the action of language viewed in a certain way. Language is the disclosure of things and thinking, as the taking into mind, is the

action of language; the allowing of beings to be disclosed and become a part of the world. As was discovered earlier, the extent of thinking is broader than just the ontic and includes the ontological and so includes the source of things as well as things themselves. Thinking as the exercising of the minds must be more, then, than just the result of the action of language, but include the full action of language, both the disclosing of the things and the source of that disclosing. Thinking as the exercising of the mind becomes the process of being: being-with, being-in, and so on.

Thinking has been shown to be existing as Dasein. Because no line can be drawn between physical and mental, thinking includes all of existence from the ontological foundations up. This points towards the extent of thinking in the directions other than those we normally take as thinking as a mental activity. As there is no mental as such, thinking can include all activity. The use of a hammer to drive in a nail is no longer just a physical activity cut off from our mental activity of the ontological analysis of Dasein; the use of the hammer is just as much thinking as the ontological analysis of Dasein. In both cases, we are undergoing the process of being and so, in each case, we are thinking. This breaking down of conceptual barriers allows the unification of language, truth and thinking. Language is no longer just the use of terms, but is the uncovering of things within the world from their ontological foundation. This uncovering can take any form from the use of a hammer to drive in a nail to a mathematical discussion. Truth is no longer just the correspondence of fact and idea conceived of as physical and mental, but the correct use of things found in the world grounded on ontological

foundations. The correct use of a hammer is just as true as a tautology. Likewise, thinking itself is more than just a process in a construct we call the mind, but is the process of being in any way at all. When we use a hammer to drive in a nail, we are no more or less thinking than when we make a logical deduction or write a novel.

If thinking is the activity of being, what can be said about thoughtlessness?

This first thing that can be said is that thoughtlessness should not be considered the opposite of thinking. When we use the term, 'thoughtless,' we do not mean that we cease the activity of being altogether, but that our thinking is restricted in some way. When we speak about thoughtlessness normally, we mean, not the lack of any thought, but the restriction of thought. Thoughtlessness is when we ignore some or all of the totality of significations associated with a thing. If we take a hammer to drive in a nail but fail to notice that the head of the hammer has become loose so that, when we use it, it flies off, we have acted thoughtlessly. We have taken up the hammer as just a hammer and ignored the possibility that the hammer might have the possibility of being a damaged hammer. Thoughtlessness, then, at one limit, is the taking of a thing just taking a thing as one possibility or even not allowing the thing to become disclosed at all and so a suppression of the thing. Thoughtlessness might be considered the same as not noticing. When we only take things as assertions and so only concerned with a single face of a thing, we could be said to be thoughtless. Being thoughtful, on the other hand, is not the allowing of the totality of possibilities to be disclosed; as the totality of possibilities is without limit and we are finite, this is impossible.

Being thoughtful is allowing possibilities to disclose themselves. This is never something that can be completed, but a continual process. When we thoughtfully contemplate, we allow what is in the ontological to disclose itself. We do not stop because we assume that a full stop can be put after what has been disclosed, but take what has been disclosed as just a part of the journey into thoughtfulness.

When a full stop is put after what has been disclosed, it is said that what has been disclosed is known. So, if we say that there is a desk in front of us and stop, we say that we know that there is a desk in front of us. However, we do not allow further possibilities to be disclosed with the desk. As was seen, in the above example, the hammer was used thoughtlessly in that some of the possibilities for the hammer were not allowed to be disclosed. The hammer was disclosed as being a hammer and that was all. The possibility that it was not in a good state of repair was not allowed to disclose itself and so, all that was known, was that the hammer was the tool it was taken to be and so it could be used to drive in a nail.

When Heidegger talked about thinking, he was indicating a thoughtful thinking and so a thinking that can never know. As he traces back the possibilities of a thing to the origin of that thing in the ontological, could it not be said that he knows the source of the thing is the ontological and so would be able to put a full stop after this assertion? The answer to this is, "No." The ontological is not a thing at all and so no full stop can be put after it; it is not there and so cannot be encapsulated in such a way. When it is said that the source of the thing is the ontological, the ontological is not the end of the assertion, but a start of a journey.



By saying that the source of the thing is the ontological, we are saying that the source of the thing is not something we can point at and, further, that our contemplation of the thing can have no end. The ontological gives us no opportunity to put a full stop, but, instead, forces us to admit that no such full stop can be placed even after our disclosing of the thing thus far. The ontological is an admission that there can be no full stops and so no static knowledge.

Thinking, then, when taken to its full extent, is the emergence of things. Things are not finite items of knowledge, but markers on the path to further disclosing. Ontological thinking is not a mode of thinking that knows any more than any other mode of thinking, but a thinking that accepts that no full stop can be placed after the emergence of any thing and so is a thinking that can have no end. The ontological is not something that can be thought about at all as it is not, but is itself the activity of being. The ontological is the activity of thinking as the disclosure of things, an activity that has no end but feeds from the disclosure of things so that further things might be disclosed.

This would seem to make Heidegger a Pyrrhonist, but that would be a too hasty judgement. Pyrrhonism requires that nothing can be known. Heidegger does not suggest this at all. Things that are disclosed are known as what they are. As this is the case, he is a realist as what is disclosed is real. But things can only be known in a form of thinking that is willing to place a full stop after the disclosed thing. By saying that the source of the thing is in the ontological, there can always be further disclosing of the thing. If we consider a disclosed thing from a finite perspective, a perspective where there is an end of disclosing, that thing is

known. If we consider a disclosed thing from a thoughtful perspective where we allow that thinking has no end, no thing can ever be taken as known.

### ***Dasein as το Ἔν***

In *Logos* (Heidegger M. , Logos (Heraclitus, Fragment B 50), 1984), Heidegger considers *Ἔν Πάντα*. He tells us that, “*Ἔν* is the unique one. It assembles in that, in gathering, it lets lie before us what lies before us as such and as a whole.” (Heidegger M. , Logos (Heraclitus, Fragment B 50), 1984, p. 70) “*Ἔν* is the gathering by which things can become manifest. As such, “*Ἔν Πάντα* suggests the way in which *Λόγος* essentially occurs.” (Heidegger M. , Logos (Heraclitus, Fragment B 50), 1984, p. 70) The essential nature of *Λόγος* is that it gathers and lies before all that is. What it lays before is the *Πάντα*, everything that is present or all of those things that together make up reality. Because *Λόγος* lays before us everything that is present, it discloses and, as has been seen, this disclosure from concealment is *Ἀλήθεια*. *Λόγος* and *Ἀλήθεια*, therefore, are essentially the same. As *Λόγος* discloses, it unconceals things from their hiddenness. This action presupposes the opposites of unconcealment and concealment. For the action of *Λόγος* to be possible at all, it must act upon these opposites. Each needs the other in order to be what it is. “*Ἔν Πάντα* says what *Λόγος* is. *Λόγος* says how *Ἔν Πάντα* essentially occurs. Both are the same.” (Heidegger M. , Logos (Heraclitus, Fragment B 50), 1984, p. 71) “*Ἔν Πάντα*, *Λόγος* and *Ἀλήθεια* have been found to be the same. The gathering and binding of the One to disclose things is the action of language and the things disclosed from this action of disclosing gives the essential nature of truth as *Ἀλήθεια*. But by saying “the

same,” caution must be exercised. Heidegger tells us that, “if we are of the opinion that the word *τό αὐτό*, the Same, means ‘identical,’ and, if we accept ‘identity’ completely as the most transparent presupposition for the thinkability of whatever is thinkable, then by this opinion we become progressively more deaf to the key word.” (Heidegger M. , *Moirā (Parmenides {VIII}, 34-41)*, 1984, p. 88)

The same does not mean identical here, but the essentially the same. Identical implies a thing, but the same is not being taken in this sense. The same is being used to talk about the twofold of *Ἔν Πάντα* and, as this is the case, talk of identity, a talk that can only occur ontically, would be erroneous. “*Ἔν Πάντα* as, *Λόγος*, lets everything present come to presence. The *Ἔν*, however, is not one present being amongst others.” (Heidegger M. , *Logos (Heraclitus, Fragment B 50)*, 1984, p. 73) Taken in this way, Heidegger is able to say with Parmenides:

*τὸ γὰρ αὐτὸ νοεῖν ἐστὶν τε καὶ εἶναι*

In order to understand how thinking and being can be the same for Parmenides, we have to first address the sense in which the term ‘being’ is used. Being was not the sum of beings as is often taken to be the case now, but, rather, being is disclosure of things. “The Greek saying assigns thinking, as an apprehending which gathers, to Being, understood as presencing.” (Heidegger M. , *Moirā (Parmenides {VIII}, 34-41)*, 1984, p. 84) If being is thought of as the totality of things and thinking is the same as being, then both thinking and being also become things; they become totalities of things. This allows being and thinking to be considered scientifically in as far as they both are transformed into things or

objects that have been crystallised and so can be considered from every viewpoint, but this is not the way that Heidegger or Parmenides interpreted by Heidegger takes being or thinking at all. For the most part, we take things as they are and do not think of the action of the twofold in disclosing those things. People usually, “accept whatever is immediately, abruptly, and first of all offered to them. They never concern themselves about preparing the path of thought.” (Heidegger M. , Moira (Parmenides {VIII}, 34-41), 1984, p. 99)

Heidegger notes that, “the beginning of Western thinking was fated to catch an appropriate glimpse of what the word *εἶναι*, to be, says – in *Φύσις, Λόγος, Ἔν.*” (Heidegger M. , Moira (Parmenides {VIII}, 34-41), 1984, p. 87) Being is not, then, the totality of beings or the being of beings at all, but being and beings is a duality, the twofold. Being allows the disclosure of beings, but the disclosure of beings hides their source in being. Since this glimpse was had by the ancient Greeks, the duality has been lost from sight. It has concealed “itself as *Λήθη*, to which *Ἀλήθεια* belongs so immediately that the former can withdraw in its favor and can relinquish to it pure disclosure of the modes of *Φύσις, Λόγος*, and *Ἔν*, as though this had no need of concealment.” (Heidegger M. , Moira (Parmenides {VIII}, 34-41), 1984, p. 87) The duality of being and beings gives the ground of thinking. “Thinking comes to presence because of the still unspoken duality. The presencing of thinking is on the way to the duality of Being and beings. The duality presences in the taking-heed-of.” (Heidegger M. , Moira (Parmenides {VIII}, 34-41), 1984, p. 88) In thinking as a whole and not a mode of thinking, the duality itself can be glimpsed. We take head of the duality, not by seeing it as the

duality – a concept, structure, or even event as such – but by allowing ourselves to experience the duality. The experience is not something that lends itself to be put into terms, but we can open ourselves to the experience by allowing terms to point in the direction of the experience.

“Parmenides says that *νοεῖν πεφασισμένον ἐν τῷ ἔόντι*. This is translated: ‘thinking, which as something uttered is being.’” (Heidegger M. , Moira (Parmenides {VIII}, 34-41), 1984, p. 89) Taken in this way, thinking becomes being. Thinking that includes the duality becomes, not a way of seeing beings or even being itself, but becomes being. Thinking is the duality. It allows the manifestations of beings from the ontological. It speaks and, in speaking, things become manifest. “Being says presencing of what is present; duality” (Heidegger M. , Moira (Heidegger M. , Moira (Parmenides {VIII}, 34-41), 1984, p. 98) and thinking as being points towards the same.

We find, therefore, that, when each concept we use to describe the nature of being human is taken as a pointer to its own ontological ground, each point towards, or are, essentially the same. Language is the gathering and laying before; truth points to the truth of being; thinking is the duality than manifests beings from being. Although these concepts are different when considered as concepts, they are the same when considered ontologically. As concepts and so as things, language, truth and thinking have been differentiated and, within ontic thinking, they cannot be reconciled, but, as pointers to what lies prior to the concepts, that is, in their essential nature, they are the same. Taking these three as the same is allowing our self to think in Heideggerian terms. It is when we can

see these are the same that we can say that we see them from a Heideggerian perspective. This does not mean that anything additional can be said about them as the saying in as far as the saying would have to be carried out by using terms would destroy what is being said. We cannot describe the perspective from which all become one using conceptual talk as the use of concepts, of necessity, takes away the perspective. All that can be done is what Heidegger tries to do; that is, to point towards the perspective and allow the position to be taken in the silence beyond the terms being used.

From the vantage point of where the concepts that make up Dasein become the same, it can be seen that Dasein, too, is the same. What appears to be the construct of Dasein described by Heidegger in *Being and Time*, turns out to be nothing of the sort. The Dasein of *Being and Time* is not a thing as such. Dasein gives the possibility of beings. It is a being in as much as it is the event of the disclosure of beings, but it is not just this. Dasein includes its own ontological ground. As the 'there,' it also includes the clearing wherein beings become possible. Dasein, therefore, is both the ontological and the ontic; it is both the totality of possibilities and actualities. Both being and the being of beings. Language, truth and thinking are all essentially the same. Taken as their totality, they can be seen as perspectives on a single totality. That totality is also Dasein. So, language, truth and thinking are not features of Dasein, but are the same as Dasein. When we talk about each of these, we are talking about a face of Dasein; about ontic, and therefore, graspable concepts, but concepts that point towards a common source. By saying 'Dasein,' we are saying the same as when

we say 'language,' 'truth,' or 'thinking,' but understanding that sameness requires us to take those concepts as signposts pointing towards their own essences and not as things at all. We must take that statement that language, truth and thinking are the same as a statement without content. The sameness is not a sameness in the sense that concepts are the same because concepts are not taken as concepts at all, but as pointers and so nothing.

The possible advantage of using the term 'Dasein' rather than any other term is not that it is descriptive of the manifestation of beings – the same could be said of any of the other concepts – but 'Dasein' is not itself a term of which we already know the meaning. In *Being and Time*, it is taken as a mysterious term and one that *Being and Time* sets out to describe. By taking 'Dasein' as a term not understood, it is more likely that it might be understood in a different way than other terms about which we already have prejudices. This, though, does not happen. The assumption is made from the outset that the description of 'Dasein' is the description of a thing – even a description of the human as animal. This cannot be the case if the description is being carried out at the level of fundamental ontology. To understand Dasein we must, each time, unlearn what we know about Dasein and allow Dasein to become a pointer itself to its own ground. In this way, Dasein and, what appear to be, the concepts used to describe Dasein can be seen ontologically. We are able to see their necessary sameness when viewed ontologically. Tracing an understanding of Dasein back to and from its own ground does not give us any specific ontic theory of world, man, or even language, truth or thinking, but allows us to position ourselves such

that we are able to see the ontic constructs built on top of the ontological possibilities as they are. Rather than giving us a positive ontic theory of whatever sort, it brings all ontic theories to the same level.

### ***Man as Dasein***

Although we can say that language, truth and thinking are the same as Dasein when taken ontologically, Dasein is not the same as man unless both 'man' and 'Dasein' are understood ontologically. 'Man' is normally taken to be an ontic thing. As such, man cannot be Dasein because man is just a thing made present by the construct, man. However, man can be taken as a pointer. If man and the attributes of a man are contemplated in a way such that their essence is sought, then that essence of man turns out to be essence of Dasein and so man and Dasein, in this mode of thinking, become the same.

The starting point of this study is to understand that "man is that being who has his being by pointing to what is, and that particular beings manifest themselves as such by such pointing." (Heidegger M. , What is Called Thinking?, 1976, p. 149) The pointing at what is, is more than a pointing at the totality of factual beings. The pointing is at being; it points at everything in the having been, present and what might be. The essential nature of man, the human, is to perform this pointing at the whole of being; a point towards man's own essence.

If it has been said that language, truth, thinking and Dasein are the same, then why can we not say that the man is Dasein? Even though the sameness of these features is said because of them pointing to the same essence, could it not be



said that the essence of man is also common with these and so man is also the same? The problem is that the essence of man could be taken in a number of ways and care must be taken to understand the way that 'man' is understood if 'man' is to be seen as the same as these other pointers.

If we use a definition of man such as ζῶον πολιτικόν or ζῶον λόγον ἔχον, we should notice first the duality. Both definitions can be split into ζῶον and something further. The ζῶον in each case gives us a thing: an animal. In both examples, the second part gives an attribute of the first part: πολιτικός as the possibility of a making public or having λόγος as a gathering and laying before. But, as has been shown, both πολιτικός and λόγος can be taken further. These apparent attributes point towards their common essential ground. This is from where confusion can spring. The apparent attributes of the man turn out to be the source of all things and so man as animal – a concept or thing – comes from the attribute we assigned to the animal. Man as an animal cannot possess or have attributes as these attributes, at their essential level, tell of how the man as an animal can be disclosed in the first place. Man as an animal turns out to be an accident of the attribute assigned to the animal to make it man. The attributes, πολιτικός or λόγος, cannot be taken as attributes but as pointers to the ground from which the animal can be disclosed. We can then redefine 'man' as essentially πολιτικός or λόγος. Man, as the possessor of πολιτικός or λόγος as ontic concepts, possesses those concepts as pointers to man's own ontological ground. Man, then, taken in a sense that the ontological essence of man becomes Dasein.

But, if man is Dasein, what of the other part of the definition of 'man'? What of the ζῷον? The manifestation of man as an animal or type of animal becomes something that cannot be addressed beyond being itself a pointer. The ζῷον, as a thing, points to its ontological source as something that has been disclosed. The ζῷον then becomes a possible thing from an ontological perspective; an example of what can emerge. The study of the ζῷον as a thing becomes, from an ontological perspective, the study of a construct; a thing that was discovered becomes petrified and can then be examined, but the source of the thing becomes hidden.

Trying to think of man as Dasein demonstrates the gap between ontological thinking and the thinking of the positive sciences. Positive sciences can take man as ζῷον and so can ascribe attributes to man. Man becomes the possessor of these attributes and can be understood. But man taken ontologically has no such limitations. Man is not limited by the ζῷον, but gives rise to all beings including the ζῷον. Man is not contained or limited in any ontic way, but the nature of man is understood in an eternal emergence. Man becomes Dasein and Dasein becomes the totality of both the ontological and ontic. Man can no longer be bound by the restriction of being a ζῷον or any other such restriction, but becomes all that there is and all that can be. In this way, the ontological analysis of Dasein or of man seen ontologically can say nothing positive anthropologically. We can gain no knowledge of man as an animal from an ontological understanding of man as the pointer to its own ground. We can, however, get an understanding of the restrictions we impose when we view man

anthropologically. As Dasein gives us, by disclosing being, reality – the totality of the being of beings – so any ontic restrictions we place on Dasein can be seen as constructs and arbitrary restrictions placed on a totality so that the totality, or, at least, parts of the totality can be understood by a finite thinking. If mind is understood at the ontological level as reality, then man cannot be restricted to being an animal or just one thing among others, but man becomes the whole of reality. The mind can no longer be placed in a part of the body or a soul existing within or in parallel to reality, but the contents of the mind becomes the contents of reality. The mind becomes another term meaning the ontic, but, more than this, as the ontic comes from the ontological, the mind, too, becomes Dasein.

What emerges is that all separate concepts that we might attribute to ourselves, the things that make us human, become the same when we think ontologically and take them back to their common ground. When they are taken as just pointers, then they point towards the same. This can be extended. Not only do concepts that are taken to be our own attributes become pointers towards the same and so the same themselves, but any ontic being, when taken thus, also becomes the same. As has been shown, Dasein includes the totality of being and beings. As such, all beings are beings within the totality of Dasein. Therefore, any being at all can be considered a pointer to its own source in being. Any being, when regarded ontologically, becomes the same as all other beings. Heidegger's analysis, if truly an analysis of fundamental ontology, cannot give as any content at all. If we take his analysis *ad absurdum*, which, as an exercise in fundamental ontology we must do, we end with nothing. But this

nothing is not nothing at all. The nothing is no thing, but it is a viewpoint from which the ontic – things – can manifest and be viewed. As was pointed out earlier, Heideggerian thinking can give us nothing positive. We can hope for no theories, no practical principles, no codes of conduct or ways to live for a good life. Heideggerian thinking can only show us the ontic constructs that we, of necessity as finite beings, built in order to understand our world. In this way, Heideggerian thinking does not attack positive science or even the metaphysical theology through which we see the world for the most part, but only shows these for what they are and shows them to be necessary for the possibility of our ontic understanding. Heidegger puts us in a position from where we can see the activities of Dionysus and Apollo and so can rebalance those two gods in our understanding, but seeing this only shows us the makeup of reality.

We discovered that concepts such as language, truth and thinking are, in essence, the same, but we apparently built this impression of sameness on conceptual formulae. Taking these formulae as being the result of the exploration would be a mistake. We have reached no knowledge in this sense. When we say something like “language is the laying before of beings,” we should not fall into the trap of believing that a full stop can be put at the end of the formula. Just as the term ‘language’ was only taken as a pointer to its own source, the formulae must be taken in the same way. If we understand the formulae conceptually, we do not understand them in a Heideggerian sense at all. It is in travelling towards a perspective from which the essence of any of these concepts can be seen that the essences can be seen. When we say

something like “language is the laying before of beings,” the term ‘being’ is used as a verb. As this is the case, we can only understand the essence of the concepts dynamically. Understanding the essence of language is not understanding a thing towards which we can point, but it is a pointer to an activity in which we must partake in order to achieve an essential understanding. If we try to follow Heidegger on his path towards an understanding of language, it is only while we are travelling on the path that we can understand or see the essence. As soon as we stop our journey, we are no longer in a position from which we can understand. The works of Heidegger can, therefore, not be used as a store of concepts or formulae from which deductions can be made as this would require us to put a full stop after the assertion – we would have to stop our journey – rather, Heidegger can only put us into a position or mode of thinking that gives us an essential understanding of the object of our study, but an understanding that can only be had while engaged in that mode of thought.

Works are never self-contained modules, but are always the start of journeys towards a goal; they never tell us anything about their claimed subject matter, but only point towards a path that can lead us to seeing the essence of the subject matter. Because a piece of writing is a journey for the reader, it is an activity for the reader. Each time the writing is read, a new journey starts. In this way, it can never be said that a piece of writing can be read and understood and so completed, only that the piece has been used to take the reader on a journey and, from taking this journey, a perspective has been established while on the journey. The piece can always be used again to accompany to reader on

another journey. The journey that the piece travels with the reader can never be the same as it is always started at a different point.

In searching for the essence of language it is only seen in the dynamic as language itself is essentially dynamic. If this is the case then language cannot be thought of as a noun - something static that can be studied from every angle and so an essentially immutable thing – but as a verb. Language is not something like a computer or computer program, not something like a logical or mathematical function, but, at its essence, is the emergence of things including itself. It is the movement and not the reason or explanation for that movement. To understand the nature of language we cannot look at language from a mode of thinking that takes things as static objects of study, but have to allow ourselves to think in the mode of fundamental ontology that allows the subject of our thinking to emerge as it itself emerges. If our goal is to understand the essence of language, we must be prepared to allow that essence to show itself as a movement in and of our thinking. We can never hope to discover a construct that we can take and show as the fruit of our labours as the essence of language only becomes visible in the movement. While we think, we can see the essence, as soon as we place a full stop, the essence is gone.

### ***What is offered by Heidegger?***

From our exploration of 'language' and a thinking from the essence of 'language' guided by Heidegger we have come to see the actions of both Dionysus and Apollo, but what does seeing this do for us?

By seeking the essential source pointed to by terms we normally take to refer to concepts, Heidegger does not tell us anything positive about those terms or any concepts. When we trace language back to the essence of language, we do not find out anything positive about language; our understanding of language does not become encapsulated within a definition or a model that can be used or explain language. Language becomes even less delineated than when we started. In fact, our understanding of language loses all constraints and language is allowed to encompass the whole of being. But giving a definition or model for language was never the goal of a Heideggerian encounter with language. The important part of the journey towards the essence of language was never the goal of a definition of language – a goal that could never be achieved – but the journey itself. In seeking the essence of language we do not find language as such, but we are able to see our own position. We allow ourself to see our own ontotheological ground. In so doing, we are able to criticise ourselves and our own unquestioned assumptions and prejudices.

We cannot expect any positive results from a Heideggerian thinking, we cannot hope to be able to say what is true or false, right or wrong by using this mode of thought, but, “Philosophy is not interested in issuing commands.” (Horkheimer, *Eclipse of Reason*, 2004, p. 124) By using a Heideggerian thinking we are not able to see the ‘true’ way, but we are able to see the character of that towards which we direct our thoughts. Horkheimer wrote that, “The real social function of philosophy lies in its criticism of what is prevalent.” (Horkheimer, *Critical theory*, 2002, p. 264) Heidegger allows us to see the nature of the ontotheology on

which the text with which we enter into discourse is based whether the text is the writings of another thinker, the events in an area of our experience, or our own thinking. By being able to see this basis we can criticise and examine it, not in a dismissive way that finds fault with it, but a way that the basis is held up as a basis exposed. Although this thinking cannot give us a reason and so cannot, in itself, allow us to attack any particular ontotheological basis, the questioning and exposure of the ontotheological basis can allow us to see on what positive actions are grounded. The exposure and explication of a ground does not attack the ground, but allows the ground to be seen and so enables the ground to be transcended. “The chief aim of such criticism is to prevent mankind from losing itself in those ideas and activities which the existing organization of society instils into its members.” (Horkheimer, *Critical theory*, 2002, pp. 264-265) Heidegger may not allow us to say anything positive, we are never able to give a model or definition of language based on Heideggerian thinking, but Heidegger does allow us to comport ourselves in such a way that we are able to see our self. Heidegger does not take us anywhere beyond where we already are, but he does allow us to hold up a mirror to our self and see our self as we are. Heidegger does not offer us anything positive, but, from this very lack, shows us what it is for us to be human as Dasein.



## **Conclusion**

Having tried to follow Heidegger on the way towards an understanding of language, what has been learned and to what use can this be applied?

The first thing that is apparent is that Heideggerian thinking is not compatible with conceptual argument. This can be frustrating or infuriating as one cannot, if one wants to remain faithful to the Heideggerian project, construct an argument in favour of either this mode of thought or of anything said while undertaking this thinking; indeed, if one does take something said as a conclusion or assertion made as a result of indulging in such thinking, then one has already fallen out of the thinking and so the assertion is a misunderstanding. Rather than constructing models that can be taken to reflect Heideggerian thinking, one can only point away from such models towards a mode of thought.

This indicates a split in thinking between the mode of thought pointed to by Heidegger and other modes of thought. If taken in its pure sense, Heideggerian thought can offer no basis. That means that it can offer no basis for any action or any conceptual framework of thought.

In order to offer a basis, the thinking would have to take something as true or as ground – to accept posits – but Heideggerian thinking does not allow that. If something is taken as ground, it has not been adequately analysed; its meaning has not been sought in an endless journey. In this mode, a truth becomes merely the expression of a refusal of further thought. Truths can get no foothold as

truths become just starting points for thought and never the end points.

### ***Heideggerian thought and Nazism***

Heidegger searched for a fundamental basis for thought. He went beyond nihilism refusing to accept that there is no basis, but this did not lead to a firm and static basis from which thinking and structures could grow, well founded in a solid foundation. He found that the basis is the search for the basis itself. That is, rather than finding something concrete, he found just movement; the flux of Heraclitus.

Because Heidegger was unable to find a static basis, he was not able to make a positive declaration without intellectual dishonesty. This led him to the worst episode in his career: the apparent support of the Nazi party. From almost any perspective, the actions of the Nazi party are abhorrent, but that abhorrence needs to be based or it becomes just an opinion with no more logical ground than what it condemns. From a Heideggerian position, such a condemnation seems to become impossible. This can lead the way to a laissez-faire attitude; to an acceptance of a mode of thought that can even give rise to the Nazis as no assertion against such thinking can be made. Heidegger could accept the prevailing corruption of humanity as he was unable to offer an alternative.

However, such a stance overlooks its own basis as much as taking a positive stance would. By accepting a prevailing mode of thought that bases itself on a set of posits, one is accepting those posits oneself as being acceptable. One is

being cowardly, not because one opposes a dogma because it is evil or wrong, but because one is refusing one's own basis. One must oppose the dogma because the dogma is a rejection of thought and so a rejection of one's own humanity.

If one adopts a Heideggerian mode of thought, then, one must reject dogmas such as Nazism, but does that entail that one must reject such dogmas both as a part of one's own thought and publicly; can there be a motivation to actually react against such dogmas?

As a teacher, Heidegger saw himself, not as a purveyor of facts, but as an enabler of thinking. He saw the function of a teacher to lead the student of the mode of thought that would question and reject dogmas. He would then be obliged to show a way to think past such dogmas towards authentic thinking and so the rejection of dogma. In the environment of the teaching establishment he would, therefore, have to actively oppose the prevailing dogma, not by saying it is wrong, but by showing the way towards thinking that made the dogma absurd.

Beyond the teaching environment the same holds correct to an extent. He could have accepted the Nazi dogma, but that would entail him being totally silent. By wearing the uniform of the SA, he broke his silence and apparently accepted the dogma. He pointed, not to authentic thought, but to a confined and restricted thought. He became intellectually dishonest. He rejected his own humanity. As a human, he points to his own essence, but, by pointing to a dogma that obscures such an essence, he made himself something less than human; a

human enslaved by the chains that he wrapped around himself.

A motivation has been found, then, for action. It is the search itself. It is intellectual freedom. It is the desire to be human.

### ***Heideggerian thought and dogma***

Taking dogma as a set of principles, rules, posits, and so on, laid down and accepted, how far does Heideggerian thinking need go to demolish such confines?

It is easy to oppose the dogma of Nazism as, generally, such a corrupt dogma is opposed anyway. For the most part, one is pushing against an open door, but, in establishing a motivation for opposing such a dogma, what are the implications for other modes of thought and ways of being for humanity?

Heideggerian thought must reject all assertions; it must reject all posits. That means that it is obliged to reject the dogma of Nazism. But that also means it must equally reject all other dogma. It must reject any mode of thought that allows itself to accept any posit as a basis of thought. The implication of this is that Heideggerian thought compels the thinker to reject all thinking that is not totally free.

Just as Nazism based itself on a set of accepted 'truths,' so all other human structures base themselves on such 'truths.' The 'truths' might be different, but that has no effect; by establishing a motivation for Heideggerian thinking to oppose Nazism, it, at the same time, opposes all dogma whether considered

good or bad by prevailing opinions. If one dogma is rejected, all dogmas have to be rejected. That means that our cultural norms, no matter which, have to be questioned ad infinitum. If we consider ourselves free but support a set of principles, we are deluding ourselves; we are in chains but are unwilling to see the chains. We cannot say that anything is good or bad because so saying implies a basis and that is itself an acceptance of dogma.

### ***Heideggerian language***

Language has been traced back towards its essence, but no structure has been found, just a continual search. To discover the nature of language means to set on a path towards language but with no hope of finding any basic thing. Language cannot be encapsulated but can only be understood in as far as one allows language to language; allows language to be a verb. This dynamic understanding is the basis of Heideggerian thought. By searching for an understanding of language, we find a destruction of the structures; we lose the knowledge and facts on which we normally hold fast. Language can be seen as the basis for all, but language cannot be encapsulated within structures or concepts. In seeking an understanding of language, we have lost every-thing that we hold to be a truth.

The search for language gives freedom of thought, but the price for that freedom is a loss of all ontic knowledge. This does not mean that all activities that rely on such knowledge are pointless, just that the status of such activities are made public; they do not and cannot disclose any immutable and universal truths, but

they can be of use for as long as they are useful. A search for language in Heidegger gives freedom at the expense for any static assertion, but the cost also means the rejection of all static dogmas that confine humanity. Dogmas such as cultural norms cannot be used as a basis from which destruction can be justified; a static paradigm or set of posits on which sciences are built cannot be allowed to turn the science into a mode of scholasticism. The loss of a static basis might be unnerving, but that loss is the greatest impetus towards humanity and evolution as change.

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