Heidegger and Deleuze: The Groundwork of Evental Ontology

James Scott Bahoh

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HEIDEGGER AND DELEUZE: THE GROUNDWORK OF EVENTAL ONTOLOGY

A Dissertation

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Duquesne University

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for

the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

By

James Scott Bahoh

May 2016
ABSTRACT

HEIDEGGER AND DELEUZE: THE GROUNDWORK OF EVENTAL ONTOLOGY

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May 2016

Dissertation supervised by Professor Daniel Selcer

This dissertation examines the concept of event, as found in the ontologies developed by Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) and Gilles Deleuze (1925-1995). The texts I focus on are Heidegger’s *Sein und Zeit* (1927), “Vom Wesen des Grundes” (1928), “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit” (lecture 1930, print 1943), *Beiträge zur Philosophie (vom Ereignis)* (written 1936-38, but not published until 1989), and Deleuze’s *Différence et répétition* (1968). My focus is on the way each philosopher advances an account of the event in relation to a set of key fundamental themes. For Heidegger, these are truth, difference, ground, and time-space. For Deleuze I also discuss ground and time, but focus especially on difference. Deleuze’s account of difference entails a distinction between a “virtual” register of dialectical Ideas and an “actual” register of systems of simulacra, and clarifying his concept of event in relation to these plays a dominant role in my analysis. Deleuze’s account of dialectical Ideas is profoundly influenced by that of the
early twentieth century mathematician and philosopher, Albert Lautman (1908-1944). Lautman, in turn, developed his account through an engagement with Heidegger’s early work. In Chapter V, I reconstruct the Heideggerian line of influence on Deleuze via Lautman. Beginning in the mid-1930s Heidegger understands being to be evental in nature, while difference constitutes an essential dimension of the event, though the latter point is often neglected in the scholarship. Truth, ground, and time-space articulate the structure and dynamics of being as event. For Deleuze, being is difference, but difference differentiates by way of events. Ground, time, systems of simulacra, and dialectical Ideas articulate the structure of being’s evental differentiation and the genesis of worlds of beings possessing quasi-stable identities modulated by their complex relations.
DEDICATION

For my grandmother, Kay, whose intellect, humor, and elegance continually inspire me.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedication</td>
<td>vi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequently Cited Works</td>
<td>xi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thematic Focus</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textual Focus</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of Basic Programmatic Consonance in Heidegger and Deleuze</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of Comparative Methodology</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note on the Term “Event”</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Heidegger’s Concept of Event</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction to Deleuze’s Concept of Event</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overview of Major Literature</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of Scholarly Contributions</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Part 1: Heidegger’s Evental Ontology** ................................................................. 20

| Chapter I                                                              | 21   |
| Chapter Overview                                                      | 21   |
| 1: Methodological Concerns: The Structure of the Movement of Heidegger’s Ontology and Its Impact on Interpretive Approaches to his Corpus (Generally) and the Concept of Event (Specifically) | 22   |
| 1.1: Syngenetic and Diagenetic Axes                                   | 25   |
| 1.2: Heidegger’s Productive Logic: An Analysis of the Complex Evolution of His Ontology | 27   |
| 1.3: Diagenic Analysis                                                | 37   |
| 1.4: The Place of *Beiträge* in Heidegger’s Corpus                   | 45   |
| 2: An Outline of the Two Key Senses of “Event” for Heidegger         | 50   |
| 2.1: The “Historical” Sense of “Event”                                | 50   |
| 2.2: The “Ontological” Sense of “Event”                               | 54   |
| 2.3: A Note on Radical Critique                                      | 58   |
2.4: A Note on the Methodological and Ontological Relation of the Historical and Ontological Senses of the Event ................................................................. 60

3: Critical Review of Two Dominant Interpretations of Ereignis .............................................. 62
  3.1: The Position that Ereignis is the Mutual Appropriation of Human Existence to Being and Being to Human Existence (Sheehan and Meillassoux) ........................................... 63
  3.2: The Position that Ereignis is Being itself as Anwesen, Ἀλήθεια, Φύσις, or the Giving of What is Given (Capobianco and Polt) ............................................................................ 69

4: The Groundwork of Sein und Zeit ......................................................................................... 75
  4.1: Dasein as the Condition for the Possibility of Doing Ontology ........................................ 77
    4.1.1: The Seinsfrage, Existentially Situated ................................................................. 86
  4.2: The Ontological Groundwork of the Problematic of the History of Metaphysics .......... 88
    4.2.1: The Historical Character of Dasein’s Existence .................................................. 90
    4.2.2: The Problematic of History in Fundamental Ontology ........................................ 95
    4.2.3: An Outline of the Historical Failure Regarding the Question of Being .............. 98
    4.2.4: Statement of Methodological Continuity between the Historical and Ontological Problematics of Event .............................................................................. 102

Chapter II .......................................................................................................................... 104

Chapter Overview .............................................................................................................. 104

1: Dasein and the Precursory Question of Truth ................................................................. 104
  1.1: Truth and Dasein in Sein und Zeit .............................................................................. 111
  1.2: Truth and Dasein in “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit” ....................................................... 122

2: Truth and Event in Beiträge zur Philosophie (vom Ereignis) ........................................ 142
  2.1: Outline of Some Major Ontological Developments Situating the Event in Beiträge ..... 144
    2.1.1: The Problem of Seiendheit and the Shift from Sein to Seyn ................................. 144
    2.1.2: The Shift from the Leitfrage to the Grundfrage .................................................. 152
    2.1.3: The Ontological Difference ............................................................................... 156
    2.1.4: An Error in Sheehan and Meillassoux’s Correlationist Interpretation of Heidegger 157
    2.1.5: Some Related Errors in Capobianco and Polt’s Interpretations of Heidegger .......... 158
  2.2: The Event and the Essence of Truth .............................................................................. 160
    2.2.1: The Originary Grounding of Heidegger’s A-lēthic Framework: The Essence of Truth as the Clearing for/of Self-Concealing ......................................................... 163
    2.2.2: Difference and Decision .................................................................................... 172
    2.2.3: The Ontological Difference .............................................................................. 173
Frequently Cited Works

Citations referencing both original and translated editions of a text indicate page numbers in the following format: original/translation.

“GA” designations refer to Heidegger’s Gesamtausgabe volumes.


**GA11** Martin Heidegger, *Identität und Differenz* (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 2006); English translations of the texts in this volume are dispersed in multiple publications. The texts I reference are primarily found in *Identity and Difference*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969). Unless otherwise noted, my citations to these texts in GA11 include the English page numbers found in the Stambaugh edition.


New Research


Introduction

Thematic Focus

Throughout the history of Western philosophy, events have most often been assigned a secondary or derivative status with respect to substances or subjects, which are taken to underwrite them. An event, for instance, is understood to be a modification of the attributes of a substance. Linguistically, this framework is replicated in our grammar: a sentence begins with a subject and a predicate, while an event is represented as a change in predicate. However, since the 1930s, a number of philosophers have argued that no ontology can be sufficient without assigning events a primary, fundamental, and ontologically positive status in their own right.\(^1\) Remarkably, many have further argued that no ontology can be sufficient without assigning being an evental nature itself.\(^2\) In other words, they have advanced what I will call “evental ontologies.” Many of the central texts arguing for evental ontologies are exceptionally difficult to interpret, and this is often a result of the way their arguments undermine the technical vocabulary of the tradition and its grammar built around subject predication. As a consequence, the reasons for taking such a position are frequently glossed over in relevant scholarship, which opts for either uncritical adoption of the terminology of evental ontologies or the dismissal of them on the grounds of their conceptual obscurity and seeming contrivance. This dissertation aims to rectify

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\(^1\) For instance, Donald Davidson writes, “I do not believe we can give a cogent account of action, of explanation, of causality, or of the relation between the mental and the physical, unless we accept events as individuals,” and that we require “an explicit ontology of events” (Donald Davidson, *Essays on Actions and Events* [New York: Oxford University Press, 2001], 165).

\(^2\) Martin Heidegger writes, “Beyng essentially occurs as the event” (“*Das Seyn west als das Ereignis*”) (GA65 30/25). Gilles Deleuze writes, “Being is the unique event in which all events communicate with one another” (*LS* 211/180).
this, within certain parameters. The core question I address is: Why is it necessary and what exactly does it mean to conceive being as event?

The implications of evental ontology are far-reaching, and so I offer only a limited answer. I confine my analysis to the work of two of the numerous recent philosophers who have contributed to this problem: Martin Heidegger (1889-1976), whose work inaugurates the twentieth century turn to evental ontology, and Gilles Deleuze (1925-1995), who advances it by integrating aspects of early modern thought, the history of mathematics, psychoanalytic theory, and French structuralism and post-rationalism that Heidegger neglected. My focus is on the way each advances an account of the event in relation to a set of key fundamental themes. For Heidegger, these are truth, difference, ground, and time-space. For Deleuze I also discuss ground and time, but focus especially on difference. It is important to emphasize that Deleuze’s account of difference entails a distinction between a “virtual” register of dialectical Ideas and an “actual” register of systems of simulacra, and clarifying his concept of event in relation to these plays a dominant role in my analysis. Beginning in the mid-1930s Heidegger understands being to be evental in nature, while difference constitutes an essential dimension of the event, though the latter point is often neglected in the scholarship. Truth, ground, and time-space articulate the structure and dynamics of being as event. For Deleuze, being is difference, but difference differentiates by way of events. Ground, time, systems of simulacra, and dialectical Ideas articulate the structure of being’s evental differentiation and the genesis of worlds of beings possessing quasi-stable identities modulated by their complex relations.
Textual Focus

My textual focus is as follows. For Heidegger, I offer short analyses of sections of *Sein und Zeit* (1927) and “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit” (lecture 1930, print 1943), which supply methodological and conceptual elements necessary for clarifying his account of being as event in the 1930s. On this basis, I turn my main attention to analyzing in detail *Beiträge zur Philosophie (vom Ereignis)* (written 1936-38, but not published until 1989), the text with the most extensive and developed account of his evental ontology. In contrast to interpretations that downplay the significance of the concept of event in Heidegger’s work, my approach will solidify its key role and demonstrate why his ontology must be characterized most fundamentally as an *evental ontology*. Later, in the midst of my treatment of Deleuze in Chapter V, I return to Heidegger and discuss his short treatise “Vom Wesen des Grundes” (1928) as well. This text was of decisive influence on the early twentieth century mathematician and philosopher, Albert Lautman (1908-1944), whose theory of dialectical Ideas Deleuze appropriated and modified for his own use. With respect to Deleuze, I focus on *Différence et répétition* (1968), the first of his two most systematic ontological works (the

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3 Heidegger’s work pertinent to his account of the event is complex and ranges through several texts, which can be broken into three groups. The first spans 1919 to 1930, framing his subsequent work but rarely explicitly mentioning *Ereignis*. The most important of the early texts is *Sein und Zeit*. The second group is composed of texts and lectures made public by the author between the late 1930s and his death in 1976. The third group includes the crucial and complex cluster of private works known either as the *seynsgeschichtliches* treatises or the private manuscripts, written during the 1930s and early 1940s as well as two texts von Herrmann (the editor of Heidegger’s *Gesamtausgabe*) describes as standing in “thematic proximity” to these (von Hermann, “Editor’s Epilogue,” in Martin Heidegger, [GA66] *Besinnung* [Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1997]; English: *Mindfulness*, trans. Parvis Emad and Thomas Kalary [New York, NY: Continuum, 2006) 434/383]). With *Beiträge* standing at its core, the *seynsgeschichtliches* category also includes *Besinnung; Über den Anfang* (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 2005) (written 1941), GA70; *Das Ereignis*; and the as yet unpublished *Die Stege des Anfangs* (1944), GA72. The two texts in thematic proximity are “Die Überwindung der Metaphysik,” in *Metaphysik und Nihilismus* (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1999), GA67 and *Die Geschichte des Seyns* (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1998) (written 1938-1940), GA69. Other related texts include a Kant/Leibniz course transcribed in *Seminare: Kant – Leibniz – Schiller* (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 2013), GA84.1 and *Zum Ereignis-Denken* (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 2013), GA73.1.

4 Cf. *EH*, which I engage extensively later.
second is the 1969 *Logique du sens*). These two texts present his most substantial treatment of the event prior to his collaborations with Felix Guattari beginning in the 1970s. Given the complexity and richness of *Différence et répétition*, I have chosen to limit my scope to it.

**Statement of Basic Programmatic Consonance in Heidegger and Deleuze**

It is a common impression that Deleuze is a distinctively non-Heideggerian thinker. This is asserted on a number of counts: Deleuze presents an ontology that is not tethered to the limits of the experiencing subject (or in Heideggerian terms to the phenomenal world as delimited by Dasein’s meaning-making activities), he casts being in terms of difference, considers himself to be a metaphysician, and condemns neither early modern philosophy nor the use of mathematics in ontology. While Heidegger was certainly an uninspired reader of early modern thought and disparaged mathematics, I hope to demonstrate that the first two of these counts misrepresent him. Beginning at least as early as 1930 Heidegger, like Deleuze, found it necessary to account for the ontological ground enabling human existence to be, a ground irreducible to the human being and constituting ontological structures that are independent of any correlation with it. Furthermore, I argue that in Heidegger’s work a logic of the event is found that is accessed as a differential logic. As mentioned, for Heidegger in *Beiträge* difference constitutes an essential dimension of being as event. As opportunities arise in my analysis of Deleuze, I add to these points of consonance and highlight points of dissonance.

Deleuze’s references to Heidegger are made explicit in 11 instances in the main text and commentary in footnotes throughout *Différence et répétition*, and none of them comment directly
on Heidegger’s concept of event.\(^5\) Contrary to common belief, these references are largely affirmative in nature. Most often, Deleuze cites Heidegger as an allied thinker advancing the philosophy of difference in ways surpassing earlier figures like Aristotle, Leibniz, and Hegel. In certain instances, though, these references include important critical remarks that show how Deleuze considers himself to move beyond Heidegger. Broadly stated, Deleuze suggests that though Heidegger advances a univocal ontology (thus escaping the downfalls of Aristotle’s equivocal system) and thinks difference as an originary character of being in a way not subsumed within the logic of determinate negation and dialectical contradiction (thus escaping the downfalls of Leibniz and Hegel), he ultimately maintains a conception of difference that is determined by an interpretation of being in terms of the same (*das Selbe*). Despite Heidegger’s arguments that the same is not the identical or the equal, Deleuze is skeptical that they are sufficient “to think original difference and to disconnect this from all mediations.”\(^6\)

In his commentary on Deleuze’s use of the concept of univocity, Dan Smith emphasizes the “confrontation with Heidegger” in *Différence et répétition*, *Spinoza et le problème de l’expression* (1968), and *Logique du sens*, but also “in Deleuze’s work from the start.”\(^7\) According to Smith, a central element of this confrontation (and a central motive of *Différence et répétition*) is the problem of being posed by Heidegger in terms of the ontological difference. Smith states the problem as follows: “What is the difference between Being and beings? Or more precisely, How is Being distributed among beings?”\(^8\) While this is a strange way of interpreting Heidegger’s ontological difference, the point, I believe, stands. Heidegger found it necessary to

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\(^5\) I find 24 uses of the words “Heidegger” or “Heideggerian” within these instances, though I wouldn’t guarantee I haven’t overlooked any. These numbers exclude instances within the Bibliography or bibliographic information in footnotes. There is a mistake in the index in Patton’s translation of *DR*, which indicates a mention of Heidegger on page 116, while it is in fact on page 117. That index also misses a mention of Heidegger on page 334.

\(^6\) *DR* 91/66.

\(^7\) *Essays* 29.

\(^8\) *Essays* 29.
differentiate being from the beingness (Seiendheit) of beings because we can’t understand being by asking what beings are insofar as they are beings (as is done in the tradition of Plato’s question about τί ἐστι and Aristotle’s τί τὸ ὄν). By establishing the ontological difference, we can pose the question of the being of beings and see where it leads. In other words, the ontological difference enables the science of being to be reestablished, and that science is its problematic. Deleuze finds Heidegger to have faulted in this task, and Différence et répétition is his attempt “to push the problematic of ontological difference to its necessary conclusion,” namely, to think being as difference.\(^9\) Smith puts the point as follows:

According to Deleuze, however, although Heidegger revived the question of ontology and gave “renewed splendor to the univocity of Being,” he did not effect the necessary conversion according to which “univocal Being belongs only to difference” (that is, the term “Being” has one and only one sense, which is “difference”). Heidegger, in other words, was unable – or perhaps unwilling – to push the problematic of ontological difference to its necessary conclusion. This is the project that Deleuze takes up as his own in Difference and Repetition.\(^10\)

While Smith is correct about Deleuze’s position here, Deleuze is incorrect about Heidegger’s. This is no fault of Deleuze’s, for in 1968 he did not have access to Heidegger’s Beiträge or the related private manuscripts, in which are found a number of relevant developments. With these texts now available, I argue the story is different. Difference is an essential dimension of the concept of event, in terms of which Heidegger rethinks beyng. And pushing the problematic of the ontological difference to the ground enabling the determination of the difference between being and beings at all forms a key moment in Heidegger’s methodological path, one by which accesses to the differential logic belonging to the event is secured. If as Smith claims, “Difference and repetition could be read as a response to Being and

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\(^9\) Essays 29.
\(^10\) Essays 29. The passages Smith quotes here are found on DR 91 (footnote 1 beginning on 89). In the English translation they are found in the main text on 66.
Time (for Deleuze, Being is difference, and time is repetition),” then Beiträge could be read as Difference and Repetition’s unknowing and anachronistic doppelgänger.¹¹

Statement of Comparative Methodology

My intention in this project is neither to give a Deleuzian interpretation of Heidegger, nor a Heideggerian interpretation of Deleuze. On the contrary, I find it vital to reconstruct each on his own terms and allow points of consonance and dissonance to arise organically. In particular, since there is no evidence of Deleuzian influence on Heidegger’s work, it has been important to me to guard against importing Deleuzian ideas into my analysis of it. This is so even, and especially, where Heidegger seems to advance positions remarkably similar to Deleuze’s. In my analysis of Heidegger I draw certain comparisons with Deleuze, however I maintain that the Heideggerian account I have reconstructed is found entirely within Heidegger’s text or logically or methodologically entailed by it. Since there is a clear engagement with Heidegger in Deleuze’s work, the situation there is different. I discuss the Heideggerian influence on Deleuze extensively and use this to clarify Deleuze’s positions. I also discuss Deleuze’s critiques of Heidegger and, on the basis of my reconstruction of Heidegger, test them for accuracy. Nonetheless, I again maintain that my reconstruction of Deleuze bears equal fidelity to the text, its logical or methodological entailments, and points of historical influence on it.

¹¹ Essays 30.
Note on the Term “Event”

I use “event” to translate both the German “Ereignis” and the French “événement.” While this is not controversial with respect to the French term, the same cannot be said for the German. Heidegger’s “Ereignis” has been translated in a number of different and sometimes confounding ways: the major translations are “event” (Rojcewicz and Vallega-Neu), “appropriation” (Sheehan), “event of appropriation” (Stambaugh), and “enowning” (Emad and Maly). Adding complication, Heidegger claimed that his term specifically should not be translated in terms of the regular meaning of “event,” i.e., in the sense of an intratemporal occurrence.¹²

As I shall argue in Chapter I, I find an author’s interpretive claims about their own work to be of limited significance. The richness and meaning of a text surpasses that which its author intended or comprehended. Heidegger’s warnings with respect to the term “Ereignis” fail to recognize the possibility of translating it with a regular word and building a technical definition for that word that goes beyond its regular use. This is my approach, which is consistent with the precedent set by Rojcewicz and Vallega-Neu’s recent translation of Heidegger’s Beiträge. Their translation marks a vast improvement over Emad and Maly’s, which rendered “Ereignis” as “enowning.” “Enowning” is a bad translation especially for two reasons. First, it is meant to capture the sense of “propriety” or “ownership” carried by the German “eigen.” While this is indeed an important sense of Heidegger’s term, it is not the only one. Sheehan effectively demolishes translation choices like Emad and Maly’s by reconstructing the etymology of the term “Ereignis.”¹³ This shows that its meaning is originally rooted in the Old High German word for “eye” – “ouga” – and only more recently gained the sense of “ownership.” With this origin, “Ereignis” includes a connotation of sight. “Enowning” excludes this connotation. The second

reason “enowning” is a bad choice is that it is hardly a translation at all. “Enowing” is not a regular English word and whatever meaning it has is quite opaque. In order to make sense of it, it must be translated as well. But this defeats the purpose of translating the word in the first place.

Sheehan translates “Ereignis” with “appropriation,” justifying this by arguing that “appropriation” captures both the senses of ownership and sight. It carries the meaning of ownership in the sense of the Latin “proprietas,” which refers especially to the essential qualities belonging to something and making it be what it is. He attempts to connect “appropriation” with sight by focusing on Heidegger’s suggestion that in Ereignis, something comes into view. What comes into view is Dasein or human existence, specifically with respect to the way that Dasein constitutes a cleared or open space that enables its meaning-making activities in the world. In Sheehan’s interpretation, this dimension of Dasein is what is most proper to it, i.e., it makes Dasein be what it is. Thus, ownership (as propriety) and sight are melded together in the word “appropriation.” Even though this is a significant improvement over “enowning,” it still has a fatal flaw. The term is extremely theory-laden, particularly insofar as Sheehan’s account of the sight involved here rests upon his controversial broader interpretation of Heidegger (which I shall engage in Chapters I and II). As I will argue, this broader interpretation is flawed and fundamentally misconstrues Heidegger’s ontology as a theory of the meaning-making activities of Dasein. Consequently, the basis for Sheehan’s translation choice is undermined. Similar problems arise for Stambaugh’s “event of appropriation,” since this loads the translation with theoretical content that goes beyond the German term.

My approach, on the other hand, is quite simple. My view is that it is best to translate “Ereignis” with its ordinary English counterpart, “event.” This does not fall into the trap of confusing Ereignis with the ordinary sense of an event occurring within time for the simple
reason that any serious reader of Heidegger will be able to keep in mind that this is not
Heidegger’s meaning. “Event” is a standard translation, a recognizable and ordinary term, and
does not carry the excessive theory-ladenness of the other options. Instead, this straight-forward
translation allows the content of the concept to be built up through careful analysis of
Heidegger’s actual use of it within his system.

**Introduction to Heidegger’s Concept of Event**

In 1927 Heidegger published *Sein und Zeit*, the central text of his early thought. There, he argues
Western philosophy requires drastic revision, particularly insofar as the tradition of metaphysics
has distorted, or even eclipsed, the problem of the nature of being.\(^4\) The issue, in Heidegger’s
judgment, is not simply that metaphysics has gotten this wrong and needs to get its accounts
straight. Rather, when it comes to the question of being, metaphysics is a flawed mode of
inquiry. Doing ontology within the framework of metaphysics results in fatally distorted
accounts of being and, in turn, of the nature and relations of beings. *Sein und Zeit* aims to rectify
this by problematizing the foundations of metaphysics and recasting the project of ontology as a
whole. There, Heidegger develops the phenomenological, existential analysis of Dasein as the
methodology for accomplishing this. Importantly, Heidegger finds the language and conceptual
framework of metaphysics to be deeply inscribed in our intellectual traditions, in the ways we
understand the nature of ourselves and the world, and in our everyday practices. Consequently,
this analysis is meant as a *Destruktion* (destruction or deconstruction) of metaphysics and its

\(^4\) I replace Macquarrie and Robinson’s translation of *Sein* as “Being” with “being” throughout.
history with respect to both its theoretical and existential manifestations. Simultaneously, it is meant to develop a better understanding of being.

In the early 1930s, Heidegger becomes convinced that his work in Sein und Zeit did not accomplish a sufficient overhaul of ontology. But this does not amount to a disavowal of that work. In his evaluation, Sein und Zeit successfully established necessary and far-reaching transformations. In fact, following his argument, the conceptual and methodological position from which he critiques Sein und Zeit in the 1930s is accessible systematically only by having previously worked through the ontological problematic opened up in 1927. Yet, for technical reasons I will address in Chapter II, Heidegger argues that his treatment of the ontological problematic in Sein und Zeit does remain metaphysical. In the 1930s, he aims to rectify this by rethinking being in terms of Ereignis (event). In other words, being – or rather, what Heidegger now calls “beyng” (Seyn) – is described as evental in nature. Working out the evental nature of being and unpacking its broader philosophical implications become central to Heidegger’s project. In the margin of “Brief über den ‘Humanismus’” in his personal copy of the 1949 first edition of Wegmarken, he notes: “For ‘event’ [Ereignis], has been the guiding word of my thinking since 1936.” Proper attention to this is imperative for understanding the

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15 SZ 19/41. As Richardson emphasizes, Heidegger’s “destruction” is not to be an annihilation of the edifice of metaphysics altogether. Problematizing the grounds of metaphysics and carrying out fundamental ontology entails working out the non-metaphysical grounds of metaphysics in a more originary ontology, consequently establishing the possibility to reground metaphysics such that it might eventually be recuperated (TPT passim).

16 In Chapter II, I differentiate between the technical senses of Heidegger’s Sein and Seyn (being and beyng). Until then, I will use the more conventional “being” to cover them both.


transformation Heidegger’s thought goes through in the 1930s, accounting for many of his obscure concepts, and registering their full significance for issues of contemporary ontology.

Broadly speaking, I maintain that Heidegger’s oft mentioned Kehre is a turn to the event – to thinking being as event. Philosophically, it operates at several different levels.\(^{19}\) The turn entails a conceptual transformation or a transformation of thought. But, more essentially, it is a structural dynamic or operation of being. The occurrence of the turn in Heidegger’s thought is commonly cited to mark a distinction between the so-called “early” and “later” periods of his work (what Richardson denominates Heidegger I and Heidegger II).\(^{20}\) Making sense of this entails a number of methodological, conceptual, and textual complexities, which I will address in Chapters I-III. With this turn Heidegger inaugurates the broader turn to evental ontology in mid-late twentieth and early twenty-first century philosophy. Thinkers such as Jacques Derrida, Jean-Luc Nancy, Deleuze, and Alain Badiou, to name just a few, carry this forward. Heidegger, though, staked out key philosophical problematics that would shape the conversations in which they engage. He also forged new conceptual apparatuses to address those problematics, some of which have been integrated into contemporary thought, some of which have not. One goal for this dissertation is to rehabilitate some of these neglected aspects, highlight their impact on Heidegger’s ontology, and explore what they mean for the relation between Heidegger and Deleuze’s projects.

As I will show, there are two core senses of “event” for Heidegger. The first is that of a rupture in the history of Western thought that opens the possibility for new, non-metaphysical approaches to our theoretical and practical endeavors. This involves a re-appropriation of the

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\(^{19}\) For a much more detailed treatment of Heidegger’s Kehre, see Richardson, TPT passim.

\(^{20}\) Richardson’s distinction between Heidegger I and II demarcates Heidegger’s work prior to 1930 and from 1930 until his death in 1976, respectively (TPT esp. 22, 230, 476, 623-628, 632-633). For more, see Richardson’s index entries “Heidegger I,” “Heidegger II,” and “Heidegger I and II” (TPT 756). Richardson takes Heidegger’s 1930 lecture “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit” to mark the inauguration of Heidegger II (TPT 624).
ontological ground from which human existence has become alienated: being. The second sense pertains directly to the nature of being itself. Being, Heidegger argues, is evental in nature. Though the second of these senses will be my focus, understanding Heidegger’s approach to this and its stakes requires first addressing important elements of the first, which I do in Chapter I. For Heidegger, the heart of being as event is pure difference. Though he does not clarify the particulars well, the structure of the event can be worked out in terms of the logic of this difference, which I argue underwrites the ontology presented in Beiträge. Here, being as event is the differentiation of difference from itself, together with a logic of determinateness that this originates. The logic of determinateness composes the ontological structure of the Da expressed in the term “Da-sein.” Truth, ground, and time-space are interrelated registers in which the logic of the event is elaborated in the Da.

**Introduction to Deleuze’s Concept of Event**

In *Différence et répétition*, Deleuze introduces his concept of event as part of a system that proceeds from a radical critique of the history of ontology, with special focus on Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Leibniz, Kant, and Hegel. Deleuze’s central critical claim is that no previous ontology has been sufficient, i.e., there are aspects of reality for which none has been able to account. These aspects are forms of difference and repetition that fall between the cracks of any given categorial system. Aristotle’s system, for instance, is able to define the type “human” by marking the genus “animal” with the specific difference “rational.” This allows one to explain Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and Alexander as instantiations of this general type – each is a rational animal – but it fails to explain essentially the individuating differences that make Socrates Socrates and
not Plato. In Deleuze’s argument, such insufficiencies are the result of a set of fundamental and tightly related mistakes perpetuated by the tradition: namely, the conception of difference as secondary to identity, the conception of repetition as generality, and the perpetuation of the framework of representation. To solve these problems and produce a sufficient ontology, Deleuze argues that sufficient concepts of difference and repetition must be produced and, on that basis, the framework of representation must be rethought from a genetic perspective. That is, the genesis of representation from non-representational ontological bases must be explained. These become Deleuze’s central tasks in *Différence et répétition*.

To produce sufficient concepts of difference and repetition, Deleuze argues that it is first necessary to conceive being as univocal (as opposed to Aristotelian equivocity or the Thomistic analogy of being). This enables the ontological determination of beings to be explained in terms of intrinsic and intensive individuating difference, rather than extrinsic predication or the categories of representation. Deleuze develops the basic framework for his univocal ontology through engagements with Duns Scotus, Spinoza, and Nietzsche’s eternal return. Deleuze suggests that the eternal return provides a basic figure for the ontological dynamics of univocal being as difference and repetition, but this remains quite vague. He adds detail with a number of different conceptual registers, including that of his complex theory of time. Deleuze proposes three logically intertwined syntheses of time that form a genetic flow of univocal being. The first synthesis explains duration within what Deleuze calls the “living present.” It, however, is possible only on the ground of the second synthesis, which is described in terms of a “pure past” or “pure memory” that takes the form of Bergson’s cone of memory. If time were reducible to the relation between the living present and pure past, then our reality would be a perpetual repetition of the identical, with no radical fecundity or novelty, i.e., no future. Thus, Deleuze
argues that the first two syntheses must in turn be grounded in a third synthesis, a future that he calls the “pure and empty form of time.” This future is caesural: it is an originary ontological break that enables the overall movement of time. This movement, however, is not that of the lived experience of fully constituted representational subjects, it is the time marking the genetic univocal flow of being as difference and repetition. This parallels the Heideggerian self-determination of the event in the structures of truth, ground, and time-space, i.e., the logic of the Da. Deleuze gives a first and preliminary account of the event in this context. The event is the caesural pure and empty form of time, the form in which anything that can occur can occur. Yet in this definition, the structure of the event remains somewhat unclear. Providing a full definition requires turning to the second main account of the event, which appears in Deleuze’s analysis of the structure of virtual problems, dialectical Ideas, or multiplicities and their actualization in systems of simulacra.

Making sense of this requires clarifying the ontological status of simulacra in his system. Deleuze produces his concept of simulacra by engaging Plato, or at least a certain Deleuzian version of Platonism. According to Deleuze, the primary task of this Platonism is to differentiate between icons or claimants that are well-grounded participants in the quality of an Idea and simulacra or false claimants (who is the true statesman or the true philosopher, for example?). An icon has being in proportion to its participation in an Idea. And Ideas, being eternal and unchanging, are loci of identity. Since simulacra do not participate in the quality of an Idea, but present themselves as if they did, Platonism excises them from proper reality. Simulacra do not count as legitimate beings. However, this implies a performative contradiction: the system implicitly recognizes the being of simulacra insofar as it is designed specifically to distinguish between them and icons. Deleuze argues on the basis of this point that by affirming the being of
simulacra, he is able to effectuate a certain overturning of Platonism. This overturning undermines the legitimacy of the ontological circuit of identity between Ideas and icons and forces a new conception of the nature of beings. Namely, for Deleuze, beings are simulacra, or rather, coagulations of modulating systems of simulacra. Systems of simulacra are systems in which different relates to different by way of difference itself. Identity is generated only as a secondary or derivative effect of difference. What, though, is the ontological structure of these systems of simulacra? In Deleuze’s account, simulacra exist with two simultaneous ontological registers, that of the virtual and that of the actual. Individual simulacra are defined by the differential and differencial processes operating in these registers. Events are precisely singular differential and differencial processes that structure, generate, and define systems of simulacra.

**Overview of Major Literature**

At the time of the completion of this dissertation, there are only two other book length studies of the intersection of Heidegger and Deleuze at the level of ontology: Miguel de Beistigui’s *Truth and Genesis: Philosophy as Differential Ontology* (2004) and Gavin Rae’s *Ontology in Heidegger and Deleuze: A Comparative Analysis* (2014). In addition Janae Sholtz recently published a study examining Heidegger and Deleuze’s philosophies of art and politics: *The Invention of a People: Heidegger and Deleuze on Art and the Political* (2015). Complimenting these are a growing number of journal articles examining the relation of Heidegger and Deleuze and books taking up this relation as part of broader projects. Knox Peden’s *Spinoza Contra*

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Phenomenology: French Rationalism from Cavaillès to Deleuze (2014) and Joe Hughes’ Deleuze’s ‘Difference and Repetition’ (2009) are good examples of the latter.\(^{23}\)

Despite such literature and a growing scholarly interest, both the philosophical and historical relations of Heidegger and Deleuze remain minimally clarified. Beistigui’s study operates within an outdated interpretive methodology dominant in late twentieth century continental philosophy in which it was acceptable to adopt an author’s technical vocabulary and reconstruct claims without rigorous definition or justification. This leads it to be a provocative analysis, but one with a limited degree of philosophical use. Moreover, I will argue that most interpreters of Heidegger’s private manuscripts (including Beistigui) have simply botched the ontology presented in them. Failure to mark a set of crucial distinctions made by Heidegger leads them to fundamentally flawed interpretations of his texts.

Rae’s approach is correct in its guiding assertion that a comparison of Heidegger and Deleuze on any topic must be grounded in an analysis of their ontologies. However, he frames his book by defining ontology as the project “trying to answer the question: what does it mean to say that something is?”\(^{24}\) This fails to register a fundamental argument Heidegger makes that defines his project in the 1930s. Heidegger’s attempt to break out of metaphysics, implementing a turn to thinking being as event in Beiträge, requires that being not be conceptualized in terms of the being of beings. Ontology must render an account of being in being’s own terms: “beyng can no longer be thought on the basis of beings but must be inventively thought from itself.”\(^{25}\) Without registering this move, any account of Heidegger’s evental ontology remains

\(^{23}\) Knox Peden, Spinoza Contra Phenomenology: French Rationalism from Cavaillès to Deleuze (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2014) and Joe Hughes, Deleuze’s “Difference and Repetition” (London: Continuum, 2009).

\(^{24}\) Rae, Ontology vii.

\(^{25}\) GA65 7/8.
fundamentally misconstrued and, given the centrality of this to his later work, consequently fails to represent accurately his overall project.

**Statement of Scholarly Contributions**

This dissertation is organized by both thematic and comparative concerns. Thematically, it aims to answer the question noted above (Why is it necessary and what exactly does it mean to conceive being as event?), albeit in a way limited in scope to the responses supplied by the two main figures I engage. On this front, my intention is to contribute to the broader discourse of contemporary ontology and, more narrowly, to that of the theory of event. I hope it might, moreover, be of use for those working in related fields of research in which the nature of events is important (psychology, aesthetics, political theory, etc.).

At the comparative level, this project has two main dimensions: one theoretical and one historical. With respect to the former, I aim to clarify the consonances and dissonances of Heidegger and Deleuze’s ontologies at the level of their most fundamental terms. I focus on the concept of the event and the related themes indicated for both practical reasons (an exhaustive comparison would be a truly massive task) and a core theoretical reason: the event’s fundamental role in each philosopher’s account of being and, in turn, of the nature of beings. Given its fundamentality, clarifying the more derivative (and often obscure) terms in each ontology requires grounding them in the author’s formulation of the problematic of the event. Failure in this regard results, as Spinoza said, in thinking of conclusions as if divorced from their premises. Consequently, any comparison between derivative elements of the two ontologies requires the same. Thus, this project aims to work out a basis for further, systematically grounded
comparison between Heidegger and Deleuze. With respect to historical comparison, my goal is to clarify certain aspects of the scholarly and textual influence of Heidegger on Deleuze. This influence is profound, yet has not been sufficiently addressed in the scholarship. I draw out connections in a number of contexts, including Deleuze’s use of the concepts of difference and ground, his analysis Aristotle, and especially in his engagement with Lautman.
Part 1: Heidegger’s Evental Ontology
Chapter I

The Methodological Ground of Heidegger’s Evental Ontology

Chapter Overview

In this chapter, I begin by addressing a set of methodological concerns pertinent to the task of analyzing Heidegger’s concept of event. This includes a discussion of the movement of his thought as it develops over his career, some points regarding his use of the concept of ground, and a proposal for a realigned interpretive approach to his corpus. After that, I outline the two primary senses of the event for Heidegger, which I call the “historical” and “ontological” senses (my primary focus in Chapters II and III is on the latter). Then, I lay out two interpretations of Heidegger’s concept of event prominent in current scholarship: those given by 1) Thomas Sheehan and Quentin Meillassoux and 2) Richard Capobianco and Richard Polt. Following this, I turn to Sein und Zeit and the ground Heidegger establishes there for his ontological project. This is necessary because properly explaining Heidegger’s concept of event in Beiträge requires establishing conceptual continuity with the groundwork of Sein und Zeit. Thus, I offer an analysis of Heidegger’s account of Dasein as the condition for the possibility of any ontology. This allows him to ground the ontological problematic by articulating it along the lines of Dasein’s existence, rendering the early methodology for doing ontology as the existential analytic of Dasein. Eventually, this would evolve, generating the reconfiguration of the ontological problematic found in his Kehre. I then turn to Heidegger’s analysis of Dasein as the existential-ontological ground of history, the factual impact of the history of metaphysics on Dasein’s existence, and its consequent role in shaping the project of ontology. I also provide a
synopsis of the history of error that Heidegger understands to constitute metaphysics. These analyses establish a crucial methodological continuity between the historical task of bringing about an “other beginning” (i.e., the historical sense of the event) and the ontological problematic of truth. This is necessary because in Chapter II, I reconstruct Heidegger’s account of the evental nature of being (i.e., the ontological sense of the event) in terms of the problematic of truth. Chapter II lays the ground for elaborating the evental nature of being in terms of ground and time-space in Chapter III. Together, Chapters I-III establish the roles of difference, ground, and time-space in Heidegger’s evental ontology, which connect it directly to Deleuze’s on a systematic level. This also frames 1) a number of additional but more minor points of Heideggerian influence on Deleuze and 2) the way Deleuze’s project in *Différence et répétition* takes up Heidegger’s in certain ways and carries it forward. I argue in Chapters IV and V that attention to these points is important for making sense of Deleuze’s evental ontology.

1: Methodological Concerns: The Structure of the Movement of Heidegger’s Ontology and Its Impact on Interpretive Approaches to his Corpus (Generally) and the Concept of Event (Specifically)

The event is the self-eliciting and self-mediating center in which all essential occurrence of the truth of beyng must be thought back in advance. This thinking back in advance to that center is the inventive thinking of beyng. And all concepts of beyng must be uttered from there.26

Heidegger’s project in the late 1920s turned around the ontological difference, that is, the difference between being and beings. In *Sein und Zeit*, he argues that being is neither a being nor

26 GA65 73/58-59.
Rather, his question is about “the being of beings.”28 Fundamental ontology proceeds within the methodological horizon of the existential analysis of Dasein or human existence, and Heidegger develops a series of different renditions of the being of Dasein, including Being-in-the-world, care, thrown projection, and temporality. After Sein und Zeit, he argues that this ontology is ultimately insufficient. Consequently, he recasts the problematic of being, and does so repeatedly, extending a series of accounts that – I will argue – finds its apex in thinking being as event. Particularly after around 1930, a good deal of the terminology he introduces in this process rings very bizarre, and much of this is associated with his concept of event. This has contributed to a great deal of confusion in scholarship addressing this concept.

Clarifying Heidegger’s account of the event requires clarifying the way his ontology develops, that is, the movement of his thought. Without this, a number of concepts involved become disconnected from aspects of the ontology they were built to articulate. They then seem arbitrary or become easily misunderstood. I take this to be the root of many analytically minded philosophers’ dismissive attitudes toward Heidegger’s later thought. On the other hand, I also take it to be at the root of some sub-cultures of Heideggerian continental philosophy rightly criticized for lack of rigor. Rudolph Carnap’s condemnation of Heidegger is a good example of how this can go wrong. Lee Braver summarizes his position well as follows: for Carnap “Heidegger’s ideas are based on a grammatical mirage which vanishes once logical analysis shows what is really going on inside these sentences.”29 However, my view is that when put into the context of the methodological evolution of Heidegger’s program, most of his bizarre

27 “The Being of beings ‘is’ not itself a being” (SZ 6/26). Macquarrie and Robinson translate “Seiendes” as “entity” or “entities” (see BT 19, fn. 1). I substitute “being” or “beings” throughout my citations.
28 SZ 6/26. This formulation relies on the ontological difference, without which the question of being would collapse into the question of beings as beings (Aristotle’s ὂν ᾗ ὄν).
formulations are in fact rigorous. Key to seeing why this is the case is recognizing that the series of renditions of the ontological problematic that Heidegger develops throughout his career do not correlate with programmatic breaks. That is, they are not the result of the author deciding his earlier work is bunk and then developing a new position inconsistent with the previous one.\textsuperscript{30} Yet a surpassing of previous renditions in favor of better ones is involved. The series of accounts Heidegger generates manifest a dynamic evolution of his ontology, and making sense of the concepts he uses, like that of event, requires clarifying the mechanism of the movement of that evolution.

A good deal of scholarship has addressed this at the macrological scale, particularly with respect to the transformation from Heidegger’s pre-\textit{Kehre} to post-\textit{Kehre} periods. However, little directly thematizes it at micrological scales. Certainly, plenty \textit{indirectly} addresses the movement of Heidegger’s thought by examining particular topics over different points in his career. Yet, none that I have found sufficiently explains the engine of this movement itself or what I find to be a clear structural homology through these scales. In this section I aim to clarify this, in the service of establishing a consistent methodology for reconstructing Heidegger’s concept of event, by examining a particular difficulty characterizing his corpus at both macrological and micrological levels. The difficulty is as follows: throughout Heidegger’s texts, the foundations of the methodology and of the conceptual apparatus through which he gives an account of his core problematic are brought into play by the nature of that problematic, according to the very account they enable. In other words, there is a reflexive, transformative relation between the account and what the account is about, a relation that drives an immanent evolution of that account forward and implies the supersession of earlier stages of it. This is particularly evident as his thought intensifies around the concept of event. It plays out in further methodological,\textsuperscript{30} Richardson argues this point extensively in \textit{TPT}, passim.
conceptual, and textual complexities that inform my analysis of Heidegger’s texts and reconstruction of his account of the event.

1.1: Syngenetic and Diagenic Axes

In the following, I argue for a realigned methodology for interpreting Heidegger’s corpus. It will be useful to present its terms here in advance, since what follows contributes to the justification of its use. This interpretive methodology takes the relations between grounding and grounded terms to be central in Heidegger’s thought. With respect to this, it is crucial to distinguish his understanding of the nature of ground from metaphysical concepts of ground. I expand on this throughout the remainder of Chapters I, II, and III. For now, I will simply point out that his concept of ground is in no way that of a substratum, ultimate foundation, principle, etc. Briefly stated, prior to Heidegger’s *Kehre*, a ground is the ontological structure enabling something to be, performing a function similar to a Kantian condition of possibility without being indexed onto the cognitive structure of an experiencing subject. After the *Kehre*, the difference between his concept of ground and metaphysical versions of ground becomes especially clear in *Beiträge*, where all grounding operations entail *Ab-grund* or abyssal ground, which both originates and exceeds ground, thus preventing any ground from becoming absolute. There, a set of interrelated structures of ground constitute an essential aspect of beyng as event.

To clarify the relations between grounding and grounded terms, I employ a distinction between what I will call *diagenic* axes (or axes of ground) and *syngenetic* axes (or axes of the grounded). I use the root γένω (*geno*) because Heidegger’s concept of ground explicitly entails a character of enabling what is grounded to be (e.g., as *Grund der Ermöglichung*) and an originary
(ursprüngliche) character (as in “Der Ab-grund ist die ursprüngliche Wesung des Grundes”). In this sense ground bears an essential genetic character (I expand on its nature at length in Chapters II and III). To be clear, I use the terminology of syngenetic and diagenetic axes to distinguish two orders in the register of ground, the genetic character of which must not be confused with that of metaphysical concepts of cause. The latter presuppose conceptions of the nature of being and of beings that Heidegger rejects. I use the δια and συν prefixes to indicate something similar to Saussure’s diachronic/synchronic distinction. Where Saussure’s distinction is organized on temporal lines, the one I am attributing to Heidegger is organized on lines of ground. Diagenetic axes run into the ground, i.e., from that which is grounded into its ground or, inversely, from ground to that which is grounded. For example, in Beiträge space and time can be situated along a diagenetic axis with respect to time-space, which is the ground whence they are originated. Such axes can in some cases be carried along farther: from p to its ground q; from q to its ground r; from r to its ground s, etc. I will elaborate such a sequence in my analysis of Heidegger’s account of truth as it transforms from Sein und Zeit to Beiträge: truth as correctness is grounded in truth as the unconcealment of beings, which is grounded in truth as the a priori ontological structures of freedom/openness and concealment/closedness/withdrawal, which is grounded in truth as self-differentiation. In distinction, to a syngenetic axis belong a set of entities, processes, or structures all grounded in the same manner, horizontal to or side-by-side one another. For example, at each of the diagenetic moments in Heidegger’s account of truth, a set of syngenically related terms is developed articulating it. Or again, in Beiträge, space and time are on a syngenetic axis with respect to each other. Likewise, my pen and my desk are beings related on a syngenetic axis within the unconcealment of beings. I will come back to a larger

31 WW 177nA/136nA; GA65 379/299.
32 Ferdinand de Saussure, Course in General Linguistics (Chicago, IL: Open Court, 1997).
33 GA65 371-388/293-306.
discussion and justification of the interpretive use of the syngenetic/diagenetic distinction later in
this section.

1.2: Heidegger’s Productive Logic: An Analysis of the Complex Evolution of His Ontology

Returning to the issue of the movement of Heidegger’s ontology, I would like to begin by
looking at an example of the difficulty I have pointed out, so that it can be more easily identified
later in some of his more abstruse conceptual registers. I will then elaborate on this movement
through a discussion of what Heidegger calls the operation of “Grundlegung” in his “produktive
Logic.”

In his understanding, one’s factical conditions constitute the standpoint from which any
philosophical inquiry proceeds. The key factical condition for Heidegger was his position
internal to the historical and conceptual configuration of metaphysics. From the start, however,
he problematized metaphysics, particularly with respect to its insufficiency for carrying out the
project of ontology. In his analyses of the historical and conceptual constitution of metaphysics
in Sein und Zeit, for example, a crucial downside to metaphysics is its failure to provide a
sufficient account of the existence of the human being, which Heidegger recasts as “Dasein.”
Dasein is distinguished from other beings like rocks and goldfish by an important characteristic:
it has its own being as an issue. Dasein’s existence is such that it includes a constitutive,
structurally reflexive exposure to the question of its own existence, and through that to the
question of being. Because Dasein’s existence is constituted in and through this question (even
when it does not pay attention to this fact), it constitutes an ontologically fundamental, internal
relation of thought and being. In this way, Dasein is the condition of possibility for any ontology

34 SZ 10/30.
(including metaphysics). I explore this in greater detail in Section 4 of this chapter. Because, in Heidegger’s mind, metaphysics maintains certain false presuppositions about the nature of the human being, it is unable to provide an appropriate account of Dasein. Consequently, metaphysics is unable to account for its own ground properly. Heidegger develops and reframes this problem incessantly throughout his corpus.

Since he proceeds from a position internal to the historical and conceptual configuration of metaphysics, Heidegger’s reframing of the project of ontology along the lines of the existential analysis of Dasein in *Sein und Zeit* marks a rupture in that configuration. Moreover, since the very existence into which Dasein inquires is partially constituted by the operation of questioning, each moment of carrying out that operation modulates its existence. This forms a Heideggerian version of Frege’s paradox.\(^{35}\) It is worth pointing out that Deleuze assigns a distinctive ontological importance to this paradox, which he attributes equally to Lewis Carroll and calls the “paradox of regress, or of infinite proliferation.”\(^{36}\) This paradox drives or draws the subject matter inquired into beyond the account given of it at any moment in the process of questioning. Here, we see an instance of the reflexive, transformative relation between the account given and what the account is about that characterizes Heidegger’s work. This operation of questioning drives forward the problematic of Dasein’s existence, and, with it, that of the ground of ontology and the task of working out the nature of being. In other words, the reflexive relation drives an immanent evolution of the account given at any moment beyond itself, superseding earlier stages. In this case, the possibility of a total and exhaustive account of

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\(^{35}\) The basic idea of this paradox can be seen in a familiar thought experiment. Imagine I have been tasked with composing a catalogue of every fact about everything that exists. I begin by listing facts about the things I see around me (“The glass is on the table.” “The table is made of wood.” And so on…). Eventually, though, if my list is to be complete, it has to include all the facts about the list itself (for example, “The list has \(N\) entries.”). And this leads to an infinite proliferation. When I add a fact about the list to the list, I’ve changed it, producing new facts that must in turn be listed. So, I list them. But each time I add another entry, I change the list again, generating new facts, and so on to infinity. In this scenario, there is always a necessary excess of facts over the domain of the list.

\(^{36}\) *LS* 41/28.
Dasein’s existence is always deferred beyond the one articulated in any particular instance. In my discussion of Albert Lautman’s engagement with Heidegger in Chapter V, it will be important to recall that Heidegger refers to this movement of surpassing as “transcendence.”

For Heidegger, this logic of deferral does not characterize only the epistemological or even existential situation of Dasein. It exemplifies an abyssal logic or logic of excess belonging to being. In “Vom Wesen des Grundes,” for instance, he discusses this in terms of “freedom” as “the abyssal ground [Ab-grund] in Dasein.”\textsuperscript{37} Again, in Beiträge, he develops this in terms of abyssal ground as one of the essential dimensions of the grounding character of being as event.\textsuperscript{38}

As I will discuss in Chapter II, after a series of programmatic transformations in the early-mid 1930s, in Beiträge Heidegger begins to think of this abyssal ground in terms of a logic of ontologically originary, inexhaustible differentiation. The fact that this logic belongs to being, moreover, has an impact on the structure of the methodology by which Heidegger addresses it.

The way Heidegger’s philosophy navigates the abyssal logic can be clarified by looking at what, in Sein und Zeit, he calls the “productive logic” belonging to his methodology.\textsuperscript{39} It describes the way his ontology renders progressively more grounded or appropriate (eigentliche) accounts of being. Importantly, a set of modulations of the concept of ground play a central role in defining it. As a related point, this logic shows that Heidegger’s methodology does not remain within the bounds of hermeneutics of suspicion or deconstruction, but from early on employs a rigorous, creative conceptual experimentalism or genetic methodology.

Heidegger’s discussion of productive logic is situated in his argument for the priority of the question and science of being with respect to other sciences (the main examples he comments on are mathematics, physics, biology, and theology). The concepts and formal structure he uses

\textsuperscript{37} WG 174/134, trans. modified, italics removed.
\textsuperscript{38} GA65 379/299.
\textsuperscript{39} SZ 10/30.
here, though, are not confined to making this distinction. They apply to any problematic insofar as it includes an account articulating its subject matter and this account experiences a Grundlagenkrise (crisis in its grounds or foundations), forcing it to revise them by developing a more appropriate understanding of its subject matter and, in turn, to fundamentally reconfigure the broader account by which the problematic field is articulated. These concepts and formal structures apply to Heidegger’s own ontology, which consistently tracks the abyssal logic entailed in and perpetually disrupting the fundamental terms of the problematic of being and reconfigures its account of being on the basis of more originary articulations that this enables.

In Heidegger’s analysis, all sciences have a Sachgebiet (subject matter).\textsuperscript{40} This can either be a Bezirk (domain) of beings, as in the cases of “history, Nature, space, life, Dasein, language,” or the being of beings in general, as in the case of fundamental ontology.\textsuperscript{41} To a domain (which I will also call a “problematic field” following Lautman and Deleuze) belongs a set of Grundstrukturen (basic/ground structures) understood to characterize its subject matter and determine proper terms for wissenschaftliche Forschung (scientific research) about it.\textsuperscript{42} Here, “the Grundstrukturen of any such area” are not the product of pure theoretical investigation; they bear a factical character, having “already been worked out after a fashion in our pre-scientific ways of experiencing and interpreting that domain of being \[Seinsbezirks\] in which the area of subject-matter is itself confined.”\textsuperscript{43} To illustrate this, our pre-scientific experience of regularity in nature might lead to theoretical research producing an account of laws of nature. Here, we develop Grundbegriffe (basic/ground concepts) to articulate the Grundverfassung (basic/ground constitution) of the subject matter at hand, for example, Newton’s three laws of motion as used

\textsuperscript{40} SZ 9/29.  
\textsuperscript{41} SZ 9/29.  
\textsuperscript{42} SZ 9/29.  
\textsuperscript{43} SZ 9/29.
to articulate the basic constitution of the problematic field of nature.\textsuperscript{44} The\
*Grundstrukturen* we understand to characterize a problematic field are revisable on the basis of scientific research. The objects thematized by such research provide one means for clarifying them. For example, research on natural objects helps to clarify the laws of nature: we can test to see if $F = MA$ or $F = M/A$. *Grundbegriffe* serve as a ground for more derivative concepts and operations within a science, like calculating the trajectory of a cannon ball or explaining planetary motion. As Heidegger puts it, “*Grundbegriffe* determine the way in which we get an understanding beforehand of the area of subject-matter underlying all the objects a science takes as its theme, and all positive investigation is guided by this understanding.”\textsuperscript{45}

What does Heidegger mean by “positive” investigation here? Ordinarily, a science’s *Grundbegriffe* take on an axiomatic role, go unchallenged, and become more or less transparent to its practitioners. In Heidegger’s terminology, positive investigation or positive science is scientific research done in such conditions.\textsuperscript{46} Positive science includes the type of research characteristic of logical positivism, in which systems of propositions are analyzed for internal semantic and syntactic consistency, consistency with the rules of an established logical language, and, regularly, consistency with the theoretical and methodological propositions of the natural sciences.

However, according to Heidegger, “real progress” in research comes not in its positive operations, but by “inquiring into the ways in which each particular area is basically constituted [*Grundverfassungen*].”\textsuperscript{47} Thus, we see two modalities of science: positive research that operates within the logic of a set of *Grundbegriffe*, which are not themselves in play, and what might be

\begin{footnotes}
\item[44] *SZ* 9/29, trans. modified.
\item[45] *SZ* 10/30.
\item[46] I will use the term “positive” in a different sense later.
\item[47] *SZ* 9/29.
\end{footnotes}
called “radical” science, which problematizes its Grundbegriffe in order to develop a more appropriate (eigentliche) account of the Grundverfassung of its subject matter. In fact, for Heidegger:

The real ‘movement’ [eigentliche ‘Bewegung’] of the sciences takes place when their basic concepts [Grundbegriffe] undergo a more or less radical revision which is transparent to itself. The level which a science has reached is determined by how far it is capable of a crisis in its basic concepts. In such immanent crises the very relationship between positively investigative inquiry and those things themselves that are under interrogation comes to a point where it begins to totter.\(^{48}\)

Heidegger uses this framework to argue for the priority of fundamental ontology with respect to all other sciences. His central point is that, whether they recognize it or not, the Grundbegriffe of other sciences contain presuppositions about the being of the domain of beings constituting their subject matter. Certainly, the factual concepts framing fundamental ontology also contain presuppositions, indeed faulty ones, but it is an explicit task of fundamental ontology to root them out. In other sciences, the very delineation of a problematic field entails an interpretation of the being of the set of beings making up that field: “Since every such area is itself obtained from the domain of beings themselves, [the] preliminary research, from which the basic concepts are drawn, signifies nothing else than an interpretation of those beings with regard to their basic state [Grundverfassung] of being.”\(^{49}\) However, since such sciences are unable to

\(^{48}\) SZ 9/29.  
\(^{49}\) SZ 10/30. There is an additional, implicit logic supporting Heidegger’s claim for the priority of fundamental ontology, specifically with respect to ontic sciences. The problematic field of an ontic science is defined by the set of beings or aspects of beings it takes as its subject matter (the problematic fields of biology and ethics both include human beings, but each with respect to different aspects). In other words, there are sets of beings or aspects of beings that are excluded by each ontic science except one. That, in Heidegger’s view, is metaphysics, which is guided by the question of what beings are insofar as they are beings, i.e., Seiendheit or Aristotle’s ὁ νῦν ὁ. Since no ontic science can contain all beings under all aspects (insofar as they are beings) in its problematic field without becoming identical with metaphysics, none can give a sufficient account of the being of beings in general. Likewise, metaphysics is incapable of this because it fails to make the ontological difference between being and beings. It investigates beings insofar as they are beings, but not the being of beings. Otherwise, it would become fundamental
sufficiently clarify the being of beings in general, they require one that does. That science is fundamental ontology. Without it, faulty presuppositions about the being of beings built into a science’s Grundbegriffe get transmitted throughout that science as a whole. Without first being grounded by fundamental ontology, a science’s Grundbegriffe cannot provide an appropriate account of the Grundverfassung of its subject matter. Fundamental ontology must lay the grounds for other sciences. Since the historical condition of the sciences is such that their Grundbegriffe bear faulty interpretations of the being of beings, fundamental ontology enacts the second, radical type of science. It challenges the Grundbegriffe of other sciences, and provides the ground in terms of which they can be appropriately revised.

Here, we can see the fault in Carnap’s critique of Heidegger. Carnap’s charge results from attempts at making sense of Heidegger’s bizarre linguistic constructions from a position external to the ontological problematic within which they were produced. His critique fails because it does not make the distinction between 1) conceptual or linguistic formulations that operate within an established syntax – at the level of positive science – to which grammatical analysis within that syntax properly applies and 2) formulations that aim to articulate the ground enabling an established syntax to be, i.e., formulations operating in the service of radical science.

In Heidegger’s account, “such ground-laying [Grundlegung] for the sciences is different in principle from the kind of ‘logic’ which limps along after, investigating the status of some science as it chances to find it, in order to discover its ‘method.’” Grundlegung does not operate like positive science within the logic of an established set of Grundbegriffe, but as

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ontology, which is precisely what Heidegger is aiming to accomplish. Consequently, neither metaphysics nor any other ontic science is capable of supplying an appropriate account of the being of beings. Yet their basic concepts contain presuppositions about this. Thus, fundamental ontology is needed to clarify the being of beings and properly ground the ontic sciences.

radical science, problematizing them and cutting into deeper ground on the basis of which they may be reconfigured. It is this process that Heidegger calls “productive logic.” *Grundlegung*, he writes, “is a productive logic – in the sense that it leaps ahead, as it were, into some area of being, discloses it for the first time in the constitution of its being [Seinsverfassung], and, after thus arriving at the structures within it, makes these available to the positive sciences as transparent assignments for their inquiry.”51 This process is productive because it discloses new aspects of the being of a science’s subject matter and produces new, more ontologically appropriate Grundbegriffe to articulate it. The productive logic characterizing *Grundlegung* doesn’t simply deconstruct the Grundbegriffe of a problematic field; it does that and ventures new Grundbegriffe or accounts to articulate the Grundverfassung of its subject matter in an ontologically appropriate way. It is worth mentioning that Heidegger cites Kant as an example of this sort of productive logic: “the positive outcome of Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason* lies in what it has contributed towards the working out of what belongs to any Nature whatsoever, not in a ‘theory’ of knowledge. His transcendental logic is an a priori logic for the subject-matter of that area of being called ‘Nature.’”52 In comparison with Kant, Heidegger reconfigures the core problematic of philosophy. Yet, in the 1930s he also begins to argue for structures and logics of being that are ontologically prior to all beings, enabling them to be at all.

Of course, the function of fundamental ontology for Heidegger is not simply to lay the grounds for other sciences, but to work out the nature of being. In doing so, fundamental ontology enacts the same radical movement with respect to the problematic of being. This is seen in a number of registers, including its disruption of the historical framework of metaphysics forming its factual situation. As outlined above, this disruption begins by grounding ontology in

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51 SZ 10/30-31, trans. modified.
52 SZ 10-11/31. Heidegger is not using “positive” here in the sense of “positive science.”
the existential analysis of Dasein, which leads to the complex, reflexive evolution of ontology and the logic of deferral or abyssal logic entailed in its problematic. This complexity and logic characterize the problematic of being in Heidegger’s analysis from early to late, not merely the methodology of *Sein und Zeit*.

The terminology of Heidegger’s productive logic helps clarify this. The radical movement of his thought is precisely along what I am calling the diagenic axis (the axis of ground), drawn out by the abyssal logic. The evolution of his ontology enacts an incessant line of *Grundlegung*. Each of Heidegger’s renditions of the ontological problematic is generated by problematizing the *Grundbegriffe* of a previous rendition (say, that of the historical framework of metaphysics). He tracks the implicit but previously unrecognized logic entailed in the ontological features articulated by those *Grundbegriffe*, but exceeding the account they offer, to a standpoint more originary and appropriate (e.g., the nexus of thinking and being constituted by a being that has its own being as an issue). He then recasts the *Grundbegriffe* to articulate his subject matter in a more originary and appropriate way, that is, he lays new grounds for the ontological problematic (e.g., the concept of Dasein). The account constituted by laying these grounds enables a reconfiguration of the entire problematic field at hand. In each rendition, then, Heidegger advances the ontological problematic by employing this productive logic. In the language of abyssal logic, each rendition is opened up to the abyssal logic entailed in its ground, destabilized by tracking that logic deeper into the abyss, and casting a set of *Grundbegriffe* articulating the dimensions of the problematic thus disclosed. This renders a conceptual distance or oblique angle with respect to the terms of the previous account, enabling them to be fundamentally rethought.
This productive logic describes not only the macrological movement of Heidegger’s ontology, but micrological movements involved in the transformation and generation of concepts within his texts, sections, paragraphs, and sentences. Making sense of his concept of event, as well as other obscure concepts and technical formulations, is dependent upon situating them in their proper location in the evolution of his account and reconstructing them with respect to their function in advancing the productive logic entailed in Heidegger’s problematic of being. In Chapter II, my analysis of Heidegger’s transformation of the ontological problematic of truth and how this renders a first properly grounded account of being as event will offer a detailed example of this productive logic.

Three initial aspects of Heidegger’s concept of event can be indicated on the basis of the complex evolutionary movement of his ontology. First, the event can be figured as a rupture in the foundations of metaphysics (this is the historical sense of the event I discuss in Section 2 below). This rupture has its ontological origins in the logic of deferral or abyssal logic characterizing the problematic of being. He pursues this problematic and its logic continually drives his thought beyond each rendition of being. The concept of event is meant to articulate being in a way free of metaphysical import. Second, Heidegger’s concept of event develops in different works. In fact, since an abyssal logic is built into it, a totalized concept of the event is impossible in principle. It offers an open-ended ontology and renders the evental nature of being

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53 It is important to point out that this is not always a smooth or seamless development, but one of fits and starts. Heidegger’s reflections on this process in Beiträge §42, entitled “From ‘Being and Time’ to ‘Event,”’ are helpful: “On this ‘way,’ if to keep falling down and getting up can be called a way, it is always and only the same question of the ‘meaning of beyng’ that is asked. Therefore the positions of the questioning are constantly different. Every essential questioning must radically change whenever it questions more originally. There is no gradual ‘development’ here. Even less is there that relation of the latter to the earlier according to which the latter would already lie enclosed in the earlier. Since everything in the thinking of beyng is directed toward the unique, to fall down is, as it were, the norm here! This also rules out the historiological procedure: to renounce the earlier as ‘false’ or to prove that the later was ‘already meant’ in the earlier. The ‘changes’ are so essential that their scale [Ausmaß] can be determined only if in each case the one question is pervasively asked out of its own site of questioning” (GA65 84-85/67-68). Polt restates one of the key points as follows: “Neither should we say that Being and Time already includes what comes later; the movement toward the Contributions is not a deduction of what is implied by some previous propositions, but trailblazing” (EB 44).
“problematic” in a sense discussed by Deleuze in *Différence et répétition* that I address in Chapters IV and V. Third, Heidegger does not introduce the concept of event in an external, adjunct way into his ontology, such that it could be defined independently of it. He arrives at it by pressing through the project of *Sein und Zeit*. That project generates methodological and conceptual horizons that are eventually driven beyond themselves by the complex logic of the problematic of being. The concept of event articulates this problematic in the advanced stages of the evolution of Heidegger’s account. It is within these horizons, or rather through their evolution, that the event is defined. Heidegger’s use of this concept marks a supersession of earlier forms of his method and its concepts.

1.3: Diagenic Analysis

The complex structure of the movement of Heidegger’s ontology – necessitated by the abyssal logic belonging to the problematic of being and the reflexive relation between being and his methodology – calls for an interpretive realignment of his texts and concepts. The conventional approach to Heidegger’s corpus is chronological or “historiographical” (see Section 4.2 below for discussion of the latter term). In it, the relations of his texts – or, more properly, their conceptual renditions of various problematics – are based on their positions along the timeline of his career. In contrast, in the approach I suggest, their relations should be based on a simultaneously methodological and ontological relation animating the movement of his thought: that of grounded and grounding terms. My view is that Heidegger’s corpus should be arranged according to the degree of grounding each text or conceptual scheme is able to attain. That is, they should be analyzed according to their position along a diagenic axis (an axis of ground).
rather than a chronological axis. This provides a rigorous way to deal with the type of complex 
evolution found in Heidegger’s work and to solve a set of four related interpretive problems. 
Moreover, I take it to be necessary for properly reconstructing his concept of event.

The first of these problems is what to do with seemingly inconsistent accounts Heidegger 
gives of various subject matters at different points in his work. Is his ontology internally 
inconsistent? For example, as mentioned, in “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit” (lecture 1930, print 
1943) the essence of truth is accounted for in terms of originary ontological structures of ἀλήθεια 
(unconcealment, clearing, openness) and λήθη (concealment, withdrawal, closedness). Yet in 
Beiträge, this a-lēthic account no longer constitutes the most originary nature of truth. How can 
such a conflict be explained? The extensive literature dealing with transformation in Heidegger’s 
thought largely focuses on the macrological shift from its early to later stages. I don’t find this 
sufficient for addressing the problem, since transformations of his account often occur at 
micrological levels.

The second interpretive problem is that if Heidegger’s corpus contains the type of 
reflexive, complex evolution I have described, how can we best navigate its various superseding 
stages with conceptual clarity, avoiding mixing them up and muddling his account?

The third problem is with Heidegger’s often poetic or mystical sounding language. Did 
he ultimately resort to logically inconsistent, nonsensical, or arbitrary formulations? Is his 
philosophy linguistically rigorous?

The fourth and final problem is found in recent debates over which of Heidegger’s texts 
should be given philosophical and, consequently, scholarly priority over others. How should one 
sort out which offer the best statements of his thought regarding some issue? In Identität und 
Differenz, for instance, the primary sense of the event is an “owning in which man and Being are
delivered over to each other” or “the belonging together of man and Being.” In *Beiträge*, however, the event figures primal structural dynamics of beyng taken independently of any such reciprocal relation. Many scholars take texts like *Identität und Differenz* to provide Heidegger’s “real” post-*Kehre* thought because they were honed for publication (*Beiträge* was not) and were written later, thus benefiting from greater refinement. I disagree and will devote Section 1.4 to arguing that analyzing Heidegger’s texts in light of the distinction between diagenic and syngenic axes solves these problems and shows a key role for *Beiträge*.

The methodological use of the notion of ground I am advancing is justified by its essential role throughout Heidegger’s corpus, as shown in certain respects in terms of the movement of *Grundlegung* above. This role can be further demonstrated in at least two related ways. First is his consistent use of the relation of grounding and grounded terms in his analyses, either explicitly or implicit in the logic of his problematics. In either case, relations of ground form a consistent organizing principle in his texts. Heidegger’s ontological program is oriented by the task of uncovering the originary ground of whichever terms are currently used to articulate the problematic of being. This enacts a productive logic of *Grundlegung*. Though this productive logic of abyssal grounding shares certain similarities with transcendental philosophy, in Chapter II I argue there are also important differences that set it apart. Second, Heidegger several times explicitly thematized the notion of ground in a way bearing decisive impact on his program. While relations of grounding and grounded terms are constantly used in his treatment of the ontological problematic, the problematic of ground itself forms a key register in which the nature of being is addressed. In “Vom Wesen des Grundes,” for instance, Heidegger writes,

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54 GA11 45/36.
“‘ground’ is a transcendental characteristic of the essence of being in general.” In Beiträge this is emphasized stronger still when the event is characterized by a set of grounding operations it performs, i.e., the structural dynamics of ground become one of the key registers in terms of which the evental nature of being is worked out. There, one finds a merging of the first, methodological use of relations of grounding and grounded terms and the ontological operations of ground belonging to the event.56

The distinction between diagenic and syngenetic axes allows me to clarify the supersession involved in the complex evolution of Heidegger’s ontology as well as the relations between a number of his difficult concepts. This solves the first and second interpretive problems because it explains the internal relation of concepts as they develop within Heidegger’s texts and how one and the same subject matter can be explained in different terms at different stages of the ontology.57 When examined in light of the reflexive evolution I have described, together with the relations of ground involved, the particular characteristic of a particular conceptual transformation can be accounted for. My methodological claim is that the evolution of Heidegger’s ontology occurs along a diagenic axis. With each rendition of new Grundbegriffe comes a clarification of syngenically related features within the problematic field at hand.

Sein und Zeit Division I can serve as an example. 1) Heidegger begins with a diagenic move, inquiring into the condition of possibility for any ontology, including ontology as construed in the systems of the history of metaphysics. He establishes Dasein as this condition,

55 WG 172/132, italics removed. “Transcendental” is used here in relation to Dasein’s transcendance or Überstieg (surpassing) (WG 137/107). The term “transcendental” “names all that belongs essentially to transcendence and bears its intrinsic possibility thanks to transcendence” (WG 139/109).
56 It is important to note that for Heidegger the notion of ground is often tied together with that of essence. When Heidegger inquires into the essence of something, he is inquiring into the ground that enables that thing to be. Since this is the basis on which something is enabled to be whatever it is, this can be called its essence. This is seen, for example, in his formulation of essence as the Grund der inneren Möglichkeit (ground of the inner possibility) in “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit” (WW 186/143).
57 Note, however, that I have yet to detail how Heidegger grounds the problematic of being, and thus the whole of this complex evolution, via Dasein as the condition for the possibility of ontology. I do this in Section 4.
thereby recasting the ground of ontology. 2) On that basis, he establishes the basic state
(Grundverfassung) of Dasein as being-in-the-world, and then develops a number of syngenic
aspects of being-in-the-world: all the elements involved in the worldhood of the world, being-
with, being-in, etc. 3) At the end of Division I, Heidegger’s focus again turns to the diagenic axis
as he searches for a more originary unity whence the different syngenically related aspects of
being-in-the-world are grounded.\textsuperscript{58} He writes:

The totality of the structural whole [Die Ganzheit des Strukturganzen] is not to be
reached by building it up out of elements…. The being of Dasein, upon which the
structural whole as such is ontologically supported, becomes accessible to us
when we look all the way through this whole to a single primordially unitary
[ursprünglich einheitliches] phenomenon which is already in this whole in such a
way that it provides the ontological foundation for each structural item in its
structural possibility [so daß es jedes Strukturmoment in seiner strukturalen
Möglichkeit ontologisch fundiert].\textsuperscript{59}

It is not an accident that Heidegger refers to this ontological foundation as the being of
Dasein. The force driving or drawing forward his problematic of being is the question of the
ground whence the elements of a current rendition of that problematic are enabled or originated.
In the passage just cited, the analysis of anxiety serves that methodology, allowing Heidegger to
arrive at a conception of Sorge (care) as such a ground and as the being of Dasein.

Because being is in part characterized by the operations of ground it performs,
Heidegger’s axis of ground forms both an essential methodological and an ontological order.
Thus, his accounts of being and of related subject matters should be sequenced diagenically
rather than chronologically. Sequential renditions are produced through the self-modulating,
reflexive, productive logic of Grundlegung. This draws out the diagenic axis. Each account is
rendered by working out how its problematic drives or draws the conceptual horizon of the

\textsuperscript{58} SZ 181/226.
\textsuperscript{59} SZ 181/226.
extant account beyond itself, then developing new concepts to articulate that newly uncovered dimension, and finally rethinking the terms of the extant account on that basis. This means that problematic is driven or drawn to a more originary grounding. Of course, Heidegger sometimes follows miscues and dead ends and just gets things wrong. The result is that bits of his corpus do not fit seamlessly and consistently into one overarching progression.

The third interpretive problem has to do with Heidegger’s language and is seen vividly in relation to his concept of event. There are extensive analyses of Heidegger’s philosophy and use of language, which I will not detail. The issue here is found in the unusual constructions in his writing, particularly beginning in the 1930s. Heidegger’s language has invited the charge that, especially in his later work, he became sloppy and a mystical, stargazing poet – something maintained to be a far cry from a rigorous philosopher. This criticism is exemplified, for instance, by Carnap. The error with this indicated earlier can now be reformulated: the Carnapian position fails to recognize the structure of the evolution of Heidegger’s ontology, whereby new and often bizarre technical conceptual and linguistic formulations are generated out of methodological need. It fails not only to recognize the distinction between positive and radical science, but between 1) technical formulations that operate on a syngenetic axis, to which grammatical analysis within the syntax of that axis properly applies and 2) formulations operating along a diagenetic axis, which aim to articulate the ground enabling the syntax of a syngenetic axis to be. It thus fails to register the relations of Heidegger’s technical terms, mistaking them for the relations that can be accounted for within a positivistic, established syntactical system.

The issue with Heidegger’s language becomes especially apparent when dealing with the concept of event. The rupture with metaphysics Heidegger intends the concept of event to
establish introduces philosophical material with which the language of the tradition is unequipped to deal. Certainly, previous thinkers also developed theories of events, often in ways much more interesting than Heidegger recognizes. In his analysis, though, these operate within the metaphysical framework oriented by the question of Seiendheit or the beingness of beings: τί τὸ ὄν. As a result, the nature of events is taken as secondary to the nature of beings. For instance, events are conceived as the modification of the attributes of subjects. Linguistically, this metaphysical framework is infused into our grammar: a sentence begins with a subject and a predicate. And our technical philosophical vocabulary is adapted to the traditional problems that lay within that framework. Heidegger’s concept of event aims to give a more fundamental account of being than is possible within the framework of Seiendheit. As I have emphasized, this involves problematizing the very foundations of metaphysics and, consequently, its language. His project engages the rupture in the tradition’s conceptual structure that the event figures. Consequently, uncovering new aspects of the event or related ontological structures requires developing new technical language, language that gains its philosophical purchase in the context of the evental problematic. Defining and evaluating it requires first taking into account the conceptual and methodological transformations that generate it.

Though it can sometimes be tedious, Heidegger’s specialized language is developed to articulate features of a problematic that disrupt our conceptual resources, features that in his account traditional philosophical terminology categorically cannot articulate accurately. Our regular philosophical standards of clarity and precision can be offended easily when his concepts appear imprecise or fuzzy. However, by upholding exactly those standards when analyzing the methodological status of Heidegger’s concepts, it becomes clear that they are often necessarily imprecise or tentative because the subject matter they are designed to get a hold of is at the
frontier of what is thinkable in terms of the conceptual apparatuses available. In other words, they are often constructed with as much precision as possible or appropriate to articulate an aspect of the ontological problematic that has yet to be grasped in full precision or that is inherently imprecise or partially indeterminate. A good example in Beiträge is again the concept of abyssal ground, which articulates a highly precise moment in the ontology presented there, but a moment that exceeds the reach of traditional concepts of ground and is, in fact, partially indeterminate. It is a moment Heidegger struggles to explicate in that text, while the indeterminate aspect of abyssal ground is built into and reflected in his account of it. It would be a mistake to take this as a flaw in the concept, since the indeterminacy in the concept is inherent in the ontological feature it articulates.

Thomas Sheehan and others have expressed frustration with the hyper-jargonized, inconsistent state of the terminology on which much English language Heidegger scholarship has relied.60 I strongly agree with this sentiment. Such lingo obfuscates the compelling and rigorous accounts Heidegger gives as he grapples with the issues of his concern.61 For reasons noted, though, some of these issues do require disruptions of our language and grammar, and the development of new constructions to articulate radically reconfigured philosophical landscapes. But this does not justify perpetuating needlessly bizarre, often unintelligible jargon in scholarship. We can give precise accounts of Heidegger’s concepts even when what they aim to grasp involves aspects that are conceptually indeterminable or yet to be worked out with

61 As Lucretius observes, “For dolts admire and love everything more which they see hidden amid distorted words, and set down as true whatever can prettily tickle the ears and all that is varnished over with fine-sounding phrases.” Lucretius, On the Nature of Things, trans. W. H. D. Rouse, revised by Martin F. Smith (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002), 53; 1.641-644.
precision. Heidegger’s thought in his more obtuse writings can be rigorously reconstructed. The challenge is simply to be precise about the conceptual horizons within which they work, how and where they problematize those horizons, and the aspects of the problematic organizing those horizons that they aim to articulate.

1.4: The Place of Beiträge in Heidegger’s Corpus

On this basis, I return to the fourth problem: how to interpret the place of Heidegger’s various texts within his corpus. This is primarily prompted by a debate over the importance and validity (or lack thereof) of Beiträge and the related private manuscripts. I will argue that we must reject a popular interpretive approach that sidelines these texts. It claims that Beiträge should be disregarded 1) because of its fractured, rough character and 2) in light of later, published texts that also address many of its core themes (Ereignis, in particular). I will address the second of these points first.

Broadly speaking, that interpretive approach employs what I have called the chronological or “historiological” axis to organize Heidegger’s different texts or different renditions of a theme. These are sequenced loosely along a timeline, though a general distinction between pre-Kehre and post-Kehre periods is observed, sometimes along with a third transitional period in between. Within these groupings, certain texts are said to provide more genuine statements of Heidegger’s thought than others. Here, a text’s chronologically advanced position

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62 I would like to make the following qualification. I take more of Heidegger’s language to be rigorous than many other critical readers of his work. But I also think some goes beyond what can be justified by his methodology.

63 As an instance of a position favoring the importance of Beiträge, Vallega-Neu writes that it “may be considered Heidegger’s second major work after Being and Time.” Daniela Vallega-Neu, Heidegger’s Contributions to Philosophy (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2003), 1. For a position downplaying its importance, see Capobianco’s EH 35-36 and HWB 20 and 51-52.
in the corpus is taken to indicate a *philosophically* advanced status. The reasoning is that such a text had the benefit of more refinement and is thus the more mature statement of the author’s thought. I don’t deny that this is often the case. But the reason a later text is more philosophically advanced than another is not *because of* its chronological position. Rather, one is more advanced than another because it advances Heidegger’s master problematic of the nature of being or any of its sub-problematics further. Thus, if a chronologically earlier text advances the problematic of being further than a later one, the former should be arranged interpretively as more philosophically advanced. Since the various renditions of these problematics are organized along diagenic axes, what it means to be more philosophically advanced is to hold a more originary position on a diagenic axis: a more philosophically advanced account is one that articulates the ground whence the elements of a less philosophically advanced account are enabled to be.

When it comes to *Beiträge* and the related private manuscripts, in the chronological approach these are placed on a linear axis according to the dates of their writing, situated among Heidegger’s other published texts, lecture courses, etc. With respect to the concept of event, therefore, chronologically later texts like *Identität und Differenz* (1957) and *Zur Sache des Denkens* (1962) are taken to hold more philosophically advanced and genuine statements of Heidegger’s thought on the topic. This position justifies dismissing aspects of the event in *Beiträge* that are not prominent in later texts. For example, in *Identität und Differenz* and *Zur Sache des Denkens*, the event is primarily a codependent, co-appropriation between being and human existence, and so chronological interpreters dismiss the position advanced in *Beiträge* that the event must be independent of beings (I analyze this independence-claim in Chapter II).

The chronological approach often correlates with a suggestion that texts Heidegger made publicly available during his lifetime should be given preference over rougher, private

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64 GA65 85/67.
manuscripts. For instance, Richard Capobianco posits the philosophical superiority of *Introduction to Metaphysics* (1935) over *Beiträge* on these grounds, implicitly preempting *Beiträge*-based objections to his interpretation of “Being as *physis* as *aletheia*.”

Despite Capobianco’s excellent analyses of ἀλήθεια, φύσις, and a number of other elements of Heidegger’s work, I find the reasoning for such an interpretive approach unconvincing. First, this assumes that Heidegger’s reason for withholding publication of these writings was that he found them of sub-par quality. Perhaps. But before jumping to this conclusion good evidence is required ruling out other plausible explanations (like maintaining a free space for thinking without the restrictions imposed in tailoring a piece for a public audience; fear of alienating his audience; professional exigencies; political exigencies; etc.). Second, authors are often poor interpreters of their own work. Their reflective statements can certainly be helpful in unlocking obscure aspects of their text. But the richness of that text often far exceeds what is recognized by the author him or herself. Even if Heidegger did believe his private manuscripts were sub-par, it would not mean they in fact are. Monet famously judged many of his *Water Lilies* to be unacceptable and Virgil died with the order that his *Aeneid* be burned. Despite the cultish worship that has developed within Heidegger scholarship, Martin Heidegger was in fact human and susceptible to changing his mind and being wrong. Even if he had disavowed *Beiträge* as philosophically faulty – which he did not – he could have been wrong. Third, the richness of a text and the account it offers is not necessarily a function of its compositional elegance, unified structure (take Nietzsche’s aphorisms, for example), or aesthetic qualities one happens to prefer. Exemplifying the problem with this last point, Capobianco expresses a preference for a tempered, “gentile” account of *Ereignis* in Heidegger’s later texts over an “eruptive eventfulness and momentousness” he finds to characterize *Ereignis* in *Beiträge* and the related

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65 *HWB* 50. Also see *EH* 35-36. I discuss Capobianco’s interpretation of *Ereignis* in more detail in Section 3 below.
writings.\textsuperscript{66} He does not, though, offer any reason as to why these are preferable characteristics; it seems he simply likes them.

With respect to Beiträge in particular, I am dubious about the sentiment that diminishes the status of the text on the basis of its fractured, unpolished character: if the content is there, then the content is there, even if it is a rough read. I am especially dubious about diminishing its status on the basis of the fact that Heidegger did not publish it. If one desires to study the skills of a masterful samurai, a choreographed display sanitized for public consumption must always fall short. One would want to observe the warrior in the throes of real battle: how do they navigate the onslaught of their adversary? How do they improvise in changing conditions with setbacks and injuries? How do they handle their sword, use a particular environment to their advantage, and exploit their adversary’s unique weaknesses? How do they conserve energy and avoid fatigue? The same goes when studying a thinker. Texts polished for publication are obviously indispensable, but one should hope to study how a thinker actually thinks as they are in the throes of their problematic. This is precisely what we find in Heidegger’s Beiträge and the related private manuscripts. Here, Heidegger is writing openly, for himself. In contrast to the later texts and lectures dealing with Ereignis made public during his lifetime, Beiträge offers an unsanitized account. This is the battlefield version of the concept, not the Discovery Channel version. Moreover, to study the limits of a warrior’s skills, one would want to see them in action as they employ all within their power to handle a superior adversary, as the adversary begins to overwhelm them, and, finally, as the warrior’s body is splintered and disintegrated in an ultimate charge into the abyss of the adversary’s sword. Beiträge and the related private manuscripts, I suggest, are the texts where Heidegger pushes his thought to its farthest limits and, as a result, where it begins to fragment. I will also argue that this means some of their accomplishments are

\textsuperscript{66} EH 150n6.
Heidegger’s greatest. *Beiträge* (together with the related manuscripts) does not just provide another rendition of Heidegger’s problematic; it provides the rendition furthest advanced along the diagenic axis: the account of the event in *Beiträge* articulates the ground whence the structures used to articulate his problematic in other, public texts are originated.

Since I hold that the key to Heidegger’s thought is a grounding movement along the diagenic axis coupled with clarification of syngenically grounded structures at each stage, this is what organizes my interpretive approach and reconstruction of his work. Heidegger’s texts and concepts should be sequenced not along a chronological axis, but a diagenic axis. That is, they should be arranged according to the degree of grounding each is able to attain and the position of the concepts addressed with respect to an axis of ground. From this perspective, as I will demonstrate, the account of truth in “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit” is more originary than that in *Sein und Zeit*: it provides an account of the ground whence the more derivative structures of truth in *Sein und Zeit* are enabled to be. Similarly, the account of truth in *Beiträge* articulates the ground whence the structures of truth in “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit” are enabled to be, and thus is more advanced on the diagenic axis. This gets more complex when we look at a text like the 1949 Bremen lecture, “Einblick in Das Was Ist.” Here, Heidegger rethinks the nature of beings in terms of *das Geviert* (the fourfold) on a non-metaphysical ground, namely, the evental account of being. But since his texts explicitly dealing with the nature of the event work out the ground for an account of the fourfold, they must be read as more advanced on the diagenic axis, even though “Einblick in Das Was Ist” is chronologically later than some of them. Likewise, since Heidegger’s account of the event in later published texts like *Identität und Differenz* and *Zur Sache des Denkens* articulate the event at the level of the mutual appropriation of human

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existence to being and of being to human existence, whereas in *Beiträge* his account of the event articulates the very ground enabling such an appropriation, the former must be read as less originary on the diagenic axis than the latter (even though they might provide better accounts of parts of their themes). Indeed, in my view the accounts given in *Beiträge* and the related texts articulate the most profound degree of grounding in Heidegger’s corpus. They should be taken as its philosophical apex, that is, as having advanced Heidegger’s problematic the farthest.

2: An Outline of the Two Key Senses of “Event” for Heidegger

2.1: The “Historical” Sense of “Event”

It will be helpful now to provide a more detailed orientation to some of the stakes of Heidegger’s account of the event and then a condensed map of the conceptual landscape in which that account is situated. This will entail making a distinction between two key senses of “event” for Heidegger.

Broadly speaking, Heidegger is concerned with the historical situation in which human existence finds itself in the early-mid twentieth century. In Heidegger’s 1936 summer lectures on Schelling, he makes a statement about just what age he understands himself to be working within: “‘Today,’ that does not mean this very day, nor this year nor even this decade, but rather the whole transitional age from the nineteenth to the twentieth century and at the same time this transition in its whole European expansion.”68 It is presumed by most Heidegger scholars that this historical situation extends to our time today, though I find that after thinkers like Deleuze the accuracy of such a characterization of the early twenty-first century is less clear. The

68 GA42 39/22.
situation Heidegger diagnoses is one in which human existence is existentially defined within the philosophical, conceptual, linguistic, social, political, and technological framework of metaphysics. Philosophically, the history of metaphysics has had certain successes in accounting for the nature of beings. In fact, in Beiträge, Heidegger defines metaphysics by its orientation to the question of beings as beings (όν ἣ ὄν), which he argues Aristotle articulated in its most general form as τί τὸ ὄν (what are beings?). The problem, however, is that this orientation entails a distinctive myopia and consequently sets into place a philosophical horizon governed by that myopia: metaphysics is structurally incapable of understanding its own ground. This trouble goes hand in hand with the inability of metaphysics, on Heidegger’s diagnosis, to provide a suitable account of being. Because metaphysics is oriented by the question of beings as such, when it comes to ask about being, it treats being as if it were a being (a most eminent being or an abstract universal) and renders it as God, a substratum, a transcendent idea, etc. As long as our efforts to conceptualize being operate within the framework of metaphysics, Heidegger argues, we are doomed to failure. The specific character of the foundations of metaphysics and their self-myopia prevents success in the science of being. Thus, a genuine rupture must be made with metaphysics. Since we live within the historical framework of metaphysics, though, that rupture must itself be generated from within metaphysics. This rupture is opened up by inquiring into the condition of possibility or ground enabling the very historical configuration of metaphysics. This is “the ontico-ontological condition for the possibility of any ontology”: Dasein. It is important to note that along with the role of this inquiry in effecting such a rupture, Heidegger thinks the reconceptualization of this ground has the promise to provide metaphysics a refreshed

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69 GA65 75/60.
70 Note that in Beiträge Heidegger will argue there is an important difference between a condition of possibility and a ground. I discuss this in Chapters II and III.
71 SZ 13/34.
basis for its own projects, especially that of providing an account of beings. Ultimately, his efforts to fulfill this promise have only limited success, appearing as a reconception of beings in terms of 

das Geviert

(the four-fold) in 1949 and the 1950s.\(^52\) This effort by Heidegger, though, is meant to be non-metaphysical for reasons I cannot go into here, and does not appear in Beiträge. One count on which I take Deleuze to surpass Heidegger is his greater success in rethinking the nature of beings on the basis of an evental ontology.

As understood in Sein und Zeit, the ground enabling any ontology – and thus metaphysics – is Dasein: that being which is in such a way that its own being is an issue for it. Dasein’s existence, however, cannot be understood properly as a metaphysical substratum or foundation. Nor can it be fully accounted for in terms of metaphysical concepts of subject, object, or any other kind of “thing.” Faulty conceptualizations like these have resulted in understanding Dasein’s intellectual life to be in the situation described by Robert Sokolowski as the “egocentric predicament” in which one’s intellectual processes are taken to be internal, while what one is concerned with trying to understand remains external.\(^73\) In this case, the task of gaining an understanding of being (or anything else for that matter) is relegated to that of coming up with an adequate representation of being (as a metaphysically external being of some sort) in one’s mind.\(^74\) Dasein’s existence, in distinction, constitutes an ontological coincidence or internal relation between thinking and being. This character makes Dasein the ground enabling any ontology whatsoever.\(^75\) It also establishes the possibility of doing ontology in an immanent, non-representational way. Since, in Sein und Zeit, being is “the being of beings” and Dasein exists

\(^{72}\) As Mitchell notes, this concept first appears in Heidegger’s 1949 Bremen lectures (GA79). Andrew Mitchell, Translator’s Forward to Heidegger, Bremen and Freiburg Lectures, vii.


\(^{75}\) I detail this point in Section 3 of this chapter.
with an (usually unthematized) understanding of its own being, this gives Dasein a special priority as the being whose being is to be inquired into in the project of ontology. Thus, the project of rethinking the nature of being on proper ontological grounds – fundamental ontology – operates via the existential analytic of Dasein. To return to the language of rupture, since this rethinking addresses the very ground of metaphysics, it enacts its first “tearing-open.”

As we will see, however, according to Heidegger’s own post-mortems of *Sein und Zeit*, this project of fundamental ontology did not go far enough: its understanding of being – and of human existence – remained essentially determined by the metaphysical framework because it continued to think being on the basis of its relation to beings (namely to Dasein). Doing ontology on the basis of this relation is a product of Aristotle’s formulation of the question, τί τὸ ὄν (what are beings?), which resulted in his faulty determination of being as οὐσία, or more broadly what Heidegger calls *Seiendheit* (beingness). Thus, for Heidegger, a more profound rupture with metaphysics is required if we want to free ourselves from its grip and develop a fresh account of the nature of being that does not rely on faulty conceptual apparatuses. This rupture is figured as the transition from the project of a fundamental ontology of Dasein to the project of thinking being as event. Heidegger thinks that if we were to accomplish this, a genuinely new or “other beginning” (*andere Anfang*) for thought would become possible. This rupture, which Heidegger continually strives to effect but never thinks he has sufficiently accomplished (although I think he is more successful in this respect than he realized), is one register of the significance of the event. In what follows, I call this the “historical” sense of the event: the event as a rupture in the framework of metaphysics that drives or draws thought beyond it, but which can only be pursued from within its factual, historical horizons.

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76 I discuss Heidegger’s analysis of *Seiendheit* in Chapter II.
77 GA65 5/7.
2.2: The “Ontological” Sense of “Event”

“Event” has a second sense that for Heidegger bears an ontological priority over the historical one. I will call it the “ontological” sense of the event. Here, event becomes the core concept in terms of which Heidegger rethinks the nature of being itself (striving to do so independently of metaphysical influence) and, in turn, the plight of human existence. I take this sense to constitute the richest register of the event in Heidegger’s thought. When the project of developing an evental ontology is merely a glimmer on the philosophical horizon, the historical, ruptural sense of the event might be regarded as primary. Yet, this historical sense is unthinkable without whatever ontological element it might be that drives or draws thought beyond metaphysics. In other words, if metaphysics provided a sufficient ontological framework, it would be impossible for thought to discover aspects of being that are irreducible to that framework, and so there would be no possibility of a rupture (historical or otherwise). However, I am arguing that for Heidegger’s ontology, thought is constitutively bound to a logic of being (as event) that categorically undermines the foundations of metaphysics, and, further, that this is a necessary condition for the historical sense of the event. Obversely, since our factual conditions are such that we exist and think within the framework of metaphysics, developing an account of that ontological element (the evental nature of being) can only be accomplished in a way that begins within and is sculpted by such conditions, and takes this situation itself into account. In this way, the ontological sense of the event bears a priority over the historical, though the two remain bound together. In the ontological sense, the event is a dynamic of pure difference, driven by the differentiation of that difference from itself such that it self-determines in processes of appropriation (Er-eignis) and expropriation (Ent-eignis), which, elaborated in the registers of
truth, ground, and time-space, constitute the genetic ground of worlds of beings. I provide a schematic outline of the components of this definition below and then proceed (through Chapter III) to provide interpretive arguments justifying this reconstruction.

In the ontological sense, being itself is the event. Here, the event is an abyss or excess of difference, that is, an originary dynamic of self-differentiation (Unterschied or Entscheidung). How can the event be both an abyss and an excess of difference? Although abyss and excess may seem to be opposites, Heidegger’s language of the “abyss” is directly connected to the discourse of “ground” that I have already begun to explore: abyss is Abgrund – the prefix evoking both a “lack” and an “origin” of ground. Heidegger therefore holds that while the abyssal dimension of the event involves a sense of total lack, this is a genetic or originary lack – a lack that selfgrounds all that is. In this account, the abyss is excessive in two distinct senses: 1) it is the ground whence all that is is as the abyss’s overflow, and 2) its dynamic is such that it withdraws from and exceeds that which it grounds. Heidegger sometimes refers to this abyssal or excessive character as an ab-gründige Unerschöpfung (abyssal undepletion) or Unerschöpflichkeit (inexhaustibility). The dynamic of self-differentiation is a primordial and perpetual ontological displacement, which is figured by and unfolds within a “turning” of moments of Er-eignis (appropriation) and Enteignis (expropriation). As I will argue in Chapter II, although some scholars suggest that Heidegger’s event is identical with operations of appropriation and expropriation, this is incorrect: these are included in the dynamics of the event,

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78 See, for instance, Beiträge §242, where Heidegger understands the essence of truth to articulate the genetic appropriation of that which is: “the abyssal ground [Ab-grund] is also, and primarily, the originary essence of the ground, of its grounding, of the essence of truth” and “What is its [the abyssal ground’s] mode of grounding? The abyssal ground is the staying away [Weg-bleiben] of the ground” (GA65 379/299).
79 GA65 29/25 and 382/302.
80 For Polt’s discussion regarding whether Ereignis is a singular, occasional, or continual event, see EB 74-87. On the “turning” in question here, see GA65 185/145: “das in sich kehrige Ereignis” (“the intrinsically turning event”), 29/25, 34/29, 57/46, 95/76, and §255. I discuss this in more detail in Chapter II. For more on the dynamic of “appropriation” and “expropriation,” see, for example, GA14 24-28/19-23.
but certain aspects of the event exceed the logic of appropriation and expropriation. In different ways, the evental dynamic both generates and dissolves ground and, in turn, grounds or enables the manifestation or coming to presence of beings. That is, it enables beings to be.

Heidegger understands the process of this manifestation in terms of his concept of truth. At an important level, truth is articulated as a dynamic relation between originary concealment or withdrawal (λήθη) and unconcealment (ἀλήθεια). The majority of scholarship on the subject maintains that this a-λήθικος framework constitutes the most originary conception of truth in Beiträge. I argue, again in Chapter II, that this is not so. Ἀλήθεια and λήθη are grounded in originary difference or self-differentiation, and so Heidegger’s concept of truth in this text is most originary differential, not a-λήθικος. Bringing the event together with this concept of truth, Heidegger proposes an account of the advent of the world: at the a-λήθικος level, the event is a process by which the structures of originary concealment and unconcealment are appropriated in a co-determinate relation of simultaneous strife and intimacy, and this unfolds in a way giving determination to or forming the finite contours of a world.

This process is integrally related to Heidegger’s thinking of time (as the temporal character of being) and history. In part, the event figures an originary domain, ontologically prior to the historical, out of which historical epochs unfold. In fact, for Heidegger, history is an epochal history, where an epoch is not simply a “span of time” but a determination or formation of being that is enabled or given its determination (i.e., is sent or “destined” [geschickt]) by an originary holding back or withdrawal ontologically prior to that formation of being: “A giving which gives only its gift, but in the giving holds itself back and withdraws.”81 Here, the “sequence of epochs” or transformations of being is determined by withdrawals that enable

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81 GA14 13/9 and 12/8.
them. \(^{82}\) Whereas Polt concludes that for Heidegger *Ereignis* is an occasional event that occurs as the inception of an historical epoch (“it happens only at a few, inconspicuous moments”), I conclude that the inception of such historical epochs is one aspect of a more primordial event. This primordial event can be essentially characterized neither as occasional nor continual – either approach would locate the event within the domain of temporality, whereas this event is originary with respect to temporality. \(^{83}\) In other words, *Ereignis* grounds the time in which any occasional event might occur.

Metaphysics, which is characterized by the “forgottenness” or eclipse of the withdrawal of being in favor of the presence it enables, understands being in terms of presence. \(^{84}\) Thus, Heidegger argues, the event, and the withdrawal or refusal essential to it, is ontologically prior to the metaphysical determination of being as beingness (*Seiendheit*). Because metaphysics, furthermore, understands human existence on the basis of being as presence, the event is also ontologically prior to human existence, metaphysically determined. In contrast, Heidegger recasts the human being on a more originary ontological ground, resulting in an account in which a mutual appropriation of being to human existence and human existence to being is one dimension of the event. Thomas Sheehan, Quentin Meillassoux, and a number of other interpreters take this mutual appropriation to form the heart of Heidegger’s conception of the event. I will show, however, that this is incorrect, at least within *Beiträge*. This mutual appropriation is a dimension of the event, but the event includes other structures and processes that cannot be captured by the logic of appropriation. Indeed, in its most originary sense, being as event is entirely independent of any relations with beings, most notably human beings. As I will demonstrate, the prevalent misinterpretation is a result of overlooking a crucial step

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\(^{82}\) GA14 13/9.  
\(^{83}\) EB 81.  
\(^{84}\) WW 195/149.
Heidegger takes in his account of the essence of truth in *Beiträge*: inquiring into the originary or genetic ground of the very structures of λῆθη and ἀλήθεια.

**2.3: A Note on Radical Critique**

Having outlined both the historical and ontological senses of event, a related point can be made here regarding what should be expected of a full ontology. In Joe Hughes’ analysis of Deleuze, he emphasizes a criterion found in Maimon’s critique of Kant. Simply put, Maimon claims that Kant’s critical philosophy is successful to the degree that it derives the conditions of possibility for experience and lays out the boundaries of knowledge in terms of the legitimate functioning of the faculties. However, Kant’s critique is insufficient because it does not give an account of the genesis of the faculties. It does not show “the genesis of what has been criticized.” Only in doing so can it be sufficient, or rise to the level of what can be called “radical critique.” Kant’s *Kritik der Urteilskraft* can perhaps be read as an attempt to recast his system in this manner.

Likewise, Deleuze’s *Différence et répétition* recasts Kant’s *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* such that the critical project satisfies this criterion. For Deleuze, the prime critical target is the regime of representation and its categorial systems, together with the ontological priority of identity presupposed by this type of system. In Deleuze’s argument, making identity prior to difference renders any such system insufficient. To fix this, *Différence et répétition* proposes an ontology in which difference is primary, and the regime of representation and the identity upon which it relies are generated only secondarily. What, following Maimon, Deleuze recognizes is that for this project to be successful, it must not only critique systems grounded in identity and their complicit representationalism as well as replace them with an ontology of difference, but

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85 DDR 3.
furthermore, this differential ontology must explain the genesis of identity and representation, giving an account of how they come to eclipse difference and of the distortion that process constitutes.

I would like to demand a similar requirement of Heidegger. The prime target of Heidegger’s critique is what he calls metaphysics, which is to be supplanted with an evental ontology. However, if this Heideggerian evental ontology is to be a full one, it cannot simply point to the errors and limits of metaphysics; it must also explain the genesis of metaphysics and its relation to being (as event). More precisely, for an evental ontology to rise to the level of radical critique: 1) It must account for the way that which exceeds the framework of metaphysics does so – Heidegger explains this in terms of the insufficiency of metaphysics to account for its own ground and other features of the problematic of being exhibited in his early phenomenological and later conceptual analyses. 2) It must account for the genesis of metaphysics. In Heidegger’s work, this, in turn, involves two aspects: A) the “deconstruction” of the historical and conceptual foundations sustaining the dominance of metaphysics and its occlusion of more originary ontological problematics; and B) the promised, though perhaps never actualized, recuperation of metaphysics such that it is properly grounded in the event and reconstructed from it. This would constitute a fundamental transformation or re-appropriation of metaphysics on proper ontological grounds and require a robust theory of distortion. Though I discuss the mechanism of distortion in Heidegger’s evental ontology in Chapter II (in terms of his notion of “Un-wesen” or “distorted essence” of truth), I find his work to fall short when it comes to satisfying criteria 2B. 86

86 GA65 347/274.
2.4: A Note on the Methodological and Ontological Relation of the Historical and Ontological Senses of the Event

In Beiträge – and in Heidegger’s work generally – the event carries the two interrelated significances indicated: as an historical event, it figures a rupture in the historical and conceptual framework of metaphysics that produces another beginning for thought; as an ontological event, it articulates the nature of being itself.

Importantly, though the event in the second sense bears ontological priority, the historical sense bears a temporary methodological priority because it constitutes the concept of the event available from within the horizon of metaphysics. A properly grounded articulation of being as event is not available within this horizon. Thus, the horizon of metaphysics must be breached, enacting the historical event, by an ontological method that can generate access to aspects of being more originary than the determination of the historical epoch of metaphysics. In Heidegger’s philosophy, this is the productive logic of Grundlegung, which advances ontology along the axis of ground. Hence, the historical sense of the event bears methodological priority until the method attains a sufficiently originary grounding. At that point, methodological and ontological priority merge and the sense of the event as the articulation of being itself takes on methodological primacy. That is, philosophical methodology takes on the logic of the event, develops an account of the event from a standpoint immanent to that logic, and establishes the ground for a consequent rearticulation of the domain of history.

Heidegger devotes a great deal of attention to working through the problematic of the history of metaphysics. This includes developing a theory of the history of metaphysics that is built into his ontology and producing numerous exquisitely detailed analyses of canonical texts.
This renders often brilliant, but often controversial, insights into the origins of Western thought. It also supplies him with deconstructed concepts to be deployed in the problematic of being (the ἀλήθεια/λήθη pair, for instance). As I will argue in Section 4.2 below, discerning the particular conceptual origins and transformations of this history is essential to understanding how it shapes our existential conditions today and the factual impact on the project of ontology. However, in Heidegger’s program none of this is sufficient for developing a properly originary, non-metaphysical account of being; in other words, focusing on the historical event is insufficient for rendering an account of being as event. This requires focusing on the problematic of being itself on the basis of the methodological grounding supplied in Sein und Zeit, employing the productive logic of Grundlegung, and grounding ontology in an originary logic of being. For this reason, my reconstruction of Heidegger in this dissertation focuses on the ontological sense of the event. However, to establish the methodological and conceptual continuity between the historical and ontological senses, Section 4.2 provides a more detailed account of the ontological ground of the problematic of the history of metaphysics offered in Sein und Zeit. This outlines the conceptual location of this problematic in Heidegger’s broader ontology and shows the foundation for explaining why working out the ontological sense of the event simultaneously enacts the historical event. Chapter II will then turn to Beiträge, where truth is the primary register of the ontological problematic through which proper conceptual grounding in the logic of the event is secured.

Prior to grounding ontology in the logic of the event, the productive logic of Grundlegung necessarily includes the dimension of what I will call “negative” or “deflationary” deconstruction. The “positive,” productive, and conceptually experimental operation of Grundlegung remains structurally mitigated by the negative task of deconstruction, since the
terms of the ontological problematic are defined in an essential way by the alienation from being manifested in the history of metaphysics. The positive operation is bound to the task of rectifying this alienation, that is, grounding human existence, Da-sein, history, etc., in being. Once this is accomplished by attaining a methodological grounding in the logic of the event, the negative aspect of the ontological problematic can be sidelined. This grounds a thoroughly positive methodology, which elaborates the logic of the event and enacts a logically immanent, “inflationary” conceptual experimentalism. In Chapter III, I will show how this can be done in terms of Heidegger’s concepts of ground and time-space. Concepts generated through this positive methodology articulate the evental problematic and its structural dynamics. They also offer a basis for developing appropriately grounded accounts of more derivative structures (beings, worlds, historical configurations, and other ontological structures that I will discuss in Chapters II and III), that is, they offer a basis for an appropriately grounded experimental metaphysics. Though this claim goes beyond Heidegger’s text to a certain degree, I believe it is a logical entailment of his evental ontology. It also shows that Deleuze’s claim to be a metaphysician is not categorically inconsistent with Heideggerian thought.

3: Critical Review of Two Dominant Interpretations of Ereignis

In the following, I provide a critical outline of two interpretations of Heidegger’s concept of event that are dominant in recent scholarship. In Chapter II Sections 1.2 and 2.1, I argue more extensively that both are faulty. The first claims the event is the mutual appropriation of human [87] My use of “positive” here is not the same as Heidegger’s use, discussed in terms of positive science. [88] As I will emphasize later, in Beiträge, Heidegger defines metaphysics especially in terms of its essential orientation toward providing an account of the nature of beings.
existence to being and being to human existence. In this schema, this co-appropriation includes a necessary dependence upon human existence. Consequently, if human existence were annihilated, being as event would not occur. This is the interpretation advanced by Sheehan and Meillassoux. The second interpretation takes the event (being itself) to be ἀλήθεια, φύσις, or the giving of what is given. This position is represented by Richard Capobianco and Richard Polt. I take the first of these to be incorrect and the second to be incomplete.

3.1: The Position that Ereignis is the Mutual Appropriation of Human Existence to Being and Being to Human Existence (Sheehan and Meillassoux)

Sheehan offers his account of das Ereignis within the context of his discontent with focus on the language of Sein in Heidegger scholarship. His core philosophical claims revolve around the idea that “the major obstacle in interpreting Heidegger today is the continued use of the ontological language of ‘being’ and ‘beings.’” Thus, Sheehan’s position entails reinterpreting the most basic directive of Heidegger’s thought: his “core topic” – die Sache selbst – was never being, but rather meaning (Sinn or Bedeutung). “Scholars” he writes, “must realize that throughout his texts the term ‘being’ was only a provisional and ultimately misleading way of saying ‘meaning.’” This thesis goes hand in hand with the other noted earlier: that because meaning “occurs only in correlation with human understanding,” Heidegger’s problematic is contained entirely within the domain of the human being or Dasein as being-in-the-world. Sheehan

89 FE 42.
90 FE 43.
91 FE 42.
92 In Sheehan’s words, “Heidegger’s extensive corpus from beginning to end remained a hermeneutics of Dasein or an analytic of human existence” (Thomas Sheehan, “Astonishing! Things Make Sense!” Gatherings: The Heidegger Circle Annual 1 [2011]: 3).
insists, “Heidegger remained on one level only, that of the man-meaning conjunction, and
everything in his corpus is about that… [H]e never got beyond human being, and never intended
to.”93 Sheehan maintains this to be true for both Heidegger I and Heidegger II.94 To me, this
places Heidegger too close to the anthropology he explicitly denies is his project in Sein und
Zeit.95

Sheehan does affirm that the defining question of Heidegger II – the “basic question”
(Grundfrage) – is the question of what gives meaning: “getting to the constituting source of
meaning as such.”96 “If meaning-giving (Welt, Lichtung) is responsible for things being
meaningful, what is responsible for Welt and Lichtung as such?”97 The answer, he agrees, comes
in terms of Ereignis. However, Sheehan reabsorbs Ereignis into the framework of meaning:
Ereignis is “the appropriation of man to the meaning-giving process” – i.e., to being, world
(Welt), Lichtung, or, using Sheehan’s alternative term, “mind.”98 Sheehan means “mind” here “in
the very specific Heideggerian sense of the structural condition for making intentional sense of

93 Sheehan, Astonishing! 4.
94 FE 43. Sheehan borrows this terminology from Richardson (see Introduction n20).
95 Sheehan’s thesis can be distilled as follows: for Heidegger, “Sein” is synonymous with “Sinn,” i.e., meaning
correlative with human existence. As he states it, “the Da-sein / Sein correlation is transformed into the Da-sinn /
Sinn conjunction” (Sheehan, Astonishing! 3). Thus, “Sein” now rendered as “Sinn” names Heidegger’s core topic.
Or alternatively, if the word “Sein” can be taken to signify his core topic, this is only because by “Sein” Heidegger
meant “Sinn.” For Sheehan, Sein = Sinn = Heidegger’s core topic – die Sache selbst. I disagree with this thesis. My
initial contention is that Heidegger was a smart guy – if he had meant Sinn and not Sein, he would have said so. But
this is clearly not a sufficient argument. I think Heidegger is in fact doing ontology and this ontology affirms a
rupture in meaning or meaninglessness at its heart. In an article I might submit to a journal after some revision, I
argue that this is evident in his account of the λήθη co-constituting the essence of truth, in terms of which the
problematic of being is sometimes articulated. Because of this it is impossible to take “Sein” to mean “Sinn” and
simultaneously to name Heidegger’s core topic. I then turn to a short analysis of the idea that in Heidegger II, being
and human existence are locked into a reciprocal correlation. Here I show that in Heidegger’s account, certain
aspects of the essence of truth are not dependent on any relation with human existence and thus the rubric of
reciprocity does not match up to Heidegger’s account.
96 FE 54 and 51.
97 FE 51. Or again: “Heidegger’s sights were ultimately set not on that which is meaningful (in traditional language,
das Seiende) not even on what gives it meaning (traditionally, das Sein) but rather on the source of meaning (das
Wesenldie Wahrheit des Seins)” (FE 51).
98 FE 53, italics removed, and 56.
anything.”

99 To clarify: “Mind in this sense is a priori ‘open’ and meaning-giving. When things come to mind, they are disclosed.”

100 But, according to Sheehan, this openness or disclosure only is insofar as it is held open by human existence. Thus, being/world/Lichtung/mind/meaning-giving is dependent on human existence, so the appropriation of human existence to the meaning-giving process is reciprocal – it is a co-appropriation.

101 This allows Sheehan to offer a fuller statement of his interpretation of Ereignis: “Ereignis is this hermeneutical circle of reciprocal need: human being’s need of Welt/mind as meaning-giving, and Welt/mind’s inability to subsist without human being.”

102 I think this is a faulty account of Ereignis. As I will show later, in Beiträge certain aspects of the event – and of the essence of truth – are not dependent on any relation with human existence. Thus, the rubric of reciprocity does not match up to Heidegger’s account.

Furthermore, the position advanced by Sheehan steps into a philosophical trap: the correlationism critiqued by Meillassoux in After Finitude. Correlationism, for Meillassoux, is the position following upon Kant’s critical philosophy that “we can only ever have access to the correlation between thinking and being, and never to either term considered apart from the other.”

In my view, this correlationism can be rendered in both epistemological and ontological registers, which in many cases overlap. In the former, whatever human existence aims to think or know – be it an object in itself, an unconditioned absolute, being, etc. – that thing is only ever accessible on the basis of its relation to us, i.e., as something for us and never

99 FE 56, italics removed.
100 FE 56. See Sheehan’s text here for more discussion of his concept of mind.
101 For more detail on Sheehan’s understanding of Ereignis as reciprocity, see FE 57 and 59-60.
103 In fact, I think this is evident even in Heidegger’s account of truth in “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit.”
105 Meillassoux, After Finitude 5.
independently of any relation to us. A good example of this is Kant’s transcendental philosophy and its establishment of the phenomenal/noumenal distinction. In the ontological register, correlationist philosophies maintain that human existence always is in a correlation with being (or world or language or whatever the primary ontological term is taken to be) and, inversely, being always is only in a correlation with human existence. In other words, such philosophies would maintain that neither being nor any aspect of being can be accounted for as independent of human existence: No human existence, no being.

Meillassoux takes Heidegger to be a paradigm case of just such ontological correlationism, particularly with respect to the concept of event. He writes:

On the one hand, for Heidegger, it is certainly a case of pinpointing the occlusion of being or presence inherent in every metaphysical conception of representation and the privileging of the present at-hand entity considered as an object. Yet on the other hand, to think such an occlusion at the heart of the unconcealment of the entity requires, for Heidegger, that one take into account the co-propriation (Zusammengehörigkeit) of man and being, which he calls Ereignis. Thus, the notion of Ereignis, which is central in the later Heidegger, remains faithful to the correlationist exigency inherited from Kant and continued in Husserlian phenomenology, for the ‘co-propriation’ which constitutes Ereignis means that neither being nor man can be posited as subsisting ‘in-themselves’, and subsequently entering into relation – on the contrary, both terms of the appropriation are originarily constituted through their reciprocal relation.106

In Meillassoux’s account, Heidegger is a correlationist because ultimately he is able to think being only on the basis of a co-propriative relation between being and human existence. Moreover, he takes Ereignis to be exactly this co-propriative relation. Sheehan’s interpretation of Heidegger fits this model precisely. As we have seen, for Sheehan, because “being” means “meaning” and meaning is always correlative with human existence, being is always correlative

106 Meillassoux, After Finitude 8.
with human existence. In fact, he terms this the “human correlativity with meaning.” Moreover, for Sheehan, “Ereignis” names the hermeneutical circle of reciprocal need between human existence and that which gives meaning (world, openness, mind, etc. – what we are used to calling “being”).

There are at least two different ways to argue against this sort of ontological correlationism, both depending on what we mean by “being.” The first is to locate being as the being of beings, as Heidegger does in *Sein und Zeit*. Then, one could argue that even in the absence of all human existence, beings would still be. Meillassoux begins his critique of correlationism with this idea, focusing on timeframes anterior to life on earth. Correlationist philosophies, he argues, cannot properly account for what he calls the “ancestral,” i.e., “any reality anterior to the emergence of the human species – or even anterior to every recognized form of life on earth.” This includes things like “the accretion of the earth (4.56 billion years ago).” In “Facticity and Ereignis,” Sheehan entertains a different version of this idea as an objection to his position: suppose a huge meteorite impacts earth and extinguishes all life on the planet. It would seem that beings like the sun, black holes, and carbon atoms still would be. Thus, it would seem, “when Dasein is gone, there still will be Sein.” Disappointingly, Sheehan dismisses this critique with a circular line of reasoning. He simply reasserts his interpretation of

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107 *FE* 48.
108 Sheehan’s correlationist interpretation of Heidegger is further expressed in the following examples. Example 1: “Heidegger himself understood *Sein* phenomenologically, i.e., as *Sinn* (meaning) in correlation with the *Da of Sinn*, man as ‘where-meaning-appears’” (*FE* 49). Example 2: “*Ohne Da-sein, kein Sein; ohne Sein, kein Da-sein* (without human being, no being; without being, no human being).” Sheehan restates this in light of his thesis as “*Ohne Da-Sinn, kein Sinn; Ohne Sinn, kein Da-sinn*” (*FE* 47-48). Example 3: In the phenomenological reduction “from being to meaning, and from meaning to its constituting source – the outcomes are always a matter of correlation. In the first reduction the phenomenologist’s focus is on the *intentional* correlation between understanding and the thing. In the second reduction, the phenomenological gaze focuses on one’s *transcendence to meaning* (= one’s a priori engagement with it), a correlation that *is* the source of meaning giving” (*FE* 45).
109 Meillassoux, *After Finitude* 10. Beyond this, I will not detail the critiques of correlationism raised by Meillassoux here.
111 *FE* 48.
being as meaning and meaning as dependent on human existence (beings have being insofar as they are made meaningful by human existence), which allows him to maintain that after the meteorite *Sein* will in fact not be. This is consistent with his broader interpretation of Heidegger. But as an argument for that interpretation and as a way out of the meteorite problem, it fails.

Whether or not the Heidegger of *Sein und Zeit* can answer to this sort of meteorite problem is something I won’t address here. I am more interested in a second way of arguing against ontological correlationism. It takes a tack away from understanding being as the being of beings and argues correlationism is false because *being itself* has aspects that are not dependent on any relation with beings (notably, the human being). Recall that in Sheehan’s account, the program of Heidegger II is oriented by the question of what gives meaning, i.e., what enables meaning to be at all. This is *Ereignis*, which he understands to be the reciprocal need human existence has for being and being has for human existence. In other words, *Ereignis* constitutes a strict ontological correlationism in which being only is in relation with human existence.

Both Meillassoux and Sheehan are wrong because for Heidegger there are aspects of being (as event) that are decisively not dependent on any relation with human existence. I establish the reasons this is so in Chapter II and take a moment there to return to the correlationist interpretation and provide an argument against it. In sum, in the evental ontology worked out in *Beiträge*, Heidegger argues not only for the independence of essential aspects of the event from human existence, but gives an account of specific structures and operations of the event that are independent of any relation to beings whatsoever. One of these is the operation of “clearing” (*Lichtung*) at the heart of the essence of truth, which generates the structures of
openness and concealment. One of Heidegger’s key claims in that text invalidates both Sheehan’s claim that \( \text{Sein} = \text{Sinn} \) = Heidegger’s core topic and the correlationism it embodies in Sheehan’s account of \( \text{Ereignis} \). The claim is that the essence of truth is “definitively detached \([\textit{abgelöst}]\) from all beings.” That is, the structural operation of the event that constitutes the essence of truth must be understood independent of any relation to beings – including, importantly, human beings.

3.2: The Position that \( \text{Ereignis} \) is Being itself as \( \text{Anwesen} \), \( \text{Ἀλήθεια} \), \( \text{Φύσις} \), or the Giving of What is Given (Capobianco and Polt)

The second interpretation I wish to look at takes “Ereignis” to be an alternative name for what is articulated by “anwesen” (presencing) or “das Anwesen des Anwesenden” (the presencing of what is present), “\( \text{Ἀλήθεια} \),” “\( \text{φύσις} \),” and number of other terms used by Heidegger. This position is represented by Capobianco and, to an extent, Polt. My main focus will be on Capobianco’s version. For him, “anwesen,” “\( \text{Ἀλήθεια} \),” and “\( \text{φύσις} \)” denote roughly the same thing: not only the manifestation of worlds of beings or meaning, but what enables such manifestation at all. Polt glosses this as “the giving of the given” (cf. Heidegger’s formulation, “es gibt”). This is more accurate than Sheehan and Meillassoux’s account, but ultimately

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112 According to Heidegger in \( \text{Beiträge} \), the essence of truth is \( \text{die Lichtung für das Sichverbergen} \) (the clearing for self-concealing) or \( \text{Lichtung des Sichverbergens} \) (the clearing of self-concealing) or again, \( \text{die lichtende Verbergung des Seyns} \) (the clearing concealment of beyng) (GA65 348/275, italics removed; 329/261; and 380/300).
113 GA65 329/261.
114 For more discussion regarding Heidegger’s use of “anwesen,” see \( \text{EH} \) 27-28. There Capobianco distinguishes between a number of his related terms. For my current purposes, it is sufficient to say that “anwesen” names the ontological process of presencing (Capobianco translates it with that gerund) and must be distinguished from \( \text{das Anwesende} \) (“that which appears or is present”) and \( \text{Anwesenheit} \) (presence), as in, “what is present in its sheer ‘presence’ (Anwesenheit).” The latter are characteristic of metaphysical definitions of the beingness of beings.
115 \( \text{EB} \) 24. For more on Polt’s interpretation of “the giving of the given,” see \( \text{EB} \) 24-33.
Capobianco’s work reflects the fact that this process is immensely complex. Presently, though, it will be sufficient to lay out the broad parameters of his reading. This will allow me to return to it in Chapter II to pose a critique and mark the key differences in my own.

In Engaging Heidegger, Capobianco frames his interpretation of Ereignis by positioning himself against those (like Sheehan) who would reduce Heidegger’s core question from one about being to one about meaning and also against those who might claim “Ereignis” names a fundamentally different matter for thought than did “being” in Heidegger’s earlier work. He insists “Ereignis” is “(only) another name for Being itself”: even though Heidegger used a number of different central concepts throughout his career, they each were meant to articulate the same “fundamental matter.” He makes this interpretive point as follows:

[Heidegger] was clear and emphatic right to the end of his life that the single, defining concern of his path of thinking regarded the originary, fundamental, unifying meaning of Being, named by him over the many years as Beyng (das Seyn), Being itself (das Sein selbst), Being as such (das Sein als solches), and Being as Being (das Sein als Sein).

And:

The single, whole phenomenon – Being itself – that he named and renamed again over the course of his lifetime of thinking, and the abundant variety of names that he put into play succeeded in bringing into view the varied features of this one, simple phenomenon. So it is that we may also speak of the unconcealing of beings (aletheia), the emerging of beings (physis), the laying out and gathering of beings (Logos), the unifying, unfolding of beings (hen), the presencing of beings (Anwesen), the lighting/clearing of beings (Lichtung), the freeing of beings (das Freie); the letting of beings (Lassen), the giving of beings (Es gibt), and the appropriating or enowning of beings (Ereignis). All of these names, and still others, say (sagen) and show (zeigen), in somewhat different ways, the primordial phenomenon. Or to put this in Heidegger’s terms, all of these names are the Same

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116 Capobianco and Polt’s versions both make the mistake of thinking Ereignis on the basis of a relation to beings. Polt understands Ereignis in the framework of the giving of the given, where what is given are worlds of beings or meaning. Capobianco understands it in terms of being itself as the condition for or the process of manifestation of worlds of beings or meaning. This, however, designates only one, derivative dimension of Ereignis.

117 EH 35 and 34. Capobianco uses “Being itself” (with the capitalized B) as a sort of shorthand for referring to this fundamental matter for thought in a way meant to include all these various formulations employed by Heidegger.

118 EH 34.
(das Selbe), but not simply identical (das Gleiche) in an empty, purely formal, logical sense.\textsuperscript{119}

For Capobianco, “Ereignis” is (only) another name used to articulate the problematic of “Being itself” in a fundamental way. Consequently, Ereignis should be given no special status with respect to anwesen, ἀλήθεια, φύσις, etc. Each of these contributes to the author’s work of “bringing into view the varied features of this one, simple phenomenon,” Being itself.\textsuperscript{120} In fact, though Capobianco does not make this claim explicit, his strong readings of ἀλήθεια and φύσις suggest he takes these concepts to address this problematic in richer ways than Ereignis, and that we should prefer to focus on them.

I affirm with Capobianco that Heidegger maintained a unified focus throughout his career on what he found to be the essential matter for thought. This was not meaning (Sinn or Bedeutung). Nor was there a “break” in his work in which he abandoned an earlier project and began a new one fundamentally inconsistent with the first.\textsuperscript{121} Addressing the second of these points, Capobianco emphasizes, “Heidegger did not marginalize the Seinsfrage in favor of the thematization of Ereignis in the years following his private Ereignis-writings.”\textsuperscript{122} In other words, the turn to Ereignis was no dismissal of the core problematic in Heidegger’s earlier thought. I agree with this claim, but not in the same sense or for the same reasons Capobianco makes it. Heidegger’s turn to Ereignis in the 1930s was a continuation of his earlier work, but he was not spinning in place and merely rethinking his problematic in different terms that might allow greater clarity through alternative expositions. Heidegger’s account of Ereignis in Beiträge was produced precisely by pursuing the Seinsfrage to a more originary ground than the concept of

\textsuperscript{119} EH 4.
\textsuperscript{120} EH 4.
\textsuperscript{121} This is more or less a reaffirmation of the case for continuity in Heidegger’s thought made by Richardson in TPT.
\textsuperscript{122} EH 36. Capobianco means between the years 1944-1956 here. Of course, as he points out, Ereignis did move back to a focal role for Heidegger in the late 1950s and early 1960s.
Sein was able to render. It rearticulates his problematic in a more originary way. He came to thematize Ereignis as a result of supplanting more derivative renditions of the ontological problematic, which the Seinsfrage progressed through in a methodologically immanent way in Heidegger’s earlier work. The mistake in Capobianco’s reading is that – aside from the broader shift from Heidegger I to Heidegger II – he takes the various accounts in which Heidegger addressed his core problematic to be syngenic recastings of that problematic, and fails to register the diagenic arrangement of certain of them.

Consistent with his interpretation, Capobianco argues “there is neither sufficient nor convincing textual evidence to maintain that he ever considered Ereignis as a more fundamental matter for thought than das Sein.” As I will show in Chapter II, this is false. In Beiträge, Heidegger makes a crucial distinction between Sein and Seyn, and Ereignis articulates the nature of Seyn. Seyn as Ereignis articulates precisely a more fundamental matter for thought than Sein:

“Sein” designates one particular rendition of Heidegger’s core problematic, and “Seyn” as Ereignis designates a more originary rendition of it. Capobianco’s claim can be maintained only by ignoring crucial distinctions made in Beiträge and the related manuscripts, which he does by dismissing these as second class texts on the basis of their fractured composition and the fact that their author opted not to publish them during his lifetime. As I have argued above, this is a fatally flawed interpretive hypothesis. Such an approach, though, paves the way for the interpretation of Ereignis Capobianco gives.

If, for Capobianco, “Ereignis” is “(only) another name for Being itself,” what is “Being itself”? He understands this to be “the temporal-spatial, finite and negative, unconcealing of beings (das Seiende) in their beingness (die Seiendheit) as made manifest meaningfully by

123 EH 34.
Dasein in language.” For Capobianco, this amounts to the claim that being as Ereignis is none other than anwesen or “Being as physis as alêtheia.” It is important to make the point clear that this is not meant to suggest that Ereignis or Being itself is presence, but that it is the dynamic process in which beings come into and go out of presence.

Characterizing Being itself as the appearing or manifesting of beings does not in the first place refer to the sheer, abiding “appearance” or “presence” of beings (which came to be spoken of in the metaphysical tradition as the eidos, morphe, ousia, energeia, actualitas, essentia), but rather to anwesen selbst, presencing itself, or to “Bewegtheit” (Heidegger’s translation of Aristotle’s kinesis), namely, the “movedness” of all beings into and out of presence, which Heidegger meditated on at length, especially in his commentary on Aristotle’s Physics, B, I.

Compare the following statements, which make this point in a variety of ways:

- “Being/Ereignis originates (gives, grants, lets, enables, allows) beings in their beingness.”
- “For Heidegger, then, das Ereignis ‘is’ the Originating (die Anfängnis) ‘is’ Beyng.”
- Being/Ereignis is the “originating of presence.”
- “Ereignis as Es gibt gives (grants, allows, enables) beingness; but Ereignis and Being itself: the Same.”

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124 EH 34.
125 HWB 50. Capobianco retains the terminology of Sein (Being) when addressing Ereignis because he maintains that Sein and Seyn ultimately addressed the same matter for thought.
126 HWB 25.
127 EH 47.
128 EH 43. Capobianco points out that the term “die Anfängnis” appears in GA70 to name an originating more originary than any Anfang: “In the 1941 manuscript Über den Anfang, he uses an obscure, antiquated German word to name this unifying ‘beginning’ (Beyng itself as Ereignis) that holds sway over both [the first and other] historical ‘beginnings’ (die Anfänge). The unusual word he uses, which can be traced back to Early New High German (roughly 1350-1650), is die Anfängnis, which I translate as ‘the Originating’” (EH 42). For more on this use of “Anfängnis,” see Capobianco’s helpful discussion in EH 42-43.
129 EH 47.
130 EH 49.
• “Being as ‘manifestness’ or ‘manifestation’ (Offenbarkeit), this is the matter itself (die Sache selbst) of Heidegger’s thought.”

• “The word Ereignis makes manifest the Being-way by virtue of the three fundamental resonances of the word itself, namely, (1) the ‘event’ or ‘happening’ that is the efflorescence and effulgence of beings coming into (2) their ‘own’ (the eigen of ereignen) and thereby (3) coming out into ‘full view’ to Dasein (ereignen related to eräugnen, literally ‘to come before the eyes’…”

The key point these citations show is that in Capobianco’s account, Ereignis is that which enables the manifestation or coming to presence and passing out of presence of beings. This process is alternatively addressed by Heidegger in terms of anwesen, ἀλήθεια, φύσις, Es gibt, and the other concepts listed in the citations above. This is not a flatly incorrect reading, for it faithfully represents accounts of Ereignis given by Heidegger in a number of texts from the 1950s and 60s. However, when it comes to Beiträge, and thus to the broader interpretation of Ereignis in Heidegger’s work, it misses the mark.

There is one more important point to make here: Capobianco has affirmed that in his interpretation φύσις or ἀλήθεια occurs even if human existence is not around, for instance in the Proterozoic era. These concepts articulate ontological structures that are not dependent upon

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131 HWB 7.
132 HWB 21.
133 For Polt, similarly to Capobianco, Ereignis is “the ‘happening’ through which being ‘takes place’ in the ‘there’ of being-there” (EB 29n3). Here, Polt is affirming his agreement with Walter Pratt that this is a good account of Ereignis). This means beyng (Seyn) “is best interpreted as the giving of being, that is, as the event in which beings as such and as a whole are enabled to make a difference to us” (EB 29). We must be careful not to conflate being (Sein) and beyng (Seyn) here. For Polt, Sein “is the givenness of beings as such and as a whole – that is, not the ‘mere fact’ that something is given, but the background meaning that enables us to recognize anything as given” (EB 28). Seyn, in distinction, is the giving of that givenness.
134 Capobianco, oral remark (in response to a question by Sheehan) at the 2013 meeting of the Heidegger Circle in New Haven, Connecticut.
human existence. I agree with him on this point, in opposition to Sheehan’s position that without human existence being (as Ereignis) does not occur.

In my analysis of Beiträge below, I show that the story Capobianco tells is only part of the story of Ereignis. That which enables the manifestation or coming to presence and passing out of presence of beings is one crucial register or dimension of Ereignis. But, this is a derivative register that must be rethought on the basis of a more originary one. There are two very specific problems with his interpretation, which show it is incomplete and essentially flawed. First, it conceives Ereignis on the basis of a relation to beings, which Heidegger argues is a fatal flaw of metaphysics. Second, it fails to register dimensions of the event that exceed ἀλήθεια, φύσις, anwesen, or “the temporal-spatial, finite and negative, unconcealing of beings (das Seiende) in their beingness (die Seiendheit) as made manifest meaningfully by Dasein in language.”135 Indeed, as I will argue, certain dimensions of the event exceed even the logic of appropriation and expropriation itself.

4: The Groundwork of Sein und Zeit

tὸ γὰρ αὐτὸ νοεῖν ἐστίν τε καὶ εἶναι
-Parmenides, Fragment 3

If Sections 1-3 of this chapter provide a map to the stakes and ideas involved in Heidegger’s account of the event, the following will more precisely examine how, in Sein und Zeit, he establishes the philosophical and methodological ground from which his program proceeds. There, he frames the core problematic he would engage for the remainder of his career (the Seinsfrage or “question of being”) and a primary set of terms for addressing it. Heidegger’s account of the event in the 1930s is developed by pursuing his core problematic through the

135 EH 34.
philosophical terrain he works out in this earlier period. That is, the complex evolution of Heidegger’s account, along the diagenic axis, takes the groundwork established in *Sein und Zeit* as its philosophical point of departure. Consequently, it is necessary to outline certain major conceptual moments determining that ontological groundwork. My intention here is to briefly distill the basic structure of his early ontology (in the Introduction to *Sein und Zeit* and a few other parts of that text) from which the major elements framing his later account of the event proceed. Specifically, I look at the way Heidegger recasts the problematic of being by establishing Dasein as a distinctive ontico-ontological structure that operates as the condition for the possibility of ontology. In this formulation, the question of being is not abstract, but situated as a structure of existence. I then address Heidegger’s understanding of the historical errancy manifested by metaphysics, the existential impact of this on Dasein, and the consequent impact on fundamental ontology (as the existential analytic of Dasein). This enables me to show how Heidegger’s pursuit of the question of being via the existential analytic of Dasein as the ground enabling any ontology (in *Sein und Zeit*) simultaneously enacts incremental progress in the project of ontology and toward rectifying Dasein’s alienation in the historical configuration of metaphysics. In fact, these two registers of philosophical progress are essentially bound together. This groundwork in *Sein und Zeit* opens up a path of conceptual access that traverses the problematic of truth to an appropriately grounded concept of the event. I turn my focus to truth in Chapter II.
4.1: Dasein as the Condition for the Possibility of Doing Ontology

It is well known that Heidegger’s philosophical project was the study of the nature of being. This was prompted by his early encounter with Franz Brentano’s *Von der mannigfachen Bedeutung des Seienden nach Aristoteles* (1862), which raised for him the question of “the meaning of the word ‘being’ (ὄν) for Aristotle.” In *Sein und Zeit*, Heidegger frames his project as *Fundamentalontologie* (fundamental ontology), which problematizes the foundations of the tradition of ontology and recasts the whole of its problematic field. Fundamental ontology is not a regional ontology, but the philosophical science of the nature of being, on the basis of which the terms of any regional ontology should be clarified. This is because any regional ontology presupposes an understanding of the being of the terms with which it is concerned. If the being of those terms is misunderstood, that mistake gets transmitted throughout the regional problematic.

In *Sein und Zeit*, Heidegger argued that being is neither a being nor the totality of beings. Rather, his question is about the being of beings. By the time of *Beiträge* this underwent a substantial reformulation, which I address in Chapter II. Prior to systematic philosophical elucidation, “being” signifies “that which determines beings as beings, that on the basis of which beings are already understood.” Richardson clarifies: being is “that which enables beings to be (present) to man and men to each other.” Or again, it is the “lighting-process by which beings are illuminated as beings.” These formulations elucidate being at only a minimal level, yet two

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136 *TPT* 4.
137 *SZ* 13/34.
139 *TPT* 6.
140 *TPT* 6. On the etymology and broader sense in which Heidegger understands the word “Sein,” see *TPT* Introduction. Also see *TPT* 10.
important points can be drawn from them. First, Heidegger’s conception of being refers both to
an ontological register (being is “that which determines beings as beings”) and an
epistemological register (being is “that on the basis of which beings are already understood”),
and he holds these to be fundamentally conjoined. Second, the character of being includes an
enabling power, it enables beings to be.\textsuperscript{141} This exhibits the link of the \textit{Seinsfrage} to questions of
ground, conditions of possibility, and necessary or sufficient reason. It also links Heidegger’s
program with those of Kant and post-Kantians broadly.

In the opening sections of \textit{Sein und Zeit}, Heidegger identifies a set of philosophical
prejudices that deny the importance of the question of being: being is mistaken as “the most
universal and the emptiest of concepts,” as “indefinable,” or as the most “self-evident” of all
concepts.\textsuperscript{142} He also summarizes what he finds to be a series of errors in the history of
philosophy that prevented the proper formulation and analysis of this question. I discuss the
particulars of these in Section 4.2.3 of this chapter. The central mistake is a failure to properly
work out the ground (here understood as the condition of possibility) for doing ontology. The
foundational philosophical move preventing this was initiated by Plato, but crystallized in
Aristotle’s interpretation of being as \textit{οὐσία}, reducing the temporal character of being to the
dimension of presence. In Heidegger’s account, this marks the advent of metaphysics and its
“forgetting” of being. Here, the history of philosophy since Plato and Aristotle can be read as the
transmission and transformation of error with respect to the ground of ontology. In other words,
metaphysics is the history of the forgetting of being. Heidegger aims to break the hold of the
erroneous foundations of metaphysics and rehabilitate the question of being via a fresh analysis
of the condition for the possibility of any ontology. Needless to say, he is not modest in his

\textsuperscript{141} Ref. Heidegger’s \textit{Grund der Ermöglichung} (ground of enabling), which is sometimes found in \textit{Beiträge as Grund
der Möglichkeit} (ground of possibility) (WW 177/136 fn. a; GA65 297/234).
\textsuperscript{142} SZ 2/21 and 4/23.
ambitions to rectify twenty-two hundred years of philosophy. The way his solution functions can be seen clearly by framing it through the implicit critique of the metaphysics of representationalism contained in the Introduction to this text. This also marks an important programmatic overlap between Heidegger and Deleuze. For both, developing a sufficient ontology entails a critique of representationalism.

The historical failure to properly work out the ground of ontology has tethered Western thought to a series of representationalist philosophies of mind and epistemologies (e.g., Aquinas, Descartes, and Kant). These are predicated on a metaphysical divorce between the mind that aims to know and the object it aims to know about. In other words, this manifests the “egocentric predicament” in which one’s intellectual processes are taken to be internal, while what one is concerned with trying to understand remains external to that intellect. As a result, the fundamental problem of philosophy becomes establishing how the mind can have proper access (or any access) to its object. How can the relation of externality between mind and object be overcome? This problem can be clarified in terms of a paradigmatic version of representationalism rooted in the scholastic tradition. In it, the task of thought is to accomplish an adaequatio intellectus ad rem: an adequation of the intellect to the thing, i.e., a true account of the object of thought in the intellect. In the case of Aquinas, for example, this operates by means of an analogical relationship to be established between the intellect’s representation and the thing it represents. The problem, though, is that an analogical representation of the thing is

143 Sokolowski, Introduction to Phenomenology 9.
144 Heidegger has a nice discussion of this in terms of the problematic of truth in “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit,” Part 1 (WW 178-182/137-140).
never the thing itself, so an abyss always subsists between the intellect and its object. The thing itself always remains transcendent to the intellect.\textsuperscript{145}

Now, if the ontological problematic is approached from the perspective of the representationalist tradition and being takes the position of the object, the problem becomes: how can the mind gain an adequate representational knowledge of being?\textsuperscript{146} In other words, the question of how ontology is possible is presented as a problem of correct means of access (\textit{der rechten Zugangsart}).\textsuperscript{147} For Heidegger, since being is the being of beings, ontology must proceed by analysis of the being of appropriate beings. The problem of access to being, consequently, is seen as a problem of access to such beings. Here, Heidegger rejects the term “mind” as an artifact of metaphysically faulty theories of the human being, opting for hermeneutically and phenomenologically dynamic terms like “understanding,” “interpretation,” and “thought.”\textsuperscript{148} Yet, if philosophical thought poses the \textit{Seinsfrage}, it must have the right kind of access to being (via the appropriate beings) – and must proceed on that basis – if the project of ontology is to have any success.\textsuperscript{149} Borrowing a Cartesian term, why doesn’t a \textit{real} difference hold between the two?


\textsuperscript{146} Of course, for Heidegger, part of the solution is found in the fact that being is not an object.

\textsuperscript{147} \textit{SZ} 6/26.

\textsuperscript{148} Heidegger has a technical conception of thought in his later work, which is not what I mean with this term here. Here, I mean “thought” in the sense that might be given in terms of \textit{Sein und Zeit}: the existential structures and processes that make up human existence’s disclosure, interpretation, and understanding of meaning, while all of this takes place via one’s concernful absorption in networks of significance and equipment (being-in-the-world), and is codetermined by the structures of factual, thrown projection.

\textsuperscript{149} Perhaps, it might be objected, the project of ontology is in fact impossible. In that case, Heidegger has no business working from the presupposition that it is possible. However, the point to his argument is that the claim that ontology is possible is not a presupposition at all. The very fact that we have any understanding of being whatsoever – which is demonstrated, for instance, by the fact that we have a concept of being, or even by the fact that we use the verb “to be” in a sensible way – proves that a thematic inquiry into the nature of being (ontology) is possible. This does not guarantee success in ontology, just that it is not categorically impossible. The first task, then, is to clarify the ground that enables the possibility of such a project. Note that this broader point is a Heideggerian version of Schelling’s principle that “like is known by like” (alt. trans: “like is recognized by like”) which Schelling borrows from Sextus Empiricus’ \textit{tois homoiois ta homoia gignoskethai}. See GA42 93/54; \textit{PIEHF} 10; Sextus Empiricus, \textit{adv. Grammaticos} L. I, c. 13, ed. Fabricius. (Leipzig: J. F. Gloedichtius’ Sons Fr. Gloeditschii B. Filii, 1718), p. 238, quoted in Schelling, \textit{PIEHF}. Schelling reformulates the point again as follows: “he alone grasps the god outside
Or, why aren’t the question and its subject matter condemned to a purely external relation, rendering them like two Lucretian atoms falling parallel through the pre-clinematic void with no encounter possible? Structurally speaking, for ontology to be possible, an appropriate point of intersection must be secured through which thought can have access to being. That is, an internal relation must be established. What breaches the gap?

Heidegger does not attempt to solve this problem directly. His position entails a demonstration that the terms in which the problem is posed are mistaken. Representationalism is not in fact a problem at all, because thought and its “objects” are not in a relation of exteriority. The conception of such a relation is itself an artifact of metaphysics that gets the situation wrong. Heidegger’s analysis of being-in-the-world details this with respect to Dasein’s relation to other beings. Prior to that, though, his formulation of the distinctive character of Dasein demonstrates this with respect to being. Here, the ground enabling ontology is already in place before one begins a thematic investigation of being. Yet, methodologically, since our dominant factical situation is one of a position internal to the history of metaphysics, proper access of thought to being must be demonstrated.

Heidegger does this, breaching the gap (or rather showing there never was a gap to breach) by reformulating the question about being in a way articulated along the lines of a fresh analysis of the ground enabling ontology. From the perspective of representationalism,

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through the god in himself” (PIEHF 10). On the same page, Schelling additionally associates this principle with Pythagoras, Plato, and Empedocles. The point is found again in Parmenides, Fragment 3, which Heidegger cites at the beginning of his discussion of truth in SZ §44: τὸ γὰρ αὐτὸ νοεῖν ἐστίν τε καὶ εἶναι (SZ 212/256). In Plato, we find it in The Republic at 508a-b, where “the eye” “is the most sunlike of the organs,” being that in which “sight” exists, and sight is “naturally related” to “the sun” (Plato, The Republic, trans. Alan Bloom [Basic Books, 1968], 188). Heidegger refers to this as follows: “Here one remembers at the same time the Platonic-Plotinian: Ou gar an popote eiden ophthalmos hellion, helioeides me gegenemenos. ‘For the eye could not see the sun if it were not itself ‘sun-like’”’ (GA42 96/55). He points out again that the same idea is expressed in a passage from Goethe’s introduction to Zur Farbenlehre:

If the eye were not sun-like
How could we look at light?
If God’s own power didn’t live in us
How could we be delighted by the god-like?
Heidegger reconfigures the relation of thought and being. In his argument, thought and being are not condemned to a relation of exteriority; instead, a relation of coincidence or interiority can be demonstrated. This point is established in a fundamental insight shared with a number of philosophers including the German Idealists and Parmenides, for whom Heidegger had great respect. Namely, thought is not an ontologically ephemeral faculty of representing objects that are, over and against it, ontologically real. Thought is.\textsuperscript{150} The insight that thought is, or that thinking (interpreting, understanding, disclosing meaningfully, etc.) is part of the very existence of the being who thinks, provides the solution to the problem of access.\textsuperscript{151} Ontology is possible because thought constitutively entails at least a minimally meaningful articulation of at least a minimal domain of being: its own being, the being of a meaningful articulation (even if this is unclear, faulty, and incomplete). The being who thinks constitutes this moment of coincidence. As such, its existence is the ground enabling the possibility of ontology. This exhibits an additional point of methodological importance for Heidegger: the fact that thought is, constituting a coincidence of thought and being, enables ontology to proceed via a direct connectivity between the operations of inquiry and the subject matter inquired into. In other words, this establishes a path of methodological immanence for the project of ontology. I use the term “immanence” here to describe the facts that being is the milieu of thought, that to begin doing ontology thought must only turn toward its own being, and that thought requires no extrinsic methodological principles in order to do ontology. As I emphasize below, though, this doesn’t negate the need for deconstructing, in relation to Dasein’s historicality, the history of

\textsuperscript{150} “Being” might be rephrased awkwardly as “isness.” Cf. Markus Gabriel and Slavoj Žižek’s point as it addresses post-Kantian Idealism: “the whole domain of the representation of the world (call it mind, spirit, language, consciousness, or whatever medium you prefer) needs to be understood as an event within and of the world itself. Thought is not at all opposed to being, it is rather being’s replication within itself” (Markus Gabriel and Slavoj Žižek, Mythology, Madness and Laughter: Subjectivity in German Idealism [London: Continuum, 2009], 3).

\textsuperscript{151} As I will detail in Section 4.2.3 of this chapter, Heidegger thinks Descartes’ insight into this was significant but ultimately insufficient because he substantialized the nature of thought’s being.
metaphysics in which such principles are posited. Furthermore, Heidegger’s ontology posits no metaphysically transcendent aspects of being. Via this ground of this methodological immanence, working out an account of being can bypass the pitfalls of representational thought. The complex evolution of fundamental ontology proceeds as the evolution of the existence of the being who thinks, insofar as it pursues the question of being. This marks a transformation of the question of being from an artificial abstractness in which it had been framed historically into a structure of the very flesh of existence.

In Heidegger’s terminology, these points are made as follows. As noted above, in Sein und Zeit Heidegger maintains that being is always the being of beings. But questioning or “inquiry is itself the behaviour of a questioner” – a being who thinks or questions.\footnote{SZ 5/24, my italics.} If the questioner is to ask about the nature of being, she must inquire into the being of some being or beings. But, which? Some “external” being? No, that unnecessarily complicates the project by raising a field of problems found in representationalist approaches. One being bears a distinctive characteristic that makes it preferable: the questioner herself. The questioner is a being that is distinct from others insofar as it is both a being and posits the question about being. Thus, the question about being and the being that is to be interrogated with respect to its being overlap – or, rather, 
\textit{coincide} – in the questioner. Moreover, the questioner’s being \textit{is} in the distinctive manner of inquiring into and thinking its own being. It is a being for whom “the very asking of this question” is its “mode of \textit{being}; and as such it gets its essential character from what is inquired about – namely, being.”\footnote{SZ 7/27.} In other words, the very being who inquires into being does so by existing (in part) as the inquiry into its own existence. Heidegger calls this being “Dasein,”
human existence.\textsuperscript{154} Dasein is the being that “is ontically distinctive in that it \textit{is} ontological.”\textsuperscript{155} Thus, Dasein’s existence holds an intrinsic relation of thinking and being, on the basis of which any understanding of being is made possible. Dasein exists as the condition for the possibility of any ontology.

It is important to be clear that this fact does not mean Dasein has a clear or sufficient understanding of being or even of its own existence. Most of the time, Dasein understands its own existence and, in turn, being, only in a vague, undeveloped way. In Heidegger’s words, though we questioners, as Dasein, “always conduct our activities in an understanding of being,” this is “a vague average understanding of being.”\textsuperscript{156} Nonetheless, “the meaning of being” is “already… available to us in some way,” despite the fact that this is for the most part “infiltrated with traditional theories and opinions about being.”\textsuperscript{157} That is, we exist as always having interpreted and understood our own existence, but the terms with which we usually do this are inherited from our historical situation, the generally thoughtless masses, the clichés of pop culture, etc., through which we can have only a significantly impoverished or inauthentic understanding. Moreover, most of the time we don’t even think explicitly about the nature of being or of our own existence. Yet, because of the coincident relation of our understanding and being that makes even impoverished, inauthentic understanding possible, when we do take up the question of being explicitly, our inquiry can be “guided beforehand” by our vague average understanding of being.\textsuperscript{158} That is, we can take this as our interpretive cue for developing a more

\textsuperscript{154}SZ 7/27.
\textsuperscript{155}SZ 12/32. Dasein “is ontically distinguished by the fact that, in its very being, that being is an \textit{issue} for it…. [T]his is a constitutive state of Dasein’s being, and this implies that Dasein, in its being, has a relationship towards that being – a relationship which itself is one of being. And this means further that there is some way in which Dasein understands itself in its being…. It is peculiar to this being that with and through its being, this being is disclosed to it” (SZ 12/32).
\textsuperscript{156}SZ 5/25, italics removed.
\textsuperscript{157}SZ 5-6/25.
\textsuperscript{158}SZ 5/25.
authentic understanding. The relation of coincidence or intrinsic connectivity that grants the
Seinsfrage access to Sein, and thus renders the project of ontology possible at all, is an essential
colorful character of Dasein’s existence.¹⁵⁹

This establishes one of Heidegger’s major ontological moves at the beginning of Sein und
Zeit: securing the intrinsic link between thought (together with the Seinsfrage) and being in
Dasein. Dasein, “in its very being,” has “that being as an issue for it”; “Understanding of being is
itself a definite characteristic of Dasein’s being.”¹⁶⁰ To be clear, Heidegger in no way simply
equates thinking and being – this is no vulgar idealism. Rather, structurally speaking, thinking
intersects being: thinking and being are connected in a moment of coincidence. Not all being is
the being of thought, but all thought is. This enables thought to proceed in a non-representational
way and generates the entire methodology of the existential analysis of Dasein that makes up
most of Sein und Zeit. Without it, his project would be impossible.

It is important to emphasize that although Heidegger’s order of argumentation or
methodological order in Sein und Zeit moves from the level of questioning as the behavior of a
questioner to Dasein as the ontico-ontological condition for the possibility of fundamental
ontology, the order of ontological dependence is exactly the inverse. It is the ontological
structure of Dasein that is the basis for inquiry into being as the behavior of a questioner. Thus,
in the order of ontological justification, Dasein takes priority. The condition for the possibility of
doing fundamental ontology is the distinctive character belonging to Dasein. It follows only upon
this condition that the inquiry into being is the behavior of a questioner. Dasein is the ontological
structure that enables the possibility of doing ontology. The upheaval of the history of

¹⁵⁹ Note that understanding and interpretation constitute only part of Dasein’s existence. Though these are laced
through Dasein’s factical dimension, as thrown, Dasein’s factical dimension includes historical, corporeal, linguistic,
etc., aspects that exceed its understanding and interpretation.
¹⁶⁰ SZ 12/32; italics removed.
metaphysics and the rest of Heidegger’s work must be understood as proceeding from this distinctive structure. And establishing it sets up another major ontological move with extensive methodological implications: situating the \textit{Seinsfrage} directly in the existential constitution of the questioner.

4.1.1: The \textit{Seinsfrage}, Existentially Situated

Heidegger’s formulation of the \textit{Seinsfrage} is grounded by articulating it along the lines of Dasein as the existential-ontological condition for the possibility of doing any ontology. Consequently, it is not an abstract question. The problematic of being coincides with Dasein’s concrete existence. Any abstraction in which this problematic appears is constituted by an eclipse of its ground, i.e., by an alienated state of Dasein. Rather, here, the \textit{Seinsfrage} is Dasein’s existence insofar as Dasein turns toward thinking being, that is, inquires into the coincidence of thinking and being that it constitutes. Addressing the \textit{Seinsfrage} is an operation of Dasein’s existence, insofar as Dasein thinks along the immanent trajectory into its own being.\footnote{On the basis of this analysis a further point can be made about the project of Heidegger’s \textit{Sein und Zeit}. In the Introduction to that text, he raises the question of being and then methodologically situates it in the existential analytic of Dasein. Here, the existential analytic of Dasein – as crucial and extensive as it is in this text – is not Heidegger’s primary concern. Rather, it is the necessary methodological arena in which the fundamental ontology can be pursued or worked out: “fundamental ontology… must be sought in the existential analytic of Dasein,” but “the analytic of Dasein remains wholly oriented towards the guiding task of working out the question of being” (SZ 13/34, italics removed, and 17/38). This point is important for showing the mistake in Sheehan’s claim that throughout Heidegger’s entire career he is primarily concerned with the human being, not being, and that consequently the question about being is really a question about meaning. In Sheehan’s claim, the \textit{Seinsfrage} should be understood as a \textit{Sinnsfrage}. To my mind this runs the risk of posing some meaning or logos or law as ontologically prior to the inception of the domain of beings, i.e., anterior to the world (the domain of meaning) – in other words, a theological meaning. Cf. Althusser’s concept of the “non-antiority of Meaning” in “The Underground Current of the Materialism of the Encounter,” trans. G. M. Goshgarian, in \textit{Philosophy of the Encounter}, ed. Francois Matheron and Oliver Corpet (London: Verso, 2006), 169.}

This is a crucial point with respect to the task of reconstructing Heidegger’s account of the event. The complex evolution of Heidegger’s ontology proceeds precisely by pursuing the
problematic of being in this trajectory. In other words, the trajectory of methodological
immanence opened up by grounding the Seinsfrage in Dasein’s existence is the famous
“pathway” Heidegger continued along for the remainder of his life. It establishes the problematic
horizon within which his ontological project proceeds. In Sein und Zeit, this operates through the
existential analytic of Dasein, generating more and more originary accounts of Dasein’s
existence by inquiring into the ground enabling the terms in which Dasein is understood and then
reflexively recasting those terms (being-in-the-world, care, thrown projection, ecstatic
temporality). In terms of that text, this line of questioning enables Dasein incrementally to take
ownership of itself, that is, appropriate itself as authentic. Pursuing the ontological problematic
enacts a grounding of Dasein insofar as the “forgetting” of being constitutes Dasein’s existential
and historical alienation. This drives the horizon of Dasein’s understanding of its own existence
and, in turn, of being, forward along a diagenic axis. As I will show in Chapter II, in the early
1930s Heidegger argues that this leads to a macrological reconfiguration of the ontological
problematic. Namely, it progresses to a point where the horizon of Dasein’s understanding of
being no longer coincides merely with its own existence. He begins to rethink the problematic of
being in terms of ontological structures more originary than human existence, structures
grounding the possibility for human existence to be. Eventually, in the mid-late 1930s, this
develops into Heidegger’s recasting of being as event. However, all these later stages – and the
ontological structures articulated in them – are accessed via the grounding of the Seinsfrage in
Dasein’s existence and the consequent pursuit of the ontological problematic through the
existential analytic of Dasein in Sein und Zeit. This is not to say that they remain within the
horizon of the existential analytic, but that the later stages of Heidegger’s work are generated
through a complex evolution that is first grounded in that methodological configuration.
4.2: The Ontological Groundwork of the Problematic of the History of Metaphysics

In the remainder of this chapter, I focus on the account in *Sein und Zeit* of the way the problematic of being was derailed by the history of metaphysics and how this is grounded in the historical character of Dasein’s existence. Here, the historical alienation we call “metaphysics” is rooted in an existential alienation (though I would argue that for Heidegger it is irreducible to existential alienation insofar as metaphysics is inscribed into the artifacts, languages, institutions, and practices of the *Mitwelt* into which Dasein is thrown). A particularly important consequence follows from this: doing fundamental ontology via the existential analytic of Dasein incrementally rectifies the error of the historical configuration of metaphysics in which Dasein exists. Dasein’s operation of self-grounding via the existential analytic *is* an incremental disruption and reconfiguration of the ground of metaphysics. This is Heidegger’s early formulation of the problematic that would evolve to frame the concept of event in its historical sense. As I will show in Chapter II, when Heidegger begins advancing accounts of ontological structures more originary than Dasein (as human existence) during his *Kehre*, this enables yet more radical reconfigurations of the ground of metaphysics and its history. Crucially, pursuit of the *ontological* problematic enacts the most fundamental disruption of the history of metaphysics. For Heidegger, the full picture of this disruption should include analyses of canonical texts marking the particular configurations of this history. This, however, goes beyond the scope of my current project. My focus is on the ontological sense of the event, which I take to be most fundamental for Heidegger. Thus, my task in this section, aside from establishing greater conceptual context, is to establish how the terms of the problematic of historical alienation are grounded in the problematic of being, such that addressing the latter
simultaneously addresses the former, or, at the least, establishes the basis for doing so. In Chapter II, I focus on the problematic of truth, which forms a key register of the problematic of being. Working through it enacts a disruption of the history of metaphysics on ontological bases. In Heidegger’s analysis in Sein und Zeit, both history and truth are constitutive dimensions of Dasein’s existence. Consequently the existential analytic provides the groundwork for addressing each. Here, Dasein’s “disclosedness” is particularly important. In “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit,” when Heidegger’s analysis of truth begins manifesting the Kehre, Dasein’s disclosedness remains a touchstone via which more originary ontological structures are accessed. Attention to this shows that as Heidegger’s program evolves, it maintains a methodological continuum between the problematics of history and truth, such that addressing what is most essentially at stake in the former (the ontological dynamics constituting the essence of truth) simultaneously addresses what is most essentially at stake in the latter (the historical event).

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The tradition of Western thought has failed to adequately clarify our understanding of being and, moreover, even to adequately formulate the question of being. Thus, as I have emphasized, Heidegger argues the Seinsfrage must be raised anew, a task that requires it first be properly formulated. The above analysis of Dasein as the condition for the possibility of ontology serves this end. While Heidegger affirms that a number of ancient Greek thinkers – including Plato and Aristotle – did genuinely engage the question of being on some levels, he also locates its eclipse in certain of the conceptual moves they make. This “forgetting” of being, he thinks, originated the epoch of metaphysics. In particular, he often focuses on the way it takes hold in Aristotle.
This, he argues, would come to define the history of Western philosophy and give rise to a “dogma” that rejects the question of being.\(^{162}\)

Heidegger’s account of the historical and conceptual structures of metaphysics and their relations to the projects of philosophy (particularly reformulating the *Seinsfrage*), is quite complex and, as would be expected, transforms through different texts.\(^{163}\) In *Sein und Zeit* §6, he outlines this by tracing metaphysics through a few touchstone configurations in Aristotle, Descartes, and Kant. I will outline this in a moment. Establishing the weight of this analysis with respect to the question of the event requires first discerning a few key registers of the conceptual framework within which it operates. For, Heidegger’s point is not simply to provide an intellectual history within which he might position himself. This history is situated in a more fundamental problematic: (1) that of the inscription of Dasein’s historical heritage into its interpretation of its own existence and, in turn, interpretation of being. This problematic is in turn situated in an even more fundamental one: (2) that of the historical nature of Dasein’s existence itself.

4.2.1: The Historical Character of Dasein’s Existence

To make sense of these problematics, we can distinguish between two pertinent registers of history in *Sein und Zeit*.\(^{164}\) First is *Weltgeschichte* (world-history), which is comprised of the sequence of entities and occurrences in the world that would make up the world’s history if, for

\(^{162}\) *SZ* 2/21. This dogma, he says, has persisted on the basis of certain “presuppositions and prejudices” that “are rooted in ancient ontology itself” (*SZ* 2-3/22).

\(^{163}\) For more detailed discussion of Heidegger’s understanding of metaphysics, see: *TPT* 3-10 and 16-20.

\(^{164}\) For more on this, see *SZ* §72-77, pp. 372-404/424-455.
instance, they were arrayed on a timeline.\textsuperscript{165} The science of such \textit{Weltgeschichte} is designated \textit{Historie} (“historiology,” in Macquarrie and Robinson’s translation).\textsuperscript{166}

The second register is that of Dasein’s \textit{Geschichtlichkeit} (historicality).\textsuperscript{167} This designates first and foremost that Dasein’s existence \textit{is} historical. The sense of this is not that Dasein exists as a part of \textit{Weltgeschichte}, but that “what is \textit{primarily} historical is Dasein.”\textsuperscript{168} In other words, history is a characteristic or function of Dasein’s existence and it must be understood on the basis of that existence.\textsuperscript{169} Heidegger understands this as follows. Dasein’s existence (care) is “grounded in temporality,” that is, it exists as thrown projection or “ecstatico-horizontal temporality” (\textit{ekstatisch-horizontalen Zeitlichkeit}).\textsuperscript{170} Dasein’s \textit{Geschichtlichkeit} is a function of its temporality.\textsuperscript{171} Only because Dasein exists as temporal can it be historical. What does it mean to say Dasein exists as temporal? In brief outline: As thrown into a concrete factical situation, Dasein is always “in the process of having-been (\textit{gewesend})” and, as projection, is always “essentially futural (\textit{zukünftig}).”\textsuperscript{172} “Having-been” designates the factical, “past” dimension of Dasein’s existence:

In its factical being, any Dasein is as it already was, and is ‘what’ it already was. It \textit{is} its past, whether explicitly or not. And this is so not only in that its past is, as it were, pushing itself along ‘behind’ it, and that Dasein possesses what is past as a property which is still present-at-hand and which sometimes has after-effects upon it: Dasein ‘is’ its past in the way of \textit{its} own being, which, to put it roughly, ‘historizes’ [\textit{geschieht}] out of its future on each occasion.\textsuperscript{173}

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{165} SZ 20/41.
\bibitem{166} SZ 20/41.
\bibitem{167} SZ 20/41.
\bibitem{168} SZ 382/433. Historicality is “the essence of history (\textit{Geschichte})” (SZ 378/249).
\bibitem{169} Dasein “is not ‘temporal’ because it ‘stands in history’, but…, on the contrary, it exists historically and can so exist only because it is temporal in the very basis of its being” (SZ 376/428, italics removed).
\bibitem{170} SZ 382/434 and 393/445. Again: “temporality [is] the primordial condition for the possibility of \textit{care}” (SZ 372/424).
\bibitem{171} Thus, Heidegger notes, “the Interpretation of Dasein’s historicality will prove to be, at bottom, just a more concrete working out of temporality” (SZ 382/434).
\bibitem{172} SZ 385/437, italics removed.
\bibitem{173} SZ 20/41.
\end{thebibliography}
As the last clause in this passage indicates, the relation of Dasein’s having-been and its futural dimensions is somewhat complex. Since our orientation toward our having-been dimension is always through our projection of the possibility of interpreting and understanding that having-been, our having-been includes a distinctively futural aspect. Likewise, since our futural projection is always a projection on the basis of our factical conditions and our having-been, our futural dimension includes a distinctively past or having-been aspect. It is worth pointing out that when, in Chapter III, I analyze Heidegger’s account of time-space in Beiträge, this structural co-implication of the futural and having-been dimensions of temporality will once again be important.

Within the register of history, the unified structure of Dasein’s historical, ecstatico-temporal existence is articulated as its “historizing” or “occurrence” (Geschehens). Weltgeschichte and Historie, for Heidegger, are grounded in Dasein’s Geschehens, without which they could not be at all.

Historicality [Geschichtlichkeit], as a determinate character [Bestimmung], is prior to what is called “history” [Geschichte] (world-historical historizing). “Historicality” stands for the state of being that is constitutive for [Seinsverfassung] Dasein’s ‘historizing’ [Geschehens] as such; only on the basis [Grunde] of such historizing is anything like ‘world-history’ possible or can anything belong historically [geschichtlich] to world-history.

Weltgeschichte and Historie are both modes of Dasein’s Geschehens: that is, they are “world-historical historizing” (welt-geschichtlichen Geschehens). “Geschehens” designates Dasein’s ecstatic structure insofar as Dasein (qua “care”) is “stretching along [Erstreckung]

174 SZ 375/427/BTs 358.
175 SZ 20/41.
176 SZ 19-20/41.
177 SZ 389/441.
between birth and death.”178 Here, birth and death, of course, are not datable events on a world-historical timeline, but essential limits of Dasein’s existence; limits that structure Dasein and grant its finitude.179 Consequently, Dasein is at once “being-towards-death” and “being-towards-the-beginning.”180 More precisely, Dasein exists as stretched between these immanent futural and factual limits; it is this “between.”181 In this way, Dasein’s Geschehens is the dynamic of its existence as stretched between the factual limit of birth and the futural limit of death.

Late in Sein und Zeit Heidegger differentiates between inauthentic (uneigentliche) and authentic (eigentliche) modes of Weltgeschichte. In the inauthentic case, “the being of the world-historical is experienced and interpreted in the sense of something present-at-hand which comes along, has presence, and then disappears” (this is the sense in which I have just been using it).182 Here, Dasein understands Weltgeschichte and Historie as primary, failing to understand them appropriately on the ground of Geschehens. In turn, Dasein understands its own historical condition inauthentically because it understands it in terms of a Weltgeschichte of present-at-hand entities and events. Thus, since Weltgeschichte is possible only on the basis of Dasein’s Geschichtlichkeit, when Dasein understands its historical condition in terms of Weltgeschichte, this constitutes an inauthentic mode of Geschichtlichkeit.183

179 Death, as the inescapable and most essential possibility belonging to Dasein and determining its futural limit, and birth, as Dasein’s factual limit, in a sense do form the ultimate limits of Dasein’s existence: beyond these, Dasein does not exist. But death and birth, as the very horizons of finitude characterizing Dasein’s futurally oriented projection into possibilities and factual conditions, are dynamic horizons, limits that are always with Dasein. They are the articulated limits of Dasein’s dynamic, concrete finitude. Since birth and death are inescapable, and structurally determinative for the entirety of Dasein’s existence, that existence always bears a structural reference toward these limits: Dasein is at once “being-towards-death” and “being-towards-the-beginning” (SZ 373/425). Dasein exists as stretched or distended between these futural and factual limits. In Heidegger’s words, it is this “between [Zwischen]” (SZ 374/427). Dasein’s Geschehens is the dynamic of its existence as stretched between the factual limit (“birth”) and the futural limit (“death”).
180 SZ 373/425.
181 TPT 84; SZ 374/427.
182 SZ 389/441.
183 See SZ 389-390/441-442.
Authentic Welt-Geschichte, on the other hand, “has a double signification.”\(^{184}\) First, this signifies “the Geschehen of the world in its essential existent unity with Dasein.”\(^{185}\) In this case, Historie does not investigate past entities and events – taken as present-at-hand – but “the disclosure of historical entities.”\(^{186}\) That is, it investigates the ontological structure that enables such things to be historical at all and which allows Dasein to thematize the past.\(^{187}\) The term “Historie,” though, is often reserved by Heidegger scholars for the inauthentic mode. Second, authentic Welt-Geschichte signifies “the ‘Geschehen’ within-the-world of what is ready-to-hand and present-at-hand, insofar as entities within-the-world are, in every case, discovered with the factically existent world.”\(^{188}\) Authentic Historie, in this case, does investigate entities and events of the past, but precisely on the basis of the ontological structure addressed in the first signification.

Thus, authentic Weltgeschichte can be taken to designate both the historical character of a world, insofar as that is grounded in Dasein’s Geschichtlichkeit, and the historical character of entities and events insofar as they are, in turn, part of such a world of significance. Historical artifacts, for instance, are characterized by being things of the “past.” But this past is “nothing else than that world within which they belonged to a context of equipment and were encountered as ready-to-hand and used by a concernful Dasein who was-in-the-world.”\(^{189}\) “That world is no longer. But what was formerly within-the-world with respect to that world is still present-at-hand.”\(^{190}\)

\(^{184}\) SZ 389/440.  
\(^{185}\) SZ 389/440.  
\(^{186}\) SZ 393/445.  
\(^{187}\) See SZ 393/445.  
\(^{188}\) SZ 389/440-441.  
\(^{189}\) SZ 380/432.  
\(^{190}\) SZ 380/432.
Additionally, it is important to point out that insofar as Dasein as being-in-the-world is *Mitsein*, the world-historical fabric is woven through the *Mitwelt*, or with-world. More fundamentally: “if fateful [*schicksalhafte*] Dasein, as being-in-the-world, exists essentially in being-with Others, its historizing [*Geschehen*] is a co-historizing [*Mitgeschehen*] and is determinantive for it as destiny [*Geschick*]. This is how we designate the historizing [*Geschehen*] of the community, of a people.”\(^\text{191}\)

Heidegger includes a more developed account of authentic *Geschichtlichkeit* on the basis of concepts of anticipatory resoluteness (*vorlaufende Entschlossenheit*), repetition (*Wiederholung*), fate (*Schicksal*), destiny, and the “moment of vision” (*Augenblick*).\(^\text{192}\) I will bypass further discussion of this here in order to keep focus on his treatment of the historical and conceptual structures of metaphysics and how these impact the inquiry into being and, in turn, his development of the concept of event. With the above distinctions made, we can now return to clarify this.

### 4.2.2: The Problematic of History in Fundamental Ontology

My considerations regarding Dasein’s *Geschichtlichkeit* and *Weltgeschichte* pose the two problems – or, rather, conditions – for Heidegger’s project of fundamental ontology that I outlined earlier. The first condition is that the conceptual, linguistic, equipmental, affective, interpretive, etc., matrices in terms of which Dasein understands its own existence and, in turn, understands being are defined by the historical context into which it is thrown. Dasein exists as factical, that is, as thrown into a factical context which determines its existence. We happen to be

\(^{191}\) SZ 384/436, italics removed.
\(^{192}\) SZ 382/434, italics removed; 385/437, italics removed; 384/436; and 386/438, italics removed.
thrown into the factual, historical context of the metaphysical tradition. Thus, the terms in which we understand our own existence and understand being are defined by it. The problem is that the metaphysical tradition is structurally incapable of asking the question about being properly. Why? The answer, for Heidegger, is found in the (authentic) historiological analysis of the foundations of the concrete formations of thought ranging from the ancient Greeks to his time. That is, this problem is not simply identifiable with the fact that Dasein’s understanding is defined by the historical context into which it is thrown, but must be understood in terms of the specific historical configurations governing that understanding (in the present analysis, key aspects of Aristotle, Descartes, and Kant). As shall be seen shortly, it is because metaphysics is a modality of thought that is constituted at a fundamental level by the interpretation of being in terms of the time determination of presence. This interpretation of being goes hand in hand with interpretations of the human being as a substantialized or subjectivized thing (ens, res, etc.) and the exportation of the problematic of temporality from Dasein’s existence. These, moreover, constitute specific ways metaphysics fails to properly account for its own grounds.

The second and more fundamental problem or condition is that in our epoch, Dasein’s existence is itself shaped by the metaphysical-historical framework into which it is thrown. This constitutes a fundamental alienation of Dasein from itself. As seen above, Dasein is its factual having-been and is its futural projection, i.e., Dasein is historical. Although this historicality is the ontological ground for any particular world-historical configuration, it always and only exists as situated within a concrete world-historical configuration. That is, Dasein exists always as thrown into a concrete factual situation and projects futurally on the basis of that factual situation. Moreover, Dasein’s understanding and interpretation are part of its very historical existence. Consequently, insofar as Dasein interprets, understands, and projects itself in terms of
its metaphysical-historical situation, it exists as metaphysical. It exists as alienated from itself. This doesn’t mean that Dasein is in fact a metaphysical thing (e.g., a substance or a subject), but that in Dasein’s existential makeup, the horizon of its understanding of its own existence and the horizon of the possibilities it projects for itself, is determined as the horizon of metaphysics. The problem is that this is a false horizon. The possibility of Dasein inquiring into the nature of being on the basis of an inquiry into its own being is precluded.

The historical analyses in Sein und Zeit develop a basis for addressing these conditions and setting ontology on the right track. This operates on different, but intertwined, levels: 1) They map out an historiological intellectual history within which Heidegger positions himself and frames what he sees as the conceptual failings of his predecessors. Among these failings is that of properly asking the question about being, the rectification of which Heidegger takes to mark his own place in this history. 2) As a result of this, Heidegger’s analyses problematize the historical-conceptual foundations of metaphysics and, thus, the grip of the framework of metaphysics on our understanding. This generates a space within which metaphysics as a whole can be problematized. Furthermore, this indicates a set of specific ways we can rupture the foundations of the metaphysical tradition, develop more fundamental ontological concepts and methods, and employ those concepts and methods to reformulate the question of being. In other words, this allows us to generate a conceptual and existential space in which to address the question of being that does not just repeat the foundations of the metaphysical tradition yet again, but ruptures them. 3) These historical analyses advance a transformation of human existence itself: by problematizing the foundations of metaphysics, the human being’s understanding of itself in metaphysical terms is problematized. It is forced to confront the question of its own existence without the benefit of the framework of metaphysical concepts in terms of which it

193 For a related discussion, see Polt’s account of “reinterpretive events” (EB 78-80).
might define itself. The transformation is set into place when the human being reinterprets itself phenomenologically on the basis of its distinctive ontico-ontological characteristic (that it is a being for whom its own being is an issue), and thus as Dasein. By reformulating the question about being on the basis of this characteristic, Dasein can work to rectify its alienation from itself, understand its own existence more authentically, and develop a more authentic understanding of being. This transformation is complex. It does not amount to simply disavowing the history of metaphysics or its impact on one’s existence, for Dasein is historical, and so “the inquiry into being… is itself characterized by historicality.” Nevertheless, we have been thrown factically into the framework of metaphysics and its history. Thus,

The ownmost meaning of being which belongs to the inquiry into being as an historical inquiry, gives us the assignment of inquiring into the history of that inquiry itself, that is, of becoming historiological. In working out the question of being, we must heed this assignment, so that by positively making the past our own, we may bring ourselves into full possession of the ownmost possibilities of such inquiry. The question of the meaning of being must be carried through by explicating Dasein beforehand in its temporality and historicality; the question thus brings itself to the point where it understands itself as historiological.

4.2.3: An Outline of the Historical Failure Regarding the Question of Being

With this sketch of the issues framing Heidegger’s treatment of history (in particular, the history of metaphysics) and the project of ontology in mind, I now turn to a very brief reconstruction of that history as it is abbreviated in Sein und Zeit.

In Heidegger’s analysis of the Greeks in Sein und Zeit §6, he mentions only Parmenides, Plato, and Aristotle by name. Aristotle, though, is taken to crystalize the “ loftiest and purest

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194 SZ 20/42.
195 SZ 20-21/42.
scientific stage” of “the foundations of ancient ontology.” These foundations are found in correlated interpretations of being and human existence on the basis of one temporal mode: presence. First, being is interpreted “as παρουσία or οὐσία, which signifies, in ontological-Temporal terms, ‘presence’ [Anwesenheit].” Beings, in turn, are consequently interpreted as essentially present: “Beings are grasped in their being as ‘presence’; this means that they are understood with regard to a definite mode of time – the ‘Present’ [Gegenwart].” Second, this correlates with the interpretation of the human being – a being – as ζῷον λόγον ἔχον – “as that living thing whose being is essentially determined by the potentiality for discourse [Redenkönnen].” As Macquarrie and Robinson indicate, Heidegger’s point here is to show that “λόγος is derived from the same root as the verb λέγειν (‘to talk,’ ‘to hold discourse’),” which he “identifies… in turn with νοεῖν (‘to cognize,’ ‘to be aware of,’ ‘to know’).” But, for Heidegger, the awareness “νοεῖν” signifies is an awareness of something as present, i.e., understood on the basis of its presence:

λέγειν itself – or rather νοεῖν, that simple awareness of something present-at-hand [Vorhandenem] in its sheer presence at hand [Vorhandenheit], which Parmenides had already taken to guide him in his own interpretation of being – has the Temporal structure of a pure ‘making-present’ [Gegenwärtigens] of something.

This association of λόγος and νοεῖν with λέγειν as making-present, in turn, reinforces the correlated first point above – that being and beings (including, importantly, the human being) are interpreted on the basis of the temporal determination of presence. For, if understanding is taken

197 SZ 25/47.
198 SZ 25/47. It is worth pointing out that Heidegger does not think this interpretation was the result of a conscious decision Aristotle or any other Greek philosopher made, and which could have been decided alternatively. It was rather, he suggests, implicit in the historical character of the Greek era.
199 SZ 25/47.
200 BT 47, trans. fn. 3.
to mean *noetic* understanding, then when we understand being and when we understand human existence, we understand them on the basis of presence. The human being becomes determined as a thing, ontologically present, over and against other such things.

Scholastic philosophy later carried on this basic framework in which the human being is conceptually determined as a thing fully ontologically present. The scholastics, though, recast the human being as an *ens creatum*, in contradistinction to a transcendent God, the *ens increatum*. The scholastics are mentioned here primarily to point out that through their formulation of the human being as an *ens creatum*, the Greek foundations of metaphysics were transmitted to Descartes at the dawn of modernism, who, at the crucial moment of his critical doubt re-implemented the concept of *ens*.

In Heidegger’s analysis, Descartes’ radical critique of scholasticism, expressed in a general way by the method of doubt carried out in his *Meditationes*, ultimately failed to make a break with this fundamental ontological framework. When Descartes arrived at his *fundamentum inconcussum* ("cogito sum"), he cast the *cogito* as a *res cogitans*, and “defined the *res cogitans* ontologically as an *ens*." Consequently, Descartes reconfigured metaphysics internally, but remained within its fundamental conceptual framework – the interpretation of being and beings in terms of presence. Descartes’ ultimate failure, in Heidegger’s eyes, was to have not worked out “the kind of being which belongs to the *res cogitans*, or – more precisely – the meaning of the being of the ‘*sum*’.” This is precisely something Heidegger has in mind to rectify through his recasting of the human being as Dasein and the subsequent existential analysis of Dasein.

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202. SZ 24/46.
203. SZ 24/46.
204. SZ 24/46.
Kant, Heidegger thinks, was on the precipice of a fundamental transformation of metaphysics. For, he brought “the phenomenon of time back into the subject.” Rather than maintaining time as a characteristic of an external, objective universe, Kant shifts time to a position internal to the subject: time is the “form of inner intuition,” “the formal a priori condition of all appearances whatsoever.” For Heidegger this shift means that the nature of time itself was in play and, with it, the domination of the mode of presence. Moreover, integrating time back into the human being opened the possibility of reevaluating the temporal character of the human being itself and, in turn, of being. Kant’s failure – and his consequent repetition of the fundamental configuration of metaphysics – is found in the fact that he did not take these further steps. “There were two things that stood in his way: in the first place, he altogether neglected the problem of being; and, in connection with this, he failed to provide an ontology with Dasein as its theme or (to put it in Kantian language) to give a preliminary ontological analytic of the subjectivity of the subject.” Thus, he adopted the basic Cartesian designation of the human being as a subject. As a result, “the decisive connection between time and the ‘I think’ was shrouded in utter darkness; it did not even become a problem.” It is worth pointing out that Deleuze highlights exactly this connection in Kant, agreeing that the latter failed to recognize its consequences. These are expressed in pithy form by Hamlet’s formulation, “time is out of joint,” which Deleuze adopts as the motto of his third temporal synthesis in Différence et répétition.

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205 SZ 24/45.  
207 SZ 24/45.  
208 SZ 24/45.
In this dissertation it is not my goal to recount this eclipse and the history that follows out from it in much more detail. I limit myself to tracking major points of inflection shaping this history only insofar as they are essential to Heidegger’s arguments addressing the event.

4.2.4: Statement of Methodological Continuity between the Historical and Ontological Problematics of Event

This analysis of how, in *Sein und Zeit*, Heidegger understands the historical alienation we call “metaphysics” to be rooted in Dasein’s existential alienation is important for clarifying his later account of the event for the following reasons. As mentioned, more than simply clarifying his understanding of the history of metaphysics, it shows that for the Heidegger of *Sein und Zeit*, doing fundamental ontology via the existential analytic of Dasein incrementally rectifies the error of the historical configuration of metaphysics in which Dasein exists. Dasein’s operation of self-grounding via the existential analytic is an incremental disruption and reconfiguration of the ground of metaphysics. Recall that the transformation of the ontological problematic Heidegger advances during and after the Kehre is achieved through the immanent, complex evolution of the configuration it took in the existential analytic of *Sein und Zeit*. In Chapter II, this will allow me to show that when he begins advancing accounts of ontological structures more originary than Dasein (as human existence) in the 1930s, this generates yet more radical reconfigurations of the ground of metaphysics and its history. I thus focus on how this operates via the problematic of truth, which forms a key register of the problematic of being. Dasein’s “disclosure” plays a central role in Heidegger’s analyses of both history and truth. Attention to this allows me to establish a methodological continuum between the problematics of history and truth, such that
addressing what is most essentially at stake in the latter (the ontological dynamics constituting the essence of truth) simultaneously addresses what is most essentially at stake in the former (the historical event). My approach to the event in Chapter II is shaped by one crucial point: it is true that the historical sense of the event bears a specific, temporary methodological priority in Heidegger’s program, insofar as the possibility of giving an account of being as evental in nature is beyond the horizon of the metaphysical “first beginning.” Thus, working out the ontological sense of the event entails a rupture of the first beginning. However, this entailment is not one in which working out an evental account of being is contingent on the historical event. The situation is the reverse. An account of being as event is not accomplished by analysis of intra-historical terms or even of the domain of history, but by pursuing the question of the ground enabling the domain of history, i.e., the operations of being enabling the determination of any historical configuration. The ontological dynamics constituting the essence of truth are one of these. Despite Heidegger’s concern with the problematic of history and the occurrence of another beginning, this other historical beginning is to be accomplished by way of the ontological problematic, i.e., by working out an evental account of being and thereby properly grounding history.209 The historical event occurs as a byproduct of articulating the evental nature of being. I turn to the latter by way of an analysis of the ontological problematic of truth in what follows.

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209 “The other beginning must be brought into effect entirely out of beyng as event and out of the essential occurrence of its truth and of the history of that truth” (GA65 58/47).
Chapter II

Heidegger: Truth and Event

Chapter Overview

In Section 1.1 of this chapter I reconstruct central elements of Heidegger’s *a-lēthic* account of truth in *Sein und Zeit* §44. In Section 1.2 I track the main transformations this account undergoes in “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit.” Crucial for my arguments is a change in the relation between truth and Dasein. In Section 2, I turn to Heidegger’s *Beiträge*. I begin by analyzing a series of important programmatic shifts he advances in that text, emphasizing the relation of these shifts and his claim (often overlooked) that being must be recast in a way independent from beings. I then examine how this impacts the problematic of truth. This leads to an analysis of a transformation in Heidegger’s conception of difference. Though the essence of truth, in Heidegger’s account, is usually taken to be *a-lēthic* in character, I show that it is in fact differential. Working out the logic of difference constituting the essence of truth provides a first grounded stance in the logic of the event. On this basis, I elaborate the logic of the event, both in the terminology of truth and on its own terms.

1: Dasein and the Precursory Question of Truth

In *Beiträge*, Heidegger claims “the question of the *essence of truth*” must be “posed radically as the question that is preliminary [*Vorfrage*] to the basic question [*Grundfrage*] of philosophy.
(How does beyng essentially occur [west]?).“210 Famously, Beiträge answers this basic question by arguing that “beyng essentially occurs as event.”211 Despite its status as a Vorfrage to this Grundfrage, the question of truth is not simply a propaedeutic. Truth forms an essential register of the event itself and its structural dynamics: “beyng qua event essentially occurs as truth.”212 My task in this chapter is to reconstruct how the problematic of truth serves both methodologically as a path to an account of beyng as event and as an essential aspect of the event itself. Though there is extensive literature on Heidegger’s conception of truth, these two crucial relations truth has to the event remain poorly understood. As I will argue, most scholarship has failed to register important changes the account of truth undergoes in Beiträge, which directly impact how we ought to understand his concept of event.

As is well known, dating back to his early work, Heidegger argues that truth cannot be primarily logical (formal), propositional, epistemological, calculative or, more broadly, representational in character. These versions are unable to explain essential aspects of inner workings of truth. Heidegger’s position follows from the conviction that a true statement or judgment, for instance, is not nothing, but is “something” in its own right, i.e., has an ontological status that is important and cannot be dismissed as something merely ephemeral that arises when humans get to know reality and do away with illusion. Rather, a true statement or judgment (and likewise a false one) is part of reality, or in Heideggerian terminology, is something that is.

Sufficiently accounting for truth, then, requires explaining the being of truth. As I will discuss, Heidegger takes this a step further, maintaining that truth is most primarily ontological in

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210 GA65 387/305; cf. TPT 7. I will clarify the significance of the terminological shift from “Sein”/”being” to “Seyn”/”beyng” in Section 2 below. In short, Heidegger spells “Seyn”/”beyng” with a “y” to signify that it is no longer understood in relation to beings, but independently, in itself.
211 GA65 344/272: “Das Seyn west als Ereignis.”
212 GA65 348/275: “Seyn… als Ereignis west als Wahrheit.”
character. That is to say, “truth” or what he comes to call “the essence of truth” designates aspects of being or of the ontological problematic itself. It serves as the ground enabling those other forms of truth (to whatever extent they might be sustainable), which are secondary or derivative in relation to it, i.e., less originary on the diagenic axis.

As I emphasized in Chapter I, Sein und Zeit grounds the problematic of being in the existence of Dasein, the analysis of which forms the methodological arena for fundamental ontology. Consequently, truth is explained within that arena – at least until the problematic of being moves to a ground more originary than Dasein. This shift is seen in Heidegger’s Kehre, beginning in the early 1930s. In Sections 1.1 and 1.2 below, I begin by summarizing the status of truth in Sein und Zeit and perhaps the earliest text in which the Kehre is visible, “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit” (lecture 1930, print 1943). Then in Section 2 I turn to an analysis of truth in Beiträge. There, it is through the problematic of the essence of truth that thought first gains a proper ground for articulating the evental nature of beyng. As this all suggests, Heidegger’s account of truth undergoes a series of important transformations. I focus on three, which correspond with these three texts.

In the 1920s and early- to mid-1930s Heidegger develops what I will call an a-λεθικ account of the essence of truth. That is, he casts truth and untruth in terms of the Greek ἀλήθεια and λήθη. Untruth or λήθη, is not falsity or the failure of truth, but a necessary, coessential dimension of it. Ἀλήθεια and λήθη structurally entail one another and together form an ongoing ontological dynamism. As the alpha-privative of “λήθη,” the word “ἀλήθεια” (“ἀ-λήθεια”) exhibits this essential correlation.

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213 Capobianco has a nice discussion of this in HWB, insisting that “on this point, Heidegger drew his inspiration from Aristotle (not Husserl) and specifically from Aristotle’s Metaphysics, Theta 10 at 1051b … where Aristotle states that ‘being’ is spoken of not only in terms of the categories and with respect to the potentiality and actuality of these, but also in the most proper sense (reading kyriotaton) as the ‘true’” (HWB 12).
Two main stages of the *a-lēthic* account can be identified. I address the first in Section 1.1 of this chapter. It is expressed in *Sein und Zeit*, where ἀλήθεια and λήθη are understood as the “Unverborgenheit” (“unhiddenness”/“unconcealment”) or “Entdecktheit” (“uncoveredness”/“discoveredness”) and “Verborgenheit” (“hiddenness”/“concealment”) of beings in a world.214 This is a phenomenological account of the nature of truth, since it describes the way in which beings become present as phenomena for Dasein (human existence), and recede from that presence.215 Here, ἀλήθεια and λήθη are grounded in (and thus dependent upon) Dasein’s *Erschlossenheit* (disclosedness) and are coextensive with the phenomenal world Dasein discloses. Ἀλήθεια and λήθη describe aspects of Dasein’s own existence, addressed by Heidegger at different points in the text in terms of being-in-the-world, care, thrown projection, and temporality.

The nature of truth, particularly with respect to its relation to logic, was a central concern in Heidegger’s early work before the 1927 publication of *Sein und Zeit*.216 Yet during the decade following *Sein und Zeit*, the problematic of truth takes on a pronounced role in Heidegger’s treatment of the *Seinsfrage* itself. During the same period, in his private works, the notion of event rises to the forefront of his characterization of being. In this period a second stage of the *a-lēthic* account of truth emerges, which I address in Section 1.2 of this chapter. This is expressed well in “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit.” There, a shift takes place in the arrangement of Heidegger’s ontology: the elements of the essence of truth – along with “Da-sein” – are cast as more originary than human existence.217 That is, human existence is argued to be ontologically

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214 SZ 219/262/BTs 210.  
215 For a detailed discussion of Heidegger’s phenomenological conception of truth, particularly as it responds to Husserl, see Daniel Dahlstrom, *Heidegger’s Concept of Truth* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001), Ch. II.  
216 Dahlstrom recounts this well in *Heidegger’s Concept of Truth*, Ch. I.  
217 As I will discuss later, Heidegger’s modification of the term “Dasein” to “Da-sein” signifies this shift.
consequent upon them. In this account, the *a-lēthic* essence of truth articulates correlated ontological structures and their dynamic, which enable beings to come to presence, i.e., *to be.*

Here, Heidegger understands truth or ἀλήθεια as Freiheit (freedom), Offenheit (openness), or Lichtung (clearing), which articulate an ontological structure enabling the movement of unconcealment, disclosure of beings, or origination of a meaningful world. Untruth or λήθη becomes originary Verbergung/Verborgenheit (concealing/concealment) or verbergenden Entzugs (concealing withdrawal), the ground enabling ἀλήθεια. Here, truth as ἀ-λήθεια articulates at least three correlated aspects of the ontology Heidegger works out in this text: 1) the terrain of beings or meaning constituting a world, 2) the genetic process by which such beings come to presence or become manifest and recede from presence, and 3) the ontological structures enabling that genetic process. As I will show later, insofar as the problematic of truth functions as a way for Heidegger to address the genesis of determinate worlds of beings, it parallels Deleuze’s account of individuation in *Différence et répétition.*

Most available scholarship addressing Heidegger’s account of truth in *Beiträge* takes it to remain within the basic framework of the second stage of the *a-lēthic* account. I take this to overlook significant structural and conceptual changes advanced in that text. My analysis in Section 2 of this chapter turns to this. As I hope to demonstrate, Heidegger moves into a third stage, which can no longer be properly accounted for in terms of the *a-lēthic* framework. Here, he inquires into the ontological ground generating the very structures of ἀλήθεια and λήθη, thereby moving to a position more originary on the diagenic axis. Ἀλήθεια and λήθη are originated in a primal process of differentiation, which constitutes not only the essence of truth but a key operation of the evental dynamic of beyng. Thus, in this third stage Heidegger’s

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218 WW 188/144.
219 WW 188/144, 201/154, and 193/148.
220 WW 201/154.
ontology offers a differential account of truth, which is more originary than the earlier a-lēthic accounts.221

A great deal of confusion has surrounded Heidegger’s evental ontology, especially as presented in Beiträge. I attribute much of this to a failure in the scholarship to adequately clarify the structural relations defining many of Heidegger’s idiosyncratic concepts. I further attribute that to a failure to register Heidegger’s shift to a differential concept of truth, since this provides access to the logic of the ground articulating these relations, that is, to the logic of the event. If the problematic of truth is the problematic preliminary to that of beyng as event, then how one understands Heidegger’s account of the essence of truth directly impacts how one understands his account of the event. Understanding the essence of truth to be most fundamentally a-lēthic, leads to an account of the evental nature of beyng in terms of the a-lēthic framework.222

However, this leads to confusion regarding many concepts related to the event, which appear out of joint, disconnected, or connected only extrinsically by Heidegger’s fiat. Reconstructions of Heidegger’s concepts within the a-lēthic framework, then, are unable to make sense of important parts of the text without reducing them to mysticism, arbitrariness, or proclamations of the master (hence the reliance of so much related Heidegger scholarship on jargon). This is because the a-lēthic framework falls short of the most originary level of grounding active in the text. Making sense of Beiträge’s concepts without registering this is like trying to understand the pieces of a game without understanding the rules in terms of which their characteristics are defined. In contrast, as I hope to show, registering Beiträge’s differential conception of the essence of truth enables a more originarily grounded articulation of the event, on the basis of

221 This does not mean he gets rid of the a-lēthic terminology. ἀλήθεια and λήθη remain crucial in this differential account, but they are no longer sufficient for accounting for the essence of truth.

222 For example, this leads Capobianco in EH to understand Ereignis to provide an account of being that is fundamentally equivalent to that given in terms of ἀλήθεια, but merely using an alternative terminology.
which those concepts snap into place. This allows a rigorous analysis of those concepts and their intrinsic, essential relations and, in turn, a reconstruction of his broader evental ontology in a unified, consistent fashion.

It is worth making one further terminological point. If the first stage of Heidegger’s a-"lēthic account of truth acquired its terminology through phenomenological description, the second and third retain much of that terminology. However, as his ontology moves beyond phenomenology, the significance of those terms becomes increasingly structural rather than descriptive. Part of the confusion about them arises from focusing on the meaning of the words used, rather than the structural aspects of the problematic they articulate.

As this all indicates, the problematic of truth forms a major conceptual context situating Heidegger’s thought regarding the event during the 1930s and 1940s. Others include ground, time or time-space, history, language, art, technology, and the plight of alienated human existence as it strives to ground itself or succumbs to the oblivion of being. As noted, though, it is through the problematic of the essence of truth that access to the event is first gained in an appropriately grounded way. Here, the program itself of inquiring into the essence of truth enacts a process of grounding, whereby thought becomes grounded in increasingly originary positions on the diagenic axis. This simultaneously effectuates conceptual transformations that set thought into the problematic of the event in an appropriate way. In Heidegger’s ontology, the logic of thought, that is, the logic of the being of thought, is continuous with the logic of being. Thus, by tracking the former it is possible to gain access to the latter. Truth, particularly in the earlier Heidegger, is a jumping off point for this process, for there “truth” designates being, insofar as being is disclosed in a meaningful way to Dasein’s thought.
As I emphasized in Chapter I, Heidegger’s account of the event is philosophically dependent on the lines of thought that lead up to it. Hence, the following analysis of the evolution of his understanding of truth will serve 1) to establish continuity from his formulation of the Seinsfrage in Sein und Zeit to his account of the event in Beiträge and 2) to articulate the problematic of truth as a key preliminary problematic enabling conceptual access the event and a properly grounded elaboration of the evental nature of beyng. My attention to Sein und Zeit and “Von Wesen der Wahrheit” is guided by these two tasks. My reconstruction of the differential conception of the essence of truth in Beiträge serves as a basis for reconstructing his account of the evental nature of beyng, which entails developing a structural dynamics or logic of the event. In Chapter III I elaborate this via the problematics of ground and time-space.

1.1: Truth and Dasein in Sein und Zeit

In Sein und Zeit §44 Heidegger makes two points about the nature of truth that are key for registering its relevance for his ongoing ontological project and understanding how it transforms in the 1930s. First, “truth, understood in the most primordial sense, belongs to the basic constitution of Dasein”; it is an “existentiale” (Existenzial) of Dasein, the human being.223 Second, “Dasein is equiprimordially both in the truth and in untruth.”224 I clarify these statements below.

Heidegger often begins his analysis of a topic by summarizing canonical accounts he will argue are insufficient or that contain an essential insight that later becomes distorted. His treatment of truth in Sein und Zeit follows this pattern. Parmenides’ famous Fragment 3

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223 SZ 226/269.
224 SZ 224/265, my italics.
expresses the insight that there is a primordial association of being with truth (under the guise of νοεῖν): “he ‘identified’ being with the perceptive understanding of being: τὸ γὰρ αὐτὸ νοεῖν ἐστίν τε καὶ εἶναι.” Aristotle figures the simultaneous adoption and distortion of this insight. For Aristotle, “philosophy itself is defined as ἐπιστήμη τῆς ἀληθείας – ‘the science of truth.’ But it is also characterized as ἐπιστήμη, ἣ θεωρεῖ τὸ ὄν ᾗ ὄν – as ‘a science which contemplates entities as entities’ – that is, with regard to their being.” Thus, the association of truth with being is maintained. However, Aristotle also “assigned truth to the judgment [or assertion] as its primordial locus” and “set going the definition of ‘truth’ as ‘agreement.’” Heidegger challenges these positions.

It is worth beginning with two preliminary notes about this engagement with Aristotle. First, as I emphasized in Chapter I, in Beiträge Heidegger argues that the philosophical orientation to the question of ὄν ᾗ ὄν leads to insufficient accounts of being as Seiendheit and is a defining characteristic of metaphysics. Here, in Sein und Zeit, Heidegger speaks of this orientation in a positive light, as aligned with the project of fundamental ontology. This contrast exhibits an important way Heidegger’s thought evolves during the Kehre. Second, the Aristotelian framework of judgement and its correlation with representation forms one of the central targets of Deleuze’s critique in Différence et répétition. The challenge Heidegger takes the problematic of truth to pose to Aristotle and that Deleuze sees posed by the problematic of difference overlap in key respects. Both Heidegger and Deleuze contend that the model of representation or of judgment set in place by Aristotle – and the philosophical tradition perpetuating it – is insufficient because it fails to account for important ontological features. In both cases these features are claimed to be ontologically prior to and generative of or originary

225 SZ 212/256.
226 SZ 213/256. Aristotle passages found at Metaphysica aI, 993b20 and Γ I, 1003a21.
227 SZ 214/257.
for representation/judgment, which is thereby derivative. For Heidegger in *Sein und Zeit*, these are cast in terms of the being of truth, or the processes of uncovering and covering (grounded in Dasein’s existence) whereby beings come into and withdraw from phenomenal presence. For Deleuze, they are cast in terms of being or becoming as difference and repetition, together with genetic processes of individuation whereby beings come to exist and pass out of existence. I detail Deleuze’s analysis of this in Chapters IV and V.

In Heidegger’s analysis, Aristotle proposed that “the soul’s ‘Experiences’ [*Erlebnesse*], its νοήματα (‘representations’ [*Vorstellungen*]), are likenings [*Angleichungen*] of Things,” and this set the precedent for “the later formulation of the essence of truth as *adaequatio intellectus et rei,*” which I briefly discussed in Chapter I.\(^228\) Heidegger uses “Angleichung” here to translate both “adaequatio” and “ὁμοίωμα.”\(^229\) The history of defining truth in terms of *adaequatio* is extensive. In its pre-Kantian form, Heidegger highlights its transmission from Isaac Israeli to Avicenna and to Aquinas, who “also uses for *adaequatio* (likening [*Angleichung*]) the terms ‘*correspondentia*’ (correspondence) and ‘*convenientia*’ (coming together).”\(^230\) Though neo-Kantian epistemology might suggest the model of *adaequatio* is untenable after the critical revolution, Heidegger insists that Kant’s system retained it, citing Kant’s initial response in *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* to the question “What is truth?”: “The nominal definition of truth, that it is the agreement of knowledge with its object, is assumed as granted; the question asked is as to what is the general and sure criterion of the truth of any and every knowledge.”\(^231\) Here, the

\(^{228}\) SZ 214/257.
\(^{229}\) This is pointed out in *BT* 257 translators’ note 2.
\(^{230}\) SZ 214/257, inconsistencies in translators’ use of quotation marks corrected.
model of *adaequatio* can be understood to be consistent with Kant’s system, so long as we remember the redefinition of the object it entails.

The jumping off point for Heidegger’s critique of the model of *adaequatio* is his claim that “the agreement of something with something has the formal character of a relation of something to something. Every agreement, and therefore ‘truth’ as well, is a relation.” 232 However, the ontological status of this relation and the implications for what is related are unclear. Heidegger proceeds by carefully inquiring into this, not by simply arguing that the model is flawed and should be jettisoned as is often suggested by commentators. He asks: “What else is tacitly posited in this relational totality of the *adaequatio intellectus et rei*? And what ontological character does that which is thus posited have itself?” 233 More pointedly, his critique proceeds by “inquiring into the foundations [*Fundamenten*] of this ‘relation.’” 234 Though he uses the terminology of “foundation” here, the result will not be an account of a metaphysical or absolute foundation, but of the ontological structures enabling *adaequatio*, that is, of what I have earlier referred to in terms of “ground.” It is clear here that Heidegger’s critique begins with a diagenic step. His broader statement of how this will proceed, moreover, exhibits each of the central moments in the movement of *Grundlegung*: First, “our analysis takes its departure from the traditional conception of truth, and attempts to lay bare the ontological foundations [*Fundamente*] of that conception.” 235 Second, “in terms of these foundations the primordial [*ursprüngliche*] phenomenon of truth becomes visible. We can then exhibit the way in which the traditional conception of truth has been derived from [*die Abkünftigkeit*] this phenomenon.” 236 In other words, the analysis will generate an account of structures of truth that are more originary

232 SZ 215/258.
233 SZ 215/258, italics removed.
234 SZ 215/258.
235 SZ 214/257, italics removed.
236 SZ 214/257, italics removed.
on the diagenic axis than those described in the traditional model, while the latter are derived from and explained by the former. Third, “our investigation will make it plain that to the question of the ‘essence’ of truth, there belongs necessarily the question of the kind of being which truth possesses.”237 Articulating these more originary structures of truth is articulating that which makes the derivative structures what they are, i.e., the essence of truth. Clarifying that means articulating the being of truth.

We usually consider intellectus and res to be different kinds of things, so with regard to what do they agree when in a relation of adaequatio? In other words, what grounds their relation such that adaequatio is possible? In an historically standard epistemology, one has truth when one has knowledge (as opposed to falsity, illusion, or opinion) and knowledge is manifest in judgments (subject predication), which are formulated linguistically in assertions (Aussage) or propositions (Sätze). But “in judgment one must distinguish between the judging as a Real psychical process, and that which is judged, as an ideal content.”238 In turn, both of these must be distinguished from “the Real Thing as that which is judged about.”239 We have truth when the ideal content of a judgment has a relation of agreement to the real thing.

This model’s insufficiency is seen in “the ontologically unclarified separation of the Real and the ideal” or, inversely, the model’s inability to say whether the relationship of agreement between ideal content and real thing is itself “Real or ideal in its kind of being, or neither of these.”240 Thus Heidegger asks: “How are we to take ontologically the relation between ideal entity and something that is Real and present-at-hand?”241 In the more general terminology of adaequatio, what is the ontological character of the relation between intellectus and res?

237 SZ 214/257, italics removed.
238 SZ 216/259.
239 SZ 216/259.
240 SZ 217/259 and 216/259.
241 SZ 216/259, italics removed.
Historically, answers have often focused on explaining in what that relationship subsists, and Heidegger tentatively adopts that language here. However, he does not suggest any substratum and his solution entails a rejection of the fundamentality of the epistemological model supporting this version of the real/ideal distinction. The absolute distinction between real judgment, ideal content, and real thing is sustainable only so long as a system fails to discern the fact that the relation between judgment and thing, or between intellectus and res, is, i.e., has its own positive ontological status. Since the terms of that model are unable to define this status, the being of the relation is irreducible to them.

Heidegger argues that to clarify the being of this relation (i.e., the essence of truth) we can examine the way “knowing demonstrates itself as true”; in other words, “in the phenomenal context of demonstration, the relationship of agreement must become visible.” Heidegger’s point is that what is interesting about demonstration is not the mechanism of how the adaequatio of assertion and thing is confirmed or disconfirmed; rather, it is that all such mechanisms – to whatever degree they might be successful – are underwritten by the phenomenal access one has to the thing. If the being of the one who asserts were such that access were impossible, the adequacy or inadequacy of the assertion could never be demonstrated. Truth as adaequatio would be structurally impossible (barring a benevolent metaphysical guarantor). Likewise, what is interesting about assertion here is not its role in adaequatio, but the fact that, as Heidegger puts it, “asserting is a way of being toward the Thing itself that is.” More specifically, it is a way of being in which the one who asserts gains phenomenal access to the thing, i.e., encounters it meaningfully in a world, and does so in such a way that it might be encountered “just as it is in

242 SZ 217/260, italics removed; my italics on “demonstration.” Dahlstrom discusses this at length in the context of Heidegger’s appropriation of Husserl’s phenomenological account of truth and evidence (Heidegger’s Concept of Truth, Ch. II).

243 SZ 218/260.
itself.” This is not to suggest that one accesses the thing as noumenon in the Kantian sense. Rather, what Heidegger means by “the thing” here is the thing as encountered as phenomenon. Needless to say, Heidegger thinks his recasting of philosophy as fundamental ontology undermines Kant’s epistemological framework not because it somehow gives us access to noumena, but instead because it denies the validity of the transcendental subject and its cognitive apparatus, and thus the validity of the phenomenon/noumenon distinction itself. Heidegger, of course, replaces the Kantian concept of phenomenon with his own: “that which shows itself in itself, the manifest”; for Heidegger, phenomena “are the totality of what lies in the light of day or can be brought into the light – what the Greeks sometimes identified simply with τὰ ὄντα (beings).”

Heidegger describes the way we gain phenomenal access to something in terms of “entdecken” (uncovering or discovering). Asserting is one way (among others) of being toward a thing such that it might get uncovered. Asserting might also fail, of course. For Heidegger, “to say that an assertion ‘is true’ signifies that it uncovers the being [Seiende] as it is in itself. Such an assertion asserts, points out, ‘lets’ the being be seen [läßt sehen] (ἀπόφανσις) in its uncoveredness.” On this basis, the kind of being an assertion has when it is true can be designated: “the being-true [Wahrsein] (truth) of the assertion must be understood as being-uncovering [entdeckend-sein].” Since, in Heidegger’s view, being-uncovering is what constitutes the truth of an assertion in this originary sense, as well as the ontological ground on which adaequatio might be possible at all, he claims that “‘being-true’ (‘truth’) means being-uncovering.” In an effort to lend this thesis historical support, Heidegger suggests it was

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244 SZ 28/51.
245 SZ 218/261.
246 SZ 218/261.
247 SZ 219/262.
“understood in a pre-phenomenological manner” by the ancients and translates it into Greek terminology:

If a λόγος as ἀπόφανσις is to be true, its being-true is ἀληθεύειν in the manner of αποφαίνεσθαι – of taking beings out of their hiddenness and letting them be seen in their unhiddenness (their uncoveredness). The ἀλήθεια which Aristotle equates with πράγμα and φαινόμενα … signifies the ‘things themselves’; it signifies what shows itself – beings in the ‘how’ of their uncoveredness.  

For the purposes of my analysis, whether or not this is a justifiable interpretation of Greek thought is not important. What matters is that Heidegger takes truth or being-true to be uncoveredness, which is designated alternatively as “ἀλήθεια.” Heidegger’s use of “ἀλήθεια” marks a point of intervention into the tradition, at which he sees himself both recuperating an original sense of the term and correcting later distortions of it.

Heidegger’s derivation of the definition of truth as uncoveredness or ἀλήθεια has operated by examining the traditional model of truth, observing its insufficiency, and working out the ontological ground it presupposes. But how does this connect with the methodological horizon belonging to fundamental ontology? For, if “truth rightfully has a primordial connection with being, then the phenomenon of truth comes within the range of the problematic of fundamental ontology.” Additionally, it is quite vague to say that the primordial kind of being constituting truth is “uncoveredness.” How might a more detailed account of the structure of uncoveredness be provided? Heidegger’s account addresses both of these questions on the basis of his earlier arguments claiming that Dasein is being-in-the world, which subvert the categories of intellectus, res, etc., and the metaphysical separation between them that leads to the epistemological problems involved in representationalism. “Being-true as being-uncovering,”

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248 SZ 219/262, italics removed.
249 SZ 213/256.
Heidegger claims, is “ontologically possible only on the basis [Grund] of being-in-the-world. This latter phenomenon, which we have known as the basic state [Grundverfassung] of Dasein, is the foundation [Fundament] for the primordial phenomenon of truth.”

This allows us to make sense of Heidegger’s key claim that truth belongs to the basic constitution of Dasein, i.e., is an existentiale of Dasein. The problematic of truth is situated within the problematic of being as the existential analytic of Dasein, and Dasein grounds truth as an ontological structure. Consequently, truth is structurally dependent upon Dasein’s existence: “Because the kind of being that is essential to truth is of the character of Dasein, all truth is relative to Dasein’s being.” Or, alternatively, “being-true as being-uncovering, is a way of being for Dasein.”

Heidegger thinks this grounding of truth in Dasein can be stated more fundamentally. The structure of Dasein’s being that enables all the dimensions of its being-in-the-world and its pre-theoretical openness to being is its Erschlossenheit (disclosedness). Disclosedness is the ground enabling Dasein’s constitutional correlation with, or absorption in, a world of beings or meaning. Its basic structure is exhibited in the ecstatic structure of care, or thrown projection, and can be elaborated in terms of a set of existentialia that constitute it: Befindlichkeit (state-of-mind), Verstehen (understanding), and Rede (discourse). This is important because it means that the essence of truth can be articulated even more originarily in terms of disclosedness than of being-in-the-world. More specifically, “truth, in the most primordial sense, is Dasein’s disclosedness, to which the uncoveredness of entities within-the-world belongs.” The inquiry into the nature of truth in Sein und Zeit leads ultimately to an inquiry into the disclosedness of Dasein. In

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250 SZ 219/261, italics removed.
251 SZ 227/270.
252 SZ 220/263.
253 SZ 220/263.
254 SZ 223/265.
Heidegger’s words: “only with Dasein’s disclosedness is the most primordial phenomenon of truth attained.”

With this in mind, we can explain Heidegger’s claim that “insofar as Dasein is its disclosedness essentially… to this extent it is essentially ‘true’. Dasein is ‘in the truth’.” Truth is grounded in Dasein’s disclosedness, but what is disclosed (along with Dasein) are beings or networks of meaning in the world. In other words, the structure of disclosedness extends into what is disclosed. In this sense, via its disclosedness Dasein exists as enmeshed within the network of meaning or world of beings it discloses, i.e., uncovers. The domain of truth includes all that is disclosed or uncovered. It articulates the dynamic fabric of the world or of meaning, as disclosed by Dasein, within which Dasein exists.

How, then, is sense to be made of the Heidegger’s closely connected claim that Dasein is equally in untruth? Clarifying this requires looking to the “full existential meaning of the principle that ‘Dasein is in the truth’, which includes not only Dasein’s “disclosedness in general” but the fact that Dasein’s existence is characterized by Geworfenheit (thrownness), Entwurf (projection), and Verfallen (falling). Thrownness and falling are most important here. “Thrownness” names the fact that Dasein does not choose the factical context in which it finds itself existing. Insofar as it exists, Dasein is simply always already woven into and conditioned by it. On the basis of its factical context, Dasein “projects” a network of relations of significance and possibilities (a world) through which it advances projects, navigates obstacles, and presses or is drawn forward temporally. Among Dasein’s possibilities are those of striving for ownership of

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255 SZ 220-21/263. It should be noted that Heidegger sometimes casts Dasein’s disclosedness as a Lichtung or “clearing,” in the sense that as its Da (“there”/“here”), Dasein holds open a clearing in which beings are accessible as phenomena. In fact, he writes, Dasein “is itself the clearing” (SZ 133/171). This concept evolves after Sein und Zeit and will play an important role in Heidegger’s subsequent account of the essence of truth and the event. For a detailed discussion, consult EH, pp. 87-122.

256 SZ 221/263.

257 SZ 221/263 and 221/264.
its existence by hermeneutically pursuing the question of its own being (authenticity) or of slipping into the prefabricated language, interpretive matrices, and circumscribed possibilities of action supplied by the masses (inauthenticity). “Falling” is the process of slipping into inauthenticity, the gravity of which can never be conquered once and for all. It also includes what Richardson calls the “negatived” aspects of the world of beings Dasein discloses: the fact that aspects of the world are concealed and that what is disclosed as present is sometimes distorted and recedes in one way or another from presence in time (occlusion, being forgotten, death, etc.). As part of this process, beings “show themselves… in the mode of semblance.” Dasein is disclosive, thrown projection to which belongs the essential characteristic of falling, but by the gravity of falling, “what has formerly been uncovered sinks back again, hidden and disguised.” Consequently, Heidegger writes, “to be closed off and covered up belongs to Dasein’s facticity.” Thus, “because Dasein is essentially falling, its state of being is such that it is in ‘untruth’,” and untruth as coveredness is understood as semblance, occlusion, or withdrawal in the field of Dasein’s disclosedness.

In summary, to say Dasein is in the truth necessarily entails it is equiprimordially in untruth. Dasein’s existence is articulated in the two movements of unconcealment and concealment. Dasein discloses networks of meaning or worlds of beings, which are phenomenally present only on the basis of its existence. The truth/untruth dynamic is the context, fabric, or terrain of meaning or beings in which Dasein is absorbed.

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258 *TP* 47.
259 *SZ* 222/264, my italics.
260 *SZ* 222/264.
261 *SZ* 222/265.
262 *SZ* 222/264.
263 See *SZ* 222/265: “‘Dasein ist in der Wahrheit’ sagt gleichursprünglich mit: ‘Dasein ist in der Unwahrheit’.”
1.2: Truth and Dasein in “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit”

During the 1930s, the problematic of truth takes on a more pronounced role in Heidegger’s treatment of the *Seinsfrage*, coming to form a central register in terms of which he articulates the nature of being. The essay “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit” is his central statement on this matter during the early part of that decade. In a paragraph added in its 1949 edition, he emphasizes the point, writing that “truth signifies the sheltering that clears [lichtendes Bergen] as the fundamental trait [Grundzug] of being.” More broadly, through the problematic of truth, Heidegger aims to articulate the ontological process by which beings come to be, i.e., come to and recede from presence or become manifest in a world. Truth is being, insofar as being is manifest in beings.

In distinction from *Sein und Zeit*, “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit” presents an important shift in the relation between truth and Dasein (as human existence): rather than maintaining that the essence of truth is found in human existence’s disclosedness and that derivative forms of truth are grounded therein, Heidegger now claims that human existence is grounded in the essence of truth. This conception continues to hold that truth essentially entails an ontological structure of disclosedness, but one more originary than Dasein’s. To mark this distinction, Heidegger employs a terminological distinction between “Dasein” and the hyphenated “Da-sein.” “Dasein” refers to human existence as described in *Sein und Zeit*, while “Da-sein” refers to this more originary structure of disclosedness. This position entails a further shift in the status of truth: no longer merely the meaningful disclosure of worlds of beings to human existence, truth becomes understood in terms of the dynamics of a set of correlated *a priori* ontological structures.

264 WW 201/153. For a more extensive reconstruction of “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit” than I give here, see *TPT* 211-254.
constituting the disclosedness of Da-sein. Nevertheless, as I will argue, Heidegger does not institute a new metaphysical transcendence. These structures enable the manifestation of worlds of beings but are immanent to them.

This transformation is significant for a number of reasons, including the way it positions Heidegger as a type of ontological realist, challenging Kant’s definition of the range of legitimate philosophical thought and the modified version of this found later in the phenomenological tradition. In fact, “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit” is particularly important because in it are found both the phenomenological apparatus of Heidegger’s early work and his move to articulate the logic of the ground enabling phenomenal presentation. Obviously, this ground is not a transcendental subject and its cognitive apparatus (as it might have been for Kant), but neither is it even conceptually indexed onto the meaning-making activities of Dasein (as it might have been for Heidegger himself in Sein und Zeit). Rather, it is articulated in terms of ontological features structurally prior to the domain of phenomena, rendering an account that cannot be called strictly phenomenological. It is in this way that, stated more sharply, Heidegger’s subtle moves undermining the Kantian and phenomenological horizons bring him toward a form of ontological realism. Though he never states the claims overtly in this way, his ontology supports the views that 1) there are aspects of being that are ontologically prior to and thus independent of human existence and 2) we can give an account of them, even if our methodology entails a necessary incompleteness and ongoing evolution of this account. Well aware that his project challenges Kant, he references the latter’s famous metaphor of the light dove of metaphysics: “With this question concerning essence do we not soar too high into the void of generality that deprives all thinking of breath?”

His answer is of course “no.” This is remarkable because contrary to strong phenomenological readings of Heidegger, like that of

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265 WW 177/136. See KPR A5/B8.
Sheehan, Heidegger begins undermining philosophy’s tethers to the human being. His move, moreover, parallels Deleuze’s critique of Kant in *Différence et répétition* insofar as it seeks an ontological ground more originary than the machinery of representation grounded in the transcendental unity of apperception, more originary even than the meaning-making activities of Dasein.

As its title indicates, the task of “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit” is to articulate the *essence* of truth. In fact, the concept of “essence” is perhaps as important as “truth” in the essay. For, according to Heidegger, “in the concept of ‘essence’ philosophy thinks being.”\(^{266}\) He sees a fundamental link between essence and truth, such that by problematizing truth the nature of essence is brought into to play. Detailing this relation, which becomes important particularly in the essay’s concluding reflections, would carry my discussion far afield. For my focus, Heidegger’s provisional definition of essence will suffice. Namely, by “essence” he means “Grund der Ermöglichung” (“ground of enabling”) or, alternatively formulated, “Grund der inneren Möglichkeit” (“ground of the inner possibility”).\(^{267}\) Thus, the inquiry into the essence of truth is one into the ground enabling truth, that is, into that which enables truth to be whatever it is. Given that Heidegger understands something’s essence and ground to be aspects of its being, the subject of inquiry may also be formulated as “the being of truth.” This is notable because a few years later in *Beiträge* he pairs this formulation with its inversion: “the being of truth” he

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\(^{266}\) *WW* 200/153. I modify the translator’s “Being” to “being” throughout my discussion of this text.

\(^{267}\) *WW* 177/136 and 186/143. In the first paragraph of the essay’s closing note, a paragraph added in the 1949 edition of the text, Heidegger says that “essence is understood verbally” (*WW* 201/153). There he also offers a brief, highly condensed statement crystallizing the relation he takes to hold between truth and essence: “The essence of truth is the truth of essence” (*WW* 201/153, italics removed). I will not unpack this technical formulation here. It is also worth pointing out that in the 1954 edition, Heidegger inscribed a marginal note clarifying his understanding of essence in this text. The note gives three sequential renditions of essence: “Essence: (1) *quidditas* – the ‘what’ – *χορδί*; (2) enabling – condition of possibility; (3) ground of enabling” (*WW* 177/136, fn. a). The first two are metaphysical renditions of the third: the first understands essence as an abstract universal defining beings insofar as they are beings and the second understands ground on the basis of the relation it has to what is grounded. Heidegger addresses the problems with these in *Beiträge*, and I address them in detail in Section 2 of this chapter.
will claim is “the truth of being.” In other words, the being of truth is to be understood as being, insofar as being comes to be manifest in truth.

As in Sein und Zeit, the movement of thought in “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit” proceeds from more derivative to less derivative or more essential forms of truth. In each stage, the progression is carried forward by a question sometimes explicitly formulated, sometimes remaining implicit: what is the ground that makes the form currently in question possible? This establishes a trajectory into ground or essence, i.e., an advance of the problematic of truth along a diagenic axis. As in Sein und Zeit, Heidegger begins his technical analysis with the traditional conception of truth as adaequatio (i.e., the correctness or accordance of a statement or judgment with the matter it is about). Using vocabulary I will discuss in a moment, he describes the chain of the essay’s progression as one “…tracing the inner possibility of the correctness of statements back to the ek-sistent freedom of letting-be as its ‘ground,’ and likewise in pointing to the essential beginning of this ground in concealing and in errancy.”

With respect to the traditional conception of truth, “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit” largely reiterates Sein und Zeit, though with a few important alterations stemming from its focus on the propositional, rather than cognitive, version of this conception. Heidegger briefly examines its medieval origins in the understanding of veritas as adaequatio rei et intellectus, focusing on but not outright mentioning Aquinas’ position, expressed particularly well in Quaestiones Disputatae de Veritate. Then he turns to the formulation of this framework as the accordance or adequacy and correspondence of a proposition or statement with the matter it is about. This presents a modified version of the problem of relationality discussed in Section 1.1: taking the example of a round coin lying on the table and the statement “this coin is round,” Heidegger

268 WW 200/153.
asks, “wherein are the thing and the statement supposed to be in accordance, considering that the relata are manifestly different in their outward appearance?” For, “the coin is made of metal. The statement is not material at all. The coin is round. The statement has nothing at all spatial about it.” As in *Sein und Zeit*, Heidegger’s claim is that answering this requires an analysis of “the kind of relation that obtains between the statement and the thing,” particularly with respect to the “essence” or ontological ground of that relation. Similarly to that text’s phenomenological account, this relation is one in which the statement “presents” (vor-stellt) the thing “and says of what is presented how, according to the particular perspective that guides it, it is disposed.”

The structure of propositional presentation found in Heidegger’s account prefigures structural aspects of the ontological ground of truth and, notably, replicates the basic formal structure of Dasein’s disclosedness (i.e., ek-sistence or transcendence). In turn, it prefigures structural aspects of being that come into focus in *Beiträge* under the rubric of the event. The relation by which a statement presents an object, such that it might be in accordance with the object, is distinct from other relations of accordance, for instance between two objects. If two coins are on the table, an accordance between them holds insofar as both are round, metal, etc. But the presence of one coin has little to do with the presentation of the other. In contrast, in a statement a relation is constituted to something else, such that the other thing comes to be phenomenally presented (i.e., in Heidegger’s preferred language uncovered or unconcealed). As mentioned, I take Heidegger’s ontology to entail that statements, like thought, are not ephemeral but have their own positive ontological status (grounded in the element of Dasein’s existence

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270 WW 183/140.
271 WW 183/140.
272 WW 183/141.
273 WW 184/141.
Heidegger referred to in *Sein und Zeit* as “Rede”). Consequently, the relation between statement and thing must be understood most basically as ontological-structural, not in terms of abstract categorial relations. In line with this and setting aside complexities involved in a statement about itself or about another statement, the statement is required to be different from its object while simultaneously corresponding to it. This might seem like an obvious point, but one must only recall the problem of access found in the Cartesian predicament (discussed in Chapter I) to see its fundamentality: how might a mind, absolutely distinct or distinct in substance from an extended object, encounter and comprehend that object at all? More than just an epistemological problem, what is at stake is the dilemma between ontological pluralism and continuity, equivocity and univocity, Leibniz and Spinoza. If one thing is really different from another, how is any relation possible, other than perhaps one of pure exteriority? If not, what structural operations generate their difference, i.e., constitute them?

One might approach the problem as posed by Heidegger by first entertaining an obviously faulty scenario: perhaps for an accordant correspondence the statement must become something round and metal like the coin, or at the limit, identical to the coin itself. However, in that case the statement ceases to be a statement. Instead, the possibility of an accordance of statement to coin requires that a *difference* hold between the two. In fact, I would suggest that Heidegger can be said to offer here a proto-differential account of this relation insofar as a statement about a coin can only be what it is in its difference from the coin. That is to say, the statement’s constitution is partially differential in nature.

Likewise, the object-pole of the presentative relation is dependent upon this difference. But it is also informed by aspects of the object that withhold from or withstand this or that phenomenal presentation. Heidegger capitalizes on the terminology of *Gegenstand* (object) to
emphasize this point, though he continues to disavow theories of consciousness, psychologies, and epistemologies entailing the Cartesian predicament. “To present,” he writes, “means to let the thing stand opposed [das Entgegenstehenlassen] as object [Gegenstand].”\textsuperscript{274} Lest the thing and statement collapse into one another, the thing “must maintain its stand as a thing and show itself as something withstanding [ein Ständiges].”\textsuperscript{275}

However, this difference cannot be an absolute discontinuity: to be presented via a statement, the object must also “traverse an open field of opposedness [Entgegen],” which tentatively can be figured as the field of difference between statement and thing.\textsuperscript{276} For the statement must have a continuity with and insistence or co-inherence in the object, through which it gains access to the object and comes to present it. Structurally speaking, then, the relation of accordance entails a simultaneous differentiation of and continuity between statement and thing. Because of the simultaneity or reciprocal ontological co-determination of these aspects, I understand this to mean that there is a structural tension constitutive of this relation and thus of the possibility of accordance in propositional truth.

Heidegger is convinced that the constitutive field of opposedness or tension entailed in this relation is not first generated by the production of a statement. “The appearing of the thing in traversing a field of opposedness takes place within an open region [Offenen], the openness of which is not first created by the presenting but rather is only entered into and taken over as a domain of relatedness.”\textsuperscript{277} This open region renders presentational statements, which can occupy it, possible. Justification for this claim is not explicated well in the text, but given the convictions of Heidegger’s fundamental ontology, his rationale is evident. Presentational statements don’t

\textsuperscript{274} WW 184/141.
\textsuperscript{275} WW 184/141.
\textsuperscript{276} WW 184/141.
\textsuperscript{277} WW 184/141.
just happen; they are made by Dasein. Ontologically prior to Dasein’s ability to thematize something in a statement is its pre-thematic openness to beings, its disclosedness via which it is being-in-the-world and able to comport itself amongst beings therein. Richardson translates this into the language of the proposition: here, as elsewhere, Heidegger maintains the “thesis that the truth of judgments (therefore predicative) supposes a pre-predicative truth”; namely, “the Open,” which “must be conceived as a matrix of relationships (Verhältnis) which constitute the sphere of potentialities of There-being [Dasein], one of which potentialities is exploited when an actual contact [with a being or object of a proposition] takes place.”278 Stated concisely, the open region is what in Sein und Zeit Heidegger referred to as a “world,” while “that which is opened up” in a world refers to beings. On this basis, the now familiar conclusion can be reiterated: the essence of truth is not the correctness, adequation, or accordance of the proposition with the thing, since these can only be explained by more originary structures entailed in pre-predicative, pre-thematic openness to a world. In other words, it must be grounded by “the openness of [Dasein’s] comportment [Verhaltens]” – the structural disclosedness belonging to Dasein in which a world is phenomenally presented or unconcealed.279

It is tempting to allow this conclusion to close the inquiry into the essence of truth, for the position of Sein und Zeit seems to have been confirmed. However, the ontological status of the open region or world remains problematic. As in Sein und Zeit, the first several sections of “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit” maintain that structurally a world is held open by Dasein’s openness to and insistence in the beings it encounters (which are in turn open to it) and its simultaneous difference or structural distance from them (Dasein’s ontic distinction in being ontological; but also the factual elements constituting its “Jemeinigkeit” or “mineness”). Dasein is the Da of

278 TPT 213 and 214.
279 WW 186/142.
Sein, but its temporal structure entails that a dimension of its Sein is withheld from the Da; in this sense Dasein is a smear or tension spanning the ontological difference. The openness of a world is understood as the field of this ontological tension, particularly insofar as constituted by Dasein’s “ek-sistent insistence” in beings, and, it should be added, the temporal dynamics belonging to this.

The problem, however, is whether Dasein’s disclosedness can sufficiently explain the open or, rather, whether Dasein must be understood to occupy the open in a way similar to a presentative statement’s occupation of what was earlier described as an open field of opposedness. More pointedly, can the origination of the open region be explained by Dasein’s disclosedness? Whence the open? Though Heidegger doesn’t construct an argument in these terms, answering in terms of Dasein’s disclosedness doesn’t get us anywhere, since Dasein is always already open. There is no Dasein that is not open, Dasein is its disclosedness (ek-sistent insistent thrown-projection, temporality, etc.). Explaining the open realm requires explaining the origination of Dasein’s open character, which must in some way entail operations ontologically prior Dasein. It follows from this that the origination of the open is either the origination of Dasein or of an open region ontologically prior to Dasein. In either case, Dasein’s existence cannot explain this origination. For ease of reference, I will refer to this as “the argument for the derivative character of Dasein’s openness.”

Heidegger’s treatment of the status of the open drives the analysis in “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit” to a new stage. In his words, this is prompted by “the question … as to the ground of the inner possibility of the open comportment that pregives [vorgebenden] a standard.” By posing the issue with an eye to the “pregiving of a standard,” Heidegger approaches it in an oblique manner different from the way I just framed it. He proceeds from the earlier conclusion

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280 WW 185/142.
that the ground enabling propositional accordance is Dasein’s disclosedness. But as he is
distinctly aware, it is one thing to show that this is the case, and quite another to demonstrate
how some proposition might actually establish an accordance with a thing. Nevertheless, this
demonstration is not Heidegger’s main objective in “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit” and detailing it
is not necessary for explaining the relation the problematic of truth has to the event. I will limit
my commentary on this to drawing out a related point that contributes significantly to his
reasoning about the status of the open region. Namely, a proposition’s accordance with a thing is
gained by being informed or bound (Heidegger describes this with the verb “binden”) by it, not
simply by occupying the open region. Though “a statement is invested with its correctness by the
openness of comportment,” it is so only insofar as “through the latter” “what is opened up [can]
really become the standard for the presentative correspondence.”281 Dasein’s disclosedness is not
isolated or one-sided, but co-constituted by the openness of the beings in which it insists or is
enmeshed. Further, the possibility of propositional accordance requires that when Dasein makes
a statement, it can actually be informed by the thing it is about. But what enables openness to be
such that this kind of binding or informing can occur? This brings us back to the issue of the
status of openness.

Heidegger’s answer to this, and to the question of the ground of the openness of
comportment, seems a bit strange: “freedom.”282 Freedom is conceived in a technical manner and
must be distinguished from “human caprice,” “absence of constraint with respect to what we can
or cannot do,” free will, or any other “property of the human being.”283 In short, freedom is not
human freedom. Rather, to begin with, the term operates as a placeholder in Heidegger’s
argument, simply designating whatever it is that enables the openness involved in Dasein’s

281 WW 185/142.
282 WW 186/142.
283 WW 186/143, 189/145, and 187/143.
comportment to be bound or determined by beings, such that that comportment is directed in a pre-thematic, pre-predicative manner and might on that basis formulate thematic or predicative statements correctly presenting those beings. Defining freedom is defining what enables Dasein’s absorption in worlds of beings that bind and direct its comportment. Thus freedom, in a sense, is Dasein’s ability to be informed by the world, not merely project upon it. Hence, in Heidegger’s words, it is a “freedom for what is opened up in an open region.” But it seems that in this definition “freedom” is merely shorthand for what still must be explained, otherwise his use of the term to explain the ground enabling openness and binding would be circular. What is the explanation?

According to Heidegger, freedom “lets beings be the beings they are” and consequently, in a tentative formulation, “reveals itself as letting beings be [das Seinlassen von Seiendem].” Freedom, as letting beings be, will have two distinct senses: first, as a manner of comportment for Dasein; second, as an ontological structure enabling beings to be. With respect to the first, it clearly cannot be a domination or bending of beings to accord with Dasein’s “will,” for then it would be meaningless to say Dasein’s comportment is bound, directed, or informed by beings. Freedom entails a reticence or restraint on Dasein’s part: Dasein “withdraws in the face of beings in order that they might reveal themselves with respect to what and how they are.” Yet this also cannot be a disengagement from beings, since that would again preclude the possibility of Dasein’s being informed by them and, consequently, of propositional adequatio. Instead, letting beings be is “to engage oneself with beings” in a particular way. Namely, it is an attentiveness to the ontological ground enabling beings to be (i.e., to come into and recede from presence)

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284 WW 187/144.
285 WW 188/144. For a later, more developed account of Heidegger’s related concept of Gelassenheit, see Heidegger, GA77 Country Path Conversations, trans. Bret W. Davis (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010).
286 WW 188-189/144.
287 WW 188/144.
insofar as this or that distinctive set of beings is in fact in this process, and a preserving of the experience of those beings as grounded in this way. In other words, it is an attentiveness to the being of those beings. The ontological ground at issue is not abstract, but operative in the manifestation of concrete beings populating the world “right now.” Thus far, it has been articulated in terms of openness, and so Heidegger writes that to let beings be is “to engage oneself with the open region and its openness into which every being comes to stand, bringing that openness, as it were, along with itself.”

Since openness is an ontologically constitutive aspect of concrete beings, attentiveness to it is attentiveness to that which makes them what they are; that on the basis of which their character might be articulated in a presentative statement.

In its second sense, freedom as letting beings be is not an engagement on the part of human existence. The first sense of freedom (and for that matter any comportment) is possible only on the basis of an ontological structure of disclosedness more originary than that of Dasein. “Freedom” names this structure and I will also refer to it as “originary openness” or “originary disclosedness.” More precisely, “freedom” or “letting-be” in this primary sense denotes the way beings are enabled to be on the ground of such openness. Thus Heidegger’s reasoning about it contains an answer to the dilemma about the ontological status of openness itself.

It is only after the first few sections of “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit” that Heidegger introduces the idea that freedom has this sort of ontological priority, writing, for instance, that “ek-sistent freedom as the essence of truth is not a property of human beings; … on the contrary humans ek-sist and so become capable of history only as the property [Eigentum] of this freedom.” His justification for this is sparse in the text. I am able to identify two lines of

288 WW 188/144.
289 “As this letting-be it exposes itself to beings as such and transposes all comportment into the open region. Letting-be, i.e., freedom, is intrinsically exposing, ek-sistent” (WW 189/144).
290 WW 191/146.
support. The first, which I outlined as the argument for the derivative character of Dasein’s openness, is not found in the text, but seems implied by it. It eliminates the possibility that Dasein can sufficiently explain openness, i.e., that Dasein is the ground whence openness is. This places that ground ontologically prior to Dasein and leaves two possibilities for the status of openness itself: either the openness generated is simply the openness of Dasein or it is ontologically prior to Dasein. The third argument is associated with “untruth” and I will return to it when I take up that theme in a moment.

The second argument eliminates the possibility that the ontological status of openness is simply that belonging to Dasein and leaves the other option – that openness is prior to Dasein. Dasein (human existence) is such that on the basis of its circumspective openness to and understanding of beings, it is able to track different paths through the world, which in differing ways contend with the tasks it has a hand. But those paths – or possibilities of comportment – are constrained by the nature and range of beings currently disclosed, the same constraint that must bind Dasein’s presentative statements. That constraint, or the parameters of possible comportment it defines, cannot be reducible to Dasein’s disclosedness (i.e., the openness of Dasein’s comportment), since then they would not be imposed upon Dasein – the “thrown” character of Dasein’s finitude would dissolve and Heidegger would be a vulgar idealist. The structural openness of other beings is not simply the openness of Dasein’s existence. Now, it might be tempting to conclude that openness is derived from the structure of beings (and thus that Heidegger is offering merely an ontic realism). However, that would put the cart before the horse: just as Dasein’s ek-sistence presupposes the field of relationality bound by those beings, the openness of those beings to anything else presupposes such a field of relationality. To be a being encounterable by anything else means to populate a field of relationality. Though that field
might always exist only in the contours of concrete beings, it nonetheless must not be reducible to a conglomeration of the structures of these or those beings, since no structurally open being could have ever come to be except by coming to populate such a field. Though not abstractable from the contours of concrete beings, such a field must be ontologically prior to them, i.e., form part of the ground enabling them to be. “Freedom” or “openness” (originary openness, the openness of the open region) is Heidegger’s name for this field of relationality, and “open region” or “world” names this field as bound by the contours of concrete beings. In alternative terminology, freedom is an originary disclosedness, which Heidegger also designates as “Da-sein” (as opposed to “Dasein” or human existence). With respect to human existence, he outlines an argument along these lines as follows:

If ek-sistent Da-sein, which lets beings be, sets the human free for his “freedom” by first offering to his choice something possible (a being) and by imposing on him something necessary (a being), human caprice does not then have freedom at its disposal. The human being does not “possess” [*besitzt ... nicht*] freedom as a property [*Eigenschaft*]. At best, the converse holds: freedom, ek-sistent, disclosive Da-sein, possesses [*besitzt*] the human being – so originarily that only *it* secures for humanity that distinctive relatedness to beings as a whole as such which first founds all history. 291

Freedom, originary openness, originary disclosedness, Da-sein is the ground that enables the openness of Dasein’s comportment and enables beings to become manifest at all. Heidegger sometimes describes it as openness as such or “the openness of the open region.” 292 That is, freedom is the openness on the basis of which the world *is*, and the world is the “open region” that “into which every being comes to stand,” i.e., “τὰ ἀληθεία, the unconcealed.” 293 Freedom grounds the disclosedness through which Dasein ek-sists, i.e., through which it is “intrinsically”

291 *WW* 190/145-146.
292 *WW* 189/145.
293 *WW* 188/144.
“expos[ed] to the disclosedness of beings as such.” Consequently, it is the basis on which Dasein engages with the world and the beings that populate it. Since freedom is an ontological structure more originary on the diagenic axis than Dasein and not dependent upon Dasein’s existence to be, I will say that here Heidegger offers not just a form of ontic, but of ontological realism. In Heidegger’s ontology a position is maintained in which at least some feature of being is regardless of whether human beings exist; and by the performance of Heidegger’s text, he maintains that at least some account of it can be given.

“Vom Wesen der Wahrheit” clearly has now moved beyond Sein und Zeit. Its decisive departure can be summarized as follows. If freedom, in its most originary sense, is the openness of the open region, that is, the ground enabling beings to be, then human existence – which is a being – cannot be identified with freedom. Originary disclosedness or openness is no longer grounded in human existence, as it was in Sein und Zeit. Heidegger’s use of the term “Da-sein” marks this shift. Da-sein is not the human being (Dasein), but the more originary ontological structure of disclosedness that grounds the human being, or makes the structure of human existence possible. Dasein is grounded in Da-sein. Human existence and the world in which it exists are structured by this more originary freedom or Da-sein.

The essence of truth, then, can no longer be equated with Dasein’s disclosure of beings, for Dasein’s disclosure of beings operates only on the basis of originary freedom or Da-sein. The human being is absorbed in the terrain of beings or meaning articulated by that freedom. If the world or open region is τὰ ἀληθέα or the unconcealed, then “ἀλήθεια” comes to signify

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294 WW 189/144 and 189/145.
295 On this basis, we can better understand freedom in the first sense. Dasein’s engagement with beings in a manner attentive to the ground whereby they are what they are is an attentiveness to the contours of originary openness as manifest in or bound by concrete beings and, it must be repeated, the temporal process involved in this. Dasein’s existence, grounded through freedom, is also in a sense correlative with freedom: for Dasein, “freedom is engagement in the disclosure of beings as such. Disclosedness is itself conserved in ek-sistent engagement, through which the openness of the open region, i.e., the “there” [“Da”], is what it is” (WW 189/145).
unconcealment, where this is not simply the phenomenological disclosure of beings to Dasein, but the originary openness whereby beings are enabled to come into and recede from manifestation. Ἀλήθεια as part of the *essence* of truth articulates part of the ontological structure or genetic ground whereby worlds of beings are enabled to be, while “truth is disclosure of beings through which [that] openness essentially unfolds [west].” Thus, Heidegger’s *a-lēthic* account of the essence of truth has moved to a second stage, beyond the purely phenomenological version found in *Sein und Zeit*.

After introducing this transformed position, Heidegger spends much of the rest of the essay rethinking the relation between the essence of truth and Dasein. I will bypass much of this to keep focus on the structural elements of the essence of truth. Recall that in *Sein und Zeit* untruth or λήθη (concealment/coveredness) was not a privation or negation of truth, but equally essential and structurally correlated with ἀλήθεια. It was the semblance or occlusion involved in (human) Dasein’s fallenness. In light of the transformation found in “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit,” what is the status of λήθη? Since the essence of truth is more originary than the ek-sistent human, untruth cannot be simply a characteristic of the human being. Freshly addressing the nature of untruth drives Heidegger’s account to a yet more originary ground.

Freedom, the disclosedness of Da-sein, lets beings be, that is, it lets them become present in unconcealment. But this occurs in a way always oriented in a particular, “attuned” comportment. What can “comportment” mean here and how can an ontological structure – freedom as Da-sein – be attuned? Answering this leads to an answer to the question regarding the status of λήθη.

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296 WW 190/146.
297 WW 192/147.
It is clear that freedom in the first, derivative sense is always attuned, like all of Dasein’s comportment. That is, the concrete meanings and possibilities offered by a world of beings to Dasein’s comportment define or provide a distinct factical character to that comportment, and Dasein’s futurally oriented circumspective concern is embedded in and guided by them. The factical possibilities of the kind of comportment described by the first sense of freedom are defined by the world of beings in which Dasein’s ek-sistence insists. And the closedness or concealment belonging to beings is equally essential to this world. Beings cannot be completely open, because then they would not be delimited at all, they would not be. Similarly, without the finitude this provides, Dasein’s possibilities of comportment would evaporate.

At the more fundamental level of freedom, Dasein’s existence is structured or attuned by the originary openness enabling it to engage beings at all. In Heidegger’s words, “as letting beings be, freedom [in the second sense] is intrinsically the resolutely open bearing that does not close up in itself. All comportment is grounded in this bearing and receives from it directedness toward beings and disclosure of them.”

Beings (aside from Dasein) are also structured or attuned by that openness. Yet openness always is in the contours of a concrete world of beings. Whence does the character of that contour arise such that openness is openness of a factically concrete world? With respect to the beings populating such a world, it is codetermined by the \( \lambda \eta \theta \eta \) co-constitutive of them. At a yet more fundamental level, originary openness itself cannot be absolute or total, for then there would be no delimitation, no finitude at all. For the same reason, the closedness, concealment, or withdrawal co-constitutive of beings cannot be explained by originary openness alone. \( \Lambda \lambda \dot{\eta} \theta \varepsilon \alpha \), originary openness, originary unconcealment can gain delimitation only in correlation with what limits or makes openness finite: an originary closedness, concealment, withdrawal, or \( \lambda \dot{\eta} \theta \eta \). This cannot be reduced to the ontic \( \lambda \dot{\eta} \theta \eta \)

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298 WW 194/149.
belonging to beings for the same reason openness cannot be reduced to the openness of beings: all beings are finite; finitude cannot be the result of beings, for they could not be without a delimitation ontologically prior to them. Correlative with originary ἀλήθεια is originary λήθη, ontologically prior to worlds of concrete beings, even if always existing only in their contours.

Heidegger uses the concept of history to discuss the way originary λήθη delimits or configures a world in this or that factically distinctive manner. The series of distinctive instances of ontological withdrawal or concealment are “epochal” configurations. There is no intelligent design behind this, it is entirely aleatory. To return to the question posed a moment ago, I take Heidegger’s notion of attunement at the level of Da-sein to designate the particular historical or epochal configuration determining the disclosure of concrete, finite worlds of beings. Such disclosure or unconcealment is always shaped in a finite, factical manner. This means unconcealment can never be total: no totality of being or beings can be disclosed. To disclose some concrete range of beings, “beings as a whole” must withdraw into concealment. The disclosure of a concrete range of beings is only possible on the basis of this withdrawal: only by the concealment that withdraws beings-as-a-whole from disclosedness, i.e., the concealment that refuses the possibility of total disclosure, is finite disclosure possible.

Precisely because letting-be always lets beings be in a particular comportment that relates to them and thus discloses them, it conceals beings as a whole. Letting-be is intrinsically at the same time a concealing. In the ek-sistent freedom of Da-sein a concealing of beings as a whole comes to pass [ereignet sich].

Heidegger’s point is not that concealment is an inevitable consequence of the unconcealment of beings/meaning, but that unconcealment is possible only on the basis of originary concealment. The finitude of concrete comportment enables that comportment to be at

299 WW 193/148.
300 WW 193/148.
all. And that finitude is grounded precisely in a withdrawal from or refusal of openness. And this is originary, not derivative.\(^{301}\)

Considered with respect to truth as disclosedness, concealment is... the un-truth that is most proper to the essence of truth. The concealment of beings as a whole does not first show up subsequently as a consequence of the fact that knowledge of beings is always fragmentary. The concealment of beings as a whole, un-truth proper, is older than every openness of this or that being. It is older than letting be itself.\(^{302}\)

Concealment is an irreducible structure of the dynamic of truth; indeed, the one most proper to it. As should be clear, it is not simply an epistemological limit, but a positive ontological structure partially constituting the essence of truth. Τὰ ἀληθέα is the articulated terrain of beings or meaning that is enabled by originary ἀληθεία or openness and λήθη or concealment. Meanwhile, concealment is not merely semblance and occlusion but a dynamic structure in the heart of truth diagenically prior to beings or meaning and which, as such, holds no meaning.

Contrary to Sheehan’s claim that for Heidegger Sein is really Sinn or meaning, under the rubric of truth it is clear that a key feature of being – λήθη – is prior to and irreducible to meaning, and is in fact distinctively devoid of meaning. This aligns Heidegger with Althusser’s insistence on the “non-anteriority of Meaning,” that is, the claim that there is no meaning inscribed in being prior to or guiding the advent of the world.\(^{303}\) Since λήθη is the ground enabling the disclosure of any meaning, meaning itself cannot be attributed to originary λήθη.

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\(^{301}\) I take this to be the Heideggerian parallel to Markus Gabriel’s argument for the impossibility of a domain of all domains or fully determinate world.

\(^{302}\) WW 193-194/148.

Otherwise, meaning would be ontologically prior to itself. Thus, from the perspective of the world, λήθη figures a rupture in the terrain of meaning.

Moreover, Sheehan’s claim that being as meaning is always correlative with human existence must be false. Ἀλήθεια and λήθη are what they are prior (on a diagenic axis) to the worlds of beings or meaning they enable to be. In fact, precisely because originary concealment is a refusal of disclosure, it cannot have any relation of dependence upon that which is disclosed. It (and perhaps even originary openness) is an ontological structure not dependent upon any relation to beings or meaning, while beings and meaning are dependent upon it. There is consequently a one-way direction of dependence here which shows that Sheehan’s rubric of reciprocity between being and human existence does not match up to Heidegger’s account.

Heidegger explicates untruth further within the human context in terms of “mystery” and “errancy,” which I can set aside for the purposes of this project. What will be crucial in Section 2 of this chapter is having established the ontological-structural elements of the essence of truth in “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit”: 1) truth as the freedom or originary openness through which the movement of unconcealment, the disclosure of beings, or generation of a meaningful world are enabled, and 2) untruth as originary concealment, the ground enabling unconcealment, or the λήθη of which ἀλήθεια is the alpha-privative. The essence of truth, then, is the ἀλήθεια/λήθη dynamic in which worlds of beings or meaning come to be. In Heidegger’s account of the essence of truth in Beiträge, ἀλήθεια and λήθη prefigure the dynamic structure of the event, and it is through a transformation of those concepts that a grounded account of the event is developed.

Though the account I have reconstructed might seem like metaphysical transcendentalism, for reasons I will detail in Section 2.2.1 of this chapter, it is not. The main
points are: 1) Αλήθεια and λήθη are not reducible to conditions of possibility for experience, and their function is not simply epistemological. They are structures or operations of being necessary for the determination of any beings or worlds of beings, regardless of their accessibility to human understanding. This point will be made decisively in Beiträge. 2) Though, again, Heidegger does not clarify this in “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit,” he is clear by the time of Beiträge that the priority of the structures of the essence of truth is not that of conditions of possibility. These structures are necessary for the origination of worlds of beings, but this status must be understood in terms of “ground” not “conditionality.” The framework of conditionality, he will argue, is metaphysical and faulty. 3) The framework of transcendentality is a byproduct of metaphysics, which is fundamentally oriented by the question of Seiendheit, the beingness of beings. There, fundamental ontological categories are derived, for instance, by abstracting universals or generalities from a set of particulars (beings in this case). This fails to register the ontological difference. In contrast, Heidegger’s account of the essence of truth aims to step outside the range of Seiendheit. Though he is still struggling to accomplish this in “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit,” he seems to find greater success in Beiträge. For Heidegger, the structures of truth are not generalities abstracted from beings, defined by universal characteristics of beings insofar as they are beings. They are non-generic dynamic structures whence worlds of beings are originated.

2: Truth and Event in Beiträge zur Philosophie (vom Ereignis)

In Beiträge, Heidegger argues that his treatment of the ontological problematic in earlier works like Sein und Zeit and “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit” was ultimately inadequate. As I will discuss,
Heidegger holds that his earlier positions remain determined by the conceptual framework of metaphysics, which he takes to prevent a sufficiently originary account of being. In an effort to rectify this, Heidegger recasts the most fundamental terms of his ontology. “Being” he argues, must be rethought in terms of “the event” (das Ereignis). In other words, being – or rather, beyng (Seyn) – is evental in nature. A central task of Beiträge, then, is to work out what exactly the evental nature of beyng is. The problematic of the essence of truth plays a key role in this.

I will return to truth shortly. To make sense of the transformation in Heidegger’s account of truth in Beiträge (and, consequently, to make sense of the text’s account of the event), it is necessary to outline some major ontological shifts present in Beiträge. First, I will examine a problem Heidegger identifies in the history of ontology and his own previous efforts at addressing the question of being: that of thinking being within the framework of Seiendheit or beingness. In Beiträge, he aims to rectify this via a major philosophical shift advancing the independence of being from beings. I will clarify this by attending to the shift of his focal term from Sein to Seyn and the correlated shift from the Leitfrage to the Grundfrage. This look at the problem of Seiendheit is necessary for making sense of a parallel shift he advances regarding the essence of truth: the essence of truth must be detached from or independent of what is true. I then briefly return to comment on Sheehan/Meillassoux’s and Capobianco/Polt’s interpretations of the event, showing where I take each to go off track.

On the basis of this frame, I then pick up the problematic of truth and detail the way it opens up proper access to the event. As discussed earlier, the problematic of truth plays a key role in the problematic of being: “beyng qua event essentially occurs [wes] as truth.”

Explicating the essence of truth drives thought into a position from which it can give a first
properly grounded account of the nature of the event itself. This will serve as a basis for elaborating this account further via the problematics of ground and time-space in Chapter III. In my analysis, I draw from the text as a whole, but focus especially on the “Gründung” division (§§168-247).

2.1: Outline of Some Major Ontological Developments Situating the Event in Beiträge

2.1.1: The Problem of Seiendheit and the Shift from Sein to Seyn

In Beiträge, Heidegger advances a major ontological shift that sets the stage for his account of the event in that text, namely, a shift in how he understands being with respect to beings. Recall that in Sein und Zeit, being was always framed as “the being of beings.”306 There, Dasein or human existence – a being – can work toward developing an authentic understanding of being by developing an authentic understanding of its own existence. In other words, I can come to understand being on the basis of the relation being has to a being – Dasein, my own existence. In Beiträge, Heidegger makes a radical shift: he disassociates being from beings.307 In other words, being is now to be thought independently of any relation it has to beings: “beyng can no longer be thought on the basis of beings but must be inventively thought from itself.”308 This shift is signified terminologically by rewriting “Sein” (“being”) in the archaic form “Seyn” (“beyng”).309 “Sein” signifies being, understood as codetermined by a relation to beings. Its conceptual

307 In Beiträge, Heidegger explains what he means by beings as follows: “’Beings’ – this term names not only the actual (and certainly not if this is taken as the present at hand and the latter merely as the object of knowledge), not only the actual of any sort, but at the same time the possible, the necessary, and the accidental, everything that stands in beyng in any way whatever, even including negativity [Nichtige] and nothingness [Nichts]” (GA65 74/59).
308 GA65 7/8.
309 It should be noted, though, that Heidegger is not entirely consistent with the use of this convention in Beiträge.
successor, “Seyn,” on the other hand, signifies being as thought independently of any relation it has to beings.\textsuperscript{310} The following passage crystallizes Heidegger’s point and indicates its implications for the related themes of metaphysics and the ontological difference. I will refer back to it again later.

There is no immediate difference between beyng [Seyn] and beings, because there is altogether no immediate relation between them. Even though beings as such oscillate only in the appropriation [Ereignung], beyng remains abyssally far from all beings. The attempts to represent both together, already in the very manner of naming them, stem from metaphysics.\textsuperscript{311}

As I hope to make clear, this independence does not mean beyng is transcendent or ultimately discrete from beings, but that beyng is not dependent upon beings or its relations to beings. Beyng is, to borrow a phrase Capobianco uses, “structurally prior” to beings.\textsuperscript{312} Of course, Heidegger also details codependent or reciprocal relations between being and beings, as in the co-appropriation of Dasein and being that enables the constitution of meaningful worlds. Indeed, much of Beiträge is devoted to themes within this register. However, I take this to be a derivative relationship consequent upon the more originary, and independent, operations of beyng as event.

\textsuperscript{310} A later clarification of the sense in which beyng is separated from beings is offered in the lecture record composed by Dr. Alfred Guzzoni, “Summary of a Seminar on the Lecture ‘Time and Being,’” published in On Time and Being, trans. Joan Stambaugh (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 33: “Then the phrase ‘to think Being without beings’ was discussed. Along with the expression… ‘without regard to the relation of Being to beings,’ this phrase is the abbreviated formulation of: ‘to think Being without regard to grounding Being in terms of beings.’ ‘To think Being without beings’ thus does not mean that the relation to beings is inessential to Being, that we should disregard this relation. Rather, it means that Being is not to be thought in the manner of metaphysics, which consists in the fact that the \textit{summum ens as causa sui} accomplishes the grounding of all beings as such (cf. Leibniz’s so-called twenty-four metaphysical theses in Heidegger, Nietzsche, Vol. II, pp. 454 ff.). But we mean more than this. Above all, we are thinking of the metaphysical character of the ontological difference according to which Being is thought and conceived for the sake of beings, so that Being, regardless of being the ground, is subjugated to beings.”

\textsuperscript{311} GA65 477/375.

\textsuperscript{312} Capobianco, HWB 11; also see his “Coda on Being is (not) meaning,” Heidegger Circle Forum Post, August 30, 2013, 8:18 AM, https://groups.google.com/forum/#!searchin/heideggercircle/coda%7Csort:relevance/heideggercircle/eqHSh01v9kY/6dqtJmTuroJ, italics removed.
Though Heidegger’s accounts of both the primal independence of beyng from beings and consequent relations of reciprocity between the two are quite complex, and I will not treat them fully here, I take his basic logic to be straightforward. It operates at a first order and then a second order level. At the first order level: as a child’s existence is dependent upon the donors of its genetic material, beings are dependent upon beyng. “If beings are, then beyng must occur essentially [wesen].” But, as the donors are not dependent upon the child, beyng is not dependent upon beings. The child might cease to exist while the donors remain. This is a one-directional dependence. At the second order level, the donors might indeed become reciprocally determined by the child, but only insofar as they become mother or father. “Mother” or “father” is a secondary determination of the donor that only arises insofar as it enters into a certain correlation with the child and becomes partially defined in terms of that correlation. The primal independence and consequent correlation of beyng and beings is the same: beyng is independent of beings, while beings are dependent upon beyng. It is only insofar as worlds of beings are meaningfully disclosed by Dasein – a consequent structure – that beyng becomes reciprocally determined by beings (namely Dasein). Yet this remains at a second order level. The one-directional relation of dependence is consequently supplemented with a reciprocal codetermination.

The term “Sein”/“being” applies in the register of this reciprocal codetermination, while the term “Seyn”/“beyng” applies in the more originary register independent of it. Marking this distinction is essential to making sense of Beiträge. Without it, Heidegger’s statements clarifying each become conflated and make a difficult text nonsensical. With it, seemingly enigmatic

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³¹³ GA65 7/8. Though this analogy uses a relation of efficient causality, which is a decisively ontic relation, I certainly do not mean to suggest beyng is a cause of beings. Rather, I mean to illustrate that there is a relation of dependence, where, if beyng did not “occur essentially,” beings would not be. Thus, I intend this to be a structural analogy, not an example.
statements like the following become clear: “The question of being is the question of the truth of beyng.”\(^{314}\) For, truth is the determination of beyng in worlds of beings or meaning. Heidegger makes the point distinguishing being and beyng again, while also emphasizing the difference of beyng from the metaphysical concepts of actuality and possibility, as follows: “‘Beyng’ [Seyn] does not simply mean the actuality of the actual, and not simply the possibility of the possible, and in general not simply being [Sein] understood on the basis of particular beings; instead, it means beyng out of its original essential occurrence in the full fissure.”\(^{315}\)

The reason for Heidegger’s shift is that thinking being on the basis of its relation to beings forces a determination of the concept of being on the basis of the concept of beings, i.e., the conceptualization of what beings are as beings (.getJSONObject("\(\ddot{o}v\ \ddot{h}\ \ddot{o}v\)), which Heidegger terms “Seiendheit” (“beingness”).\(^{316}\) A series of related faults are involved with understanding being in the framework of Seiendheit. First, it leads to an abstract or generic account of being. Historically, a dominant procedure for deriving Seiendheit is the examination of a set of beings with an eye toward what is identical in all of them. In other words, the derivation of an essence by means of abstraction of a universal from a set of particulars, which might be accomplished by a variety of a priori or a posteriori methods. Seiendheit, in such cases, is that which most universally belongs to beings. For Heidegger, the paradigm case is Platonism’s derivation of abstract universals or ideas.\(^{317}\) The Aristotelian analogue is found in his account of “οὐσία as the

\(^{314}\) GA65 6/8.

\(^{315}\) GA65 75/60. For more on Heidegger’s understanding of Seiendheit, see Polt, Emergency 55-56 and 63-64.

\(^{316}\) GA65 75/60. For more on Heidegger’s understanding of Seiendheit, see Polt, Emergency 55-56 and 63-64.

\(^{317}\) GA65 75/60. For more on Heidegger’s understanding of Seiendheit, see Polt, Emergency 55-56 and 63-64.

\(^{317}\) Heidegger makes this point particularly well in Nietzsche vol. IV, ed. David Farrell Krell, trans. Joan Stambaugh, David Farrell Krell, and Frank A. Capuzzi (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 1991). “Plato interpreted the beingness of beings as idea” (Heidegger, Nietzsche vol. IVe 194). “In the question ‘What is the being as such?’ we are thinking of being, and specifically of the being of beings, that is to say, of what beings are. What they are – namely, the beings – is answered by their what-being [Was-sein], to ti estin. Plato defines the whiteness of a being as idea (see Plato’s Doctrine of Truth). The whiteness of being, the essential of ens, we also call ‘the essence’” (Heidegger, Nietzsche vol. IVe 206). Heidegger’s essay, Plato’s Doctrine of Truth, is found in Wegmarks 203-238/Pathmarks 155-181. For more of Heidegger’s comments on Aristotle, Kant, and Nietzsche, see Nietzsche vol. IV 41.
beingness of beings,” which replicates the problem: “despite [Aristotle’s] denial that being has
the character of a genus, nevertheless being (as beingness) is always and only meant as the
κοινόν, the common and thus what is common to every being.” A second problem is that
within the framework of Seiendheit, “nothing is said about the inner content of the essence of
being.” That is, the characterization of being is donated only from the character of beings, not
arrived at on the basis of being itself. In Heidegger’s analysis, thinking being on the basis of
beings prioritizes beings over being by making the conceptualization of beings as such
determinative for the conceptualization of being. Third, moreover, extant conceptions of beings
as such are not “innocent.” They are determined within faulty metaphysical historical and
conceptual configurations. Characterizations of being drawn from beings carry this fault. Fourth,
moreover, characteristics of beings are characteristics of beings, not being. Failing to register this
means failing to register the ontological difference between being and beings.

It is tempting to understand the priority involved in beyng’s independence in terms of a
relation of conditionality. However, Heidegger is careful to point out that this would be
mistaken. Showing why will help clarify the status of beyng’s independence. In his view, if we
take beyng as a condition for beings we continue to determine beyng on the basis of a relation
between it and beings, i.e., as Seiendheit. The problem here is in the application of the very
framework of conditionality to beyng. Concepts of condition must be distinguished from
Heidegger’s concepts of ground in Beiträge, which constitute an essential register of beyng itself

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318 GA65 75/60.
319 Nietzsche vol. IV 156.
320 While Heidegger critiques the ontological difference in Beiträge, attaining the conceptual and methodological
position from which that critique can be made is itself dependent upon having previously marked the ontological
difference and worked through the ontological problematic it opens up.
321 For instance (keeping attentive to the terminological distinction between Sein and Seyn), see the passage from
GA65 478/376 block quoted below. Similarly, in GA66 Heidegger writes: “Das Seyn als Er-eignis des ab-gründigen
Austrags der Kreuzung von Entgegnung und Streit ist weder vom Seienden her als dessen Abhub und Nachtrag,
noch auf das Seiende zu als dessen Ursache und Bedingung er-dacht” (GA66 93/78).
as event: namely, “Grund der Möglichkeit” (“ground of possibility”) or the more developed
ground as “das Sichverbergen im tragenden Durchragen” (“self-concealing in a protrusion that
bears”).322 This is differentiated into “Er-gründen” (“creative grounding” or “fathoming the
ground”) and “das ursprüngliche Gründen des Grundes” (“The original grounding of the
ground”) or “gründende Grund” (“grounding ground”).323 We can set aside the more derivative
fathoming the ground for now, which articulates ways alienated human existence grounds itself.
Grounding ground, on the other hand, articulates the originary grounding dynamic inherent to
beyng itself as event. Grounding ground is necessary for beings to be, but is not to be determined
as a condition. Casting something as a condition always means understanding it as a condition
for something: a condition for a being or for experience, for instance. The strange consequence
Heidegger recognizes, in other words, is that casting something as a condition always subjects it
to a co-determination by what it is a condition for, insofar as the condition is defined in terms of
the relation it has to the conditioned. Although we seem to have good concepts for conditions
that are independent of what is conditioned, his point is that applying the very framework of
conditionality to something means understanding it in terms of the relation of condition to
conditioned, and vice versa. In this way, thinking being as a condition for beings generates an
account in which being is structurally conditioned by beings, not independent of them: “If beyng
is understood as a condition in any sense whatever, it is already degraded into something in the
service of beings and supervenient to them.”324 In Beiträge, on the other hand, grounding ground
enables what is grounded on it to be, but is not itself essentially determined by what is grounded.
In other words, it is conceived on the basis of the inherent grounding character of the event, not

322 GA65 297/234 and 379/300. Recall that in “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit” a version of the “ground of possibility”
appears as “Grund der Ermöglichung” (“ground of enabling”) (WW 177/136 fn. a).
323 GA65 307/243.
324 GA65 479/377.
the relation it has to what is grounded.325 How this works can be seen in §242, where the originary structures or dynamics of ground – Ab-grund, Ur-grund, and Un-grund – are unfolded immanently as part of the originary dynamics of the event, not derived from what is consequent upon them.

It will be worth noting that for Heidegger, “the original grounding of the ground … is the essential occurrence of the truth of beyng; truth is a ground in the original sense.”326 This, as will be seen, means the essential occurrence of the truth of beyng must not be thought in terms of any relation to what is consequent upon it (beings), but likewise unfolded immanently as part of the originary dynamics of the event.

These distinctions allow me to further clarify how I understand the structural priority of beyng in Beiträge. It will be helpful to mark my agreement and disagreement with Capobianco’s recent interpretation of this matter. As he writes: “Heidegger’s mature position, in my formulation of the matter, is that Being is structurally prior to and a condition of meaning. That is, only insofar as there is Being is there meaning.”327 I take him to understand “meaning” here as shorthand for “the meaningful disclosure of a world of beings” or “the disclosure of a world of beings in their meaningful relations with human existence.” I agree that without beyng, meaning or worlds of beings would be impossible. In contrast to Capobianco, though, my understanding is that, at least in Beiträge, being (as beyng, as Ereignis) is structurally prior to, but not a condition of meaning or worlds of beings. For, casting this structural priority in terms of conditionality

325 Ground is also that which is most proper to what is grounded; it bears the gravity of essence. Recall that in “Vom Wesen Der Wahrheit,” “essence” was provisionally understood to mean “ground of enabling” or “ground of the inner possibility” (WW 178/136 and 186/143).
326 GA65 307/243.
327 Richard Capobianco, “Coda on Being is (not) meaning,” Heidegger Circle Forum Post, August 30, 2013, 8:18 AM. Again: “Being qua manifestation is structurally prior to, and the ontological condition of, any ‘constitution’ of meaning” (Capobianco, HWB 11).
inadvertently reinstitutes the dependence of beyng upon beings. In my view, to say beyng is structurally prior to meaning is to say beyng is prior on the diagenic axis or axis of ground, where “ground” must not be conflated with “condition.” This results in a different formulation: in Beiträge, beyng is structurally prior, prior on the diagenic axis, to meaning or beings.

Metaphysics, in Beiträge, is characterized by its essential orientation to think the beingness of beings: “all metaphysics” is “founded on the leading question [Leitfrage]: what are beings?” (cf. Aristotle’s τί τὸ ὄν). This is a central reason why it is insufficient for ontology. “‘Metaphysics’ asks about beingness on the basis of beings (within the inceptual – i.e., definitive – interpretation of φύσις) and necessarily leaves unasked the question of the truth of beingness and thus the question of the truth of beyng.”330 Heidegger’s shift to thinking beyng independently of beings aims to recast the problematic of being in a way liberated from metaphysical determination by the problematic of Seiendheit. This point allows a further clarification of Heidegger’s terminological distinction between “Sein”/“being” and “Seyn”/“beyng.” “Sein”/“being” signifies being as understood within the framework of Seiendheit:

Being [Sein] is the condition for beings, which are thereby already established in advance as things [Dinge] (the objectively present at hand). Being conditions [bedingt] beings either as their cause [summum ens – δημιουργός (‘craftsman’)] or as the ground of the objectivity of the thing in representation (condition of the possibility of experience or in some way as the ‘earlier,’ which it is in virtue of its higher constancy and presence, as accords with its generality).331

328 Moreover, according to Heidegger, the very framework of conditionality remains within the transcendental mode of thinking that he disavows both in Beiträge and later works like GA77: Feldweg-Gespräche.
329 GA65 12/12.
330 GA65 297/235, my italics on “truth.”
331 GA65 478/376.
Hence, “Sein”/“being” remains metaphysical in its signification. “Seyn”/“beyng” does not. Recall the point made in the passage cited above on page 24: “The attempts to represent both [beyng and beings] together, already in the very manner of naming them, stem from metaphysics.”332 Consequently, beyng cannot be “the being of beings.” It must not be understood on the basis of beings, in any way codetermined by a relation to them as its counterpart. Importantly, however, Heidegger is not claiming beyng has no relation to beings, but that beyng has no immediate relation to beings. Beyng is related to beings only mediately through what he calls “the strife of world and earth.”333

2.1.2: The Shift from the Leitfrage to the Grundfrage

As a consequence of these shifts, the question of beyng cannot be oriented by that of the being of beings. The distinction between being and beyng correlates with a distinction between two configurations of the question about being (or beyng): the “Leitfrage” (“guiding question”) and the “Grundfrage” (“basic question”).334 The Leitfrage is governed by the question “about beings as beings (ӧν ᥙ ᾗ ὀν).”335 For Heidegger, Aristotle’s “τί τὸ ὄν” “(What are beings?)” renders its “most general form.”336 Since it has this “approach and directionality,” when it comes to ask about being, it asks “the question of the being of beings.”337 The meaning of the term “Sein”/“being” ultimately remains determined by the framework of the Leitfrage. Thus, Heidegger argues the Leitfrage must be supplanted. It is so by the Grundfrage, for which “the

332 GA65 477/375.
333 GA65 477/375. Again: “As a consequence of its solitude, beyng essentially occurs in relation to ‘beings’ always only mediately, through the strife of world and earth” (GA65: 471/371).
334 GA65 75-76/60.
335 GA65 75/60.
336 GA65 75/60.
337 GA65 75/60.
starting point is not beings, i.e., this or that given being, nor is it beings as such and as a whole.\footnote{GA65 75-76/60.} It is “the question of the essential occurrence [Wesung] of beyng” which interrogates “the openness for essential occurrence [Offenheit für Wesung] as such, i.e., truth.”\footnote{GA65 76/60.} Here, truth “essentially occurs in advance [Voraus-wesende]” of (i.e., is structurally prior or prior on the diagenic axis to) the determination of 1) beings, 2) the Leitfrage, and 3) the historical epoch of metaphysics.\footnote{GA65 76/60.} In other words, the Grundfrage inquires into the ground of these grounded terms, but not on the basis of any relation this ground has to what is grounded. Rather, it asks about this ground independently of any such relation.\footnote{For more on the Grundfrage vs. the Leitfrage see GA65 §85, §91, and §172.}

Making a fatal error shaping his interpretation of Heidegger and his relation to Deleuze, Gavin Rae’s Ontology in Heidegger and Deleuze: A Comparative Analysis frames Heidegger’s ontology as one defined by a “wholesale abandonment” of metaphysics: “For Heidegger, philosophy is so irreparably damaged by metaphysics that nothing other than its wholesale abandonment will rejuvenate thinking to being’s becoming.”\footnote{Gavin Rae, Ontology in Heidegger and Deleuze: A Comparative Analysis (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014) 3. This is one of three book length studies of the relation of Heidegger and Deleuze currently available.} Translated into the language I have just been using, this would mean that in the shift from the Leitfrage to the Grundfrage, the framework of the former is cast entirely to the flames. This is false and expresses a fundamental misunderstanding of the structure of Heidegger’s ontology. It fails to register the dimension of what I have described in terms of radical critique that Heidegger recognizes as essential to a sufficient ontology. If metaphysics constitutes a distorted ontology, a sufficient ontology must include within it an explanation on more appropriate bases of the genesis of that distortion. In other words, it must not abandon the framework of that distortion, but offer the possibility to
rethink it on proper grounds. In Deleuze, this move is found in his commitment not only to showing the error of the regime of representation, but also the genesis of representation as part of a broader ontology. Describing the shift here in terms of “überrängliche Denken” or “transitional thinking,” Heidegger emphasizes the point as follows:

For transitional thinking, however, what matters is not an ‘opposition’ to ‘metaphysics,’ since that would simply bring metaphysics back into play; rather, the task is an overcoming of metaphysics out of its ground. …[T]ransitional thinking must not succumb to the temptation to simply leave behind what it grasped as the end and at the end; instead, this thinking must put behind itself what it has grasped, i.e., now for the first time comprehend it in its essence and allow it to be integrated in altered form into the truth of beyng.  

Heidegger’s concern with this issue is seen clearly in the way he casts the transition from the Leitfrage to the Grundfrage. This transition is neither a simple switch from one orientation to another nor a seamless progression. The framework of the Leitfrage defines metaphysics, and its crystallization by the ancient Greeks marks what Heidegger calls the “first beginning” for thought. The shift toward the Grundfrage marks a shift toward an “other beginning.” In this way, it is an essential part of what I have described as the event in its historical sense. But as I explained in Chapter I, the event in the historical sense would be impossible without an ontological element that drives or draws thought beyond the framework of the first beginning; namely, what Heidegger elaborates as the evental character of beyng (the event in the ontological sense). In the shift from the Leitfrage to the Grundfrage, we see part of this broader transformation taking place.

The overcoming of the first beginning and its Leitfrage cannot be accomplished by simple negation. It cannot be “a counter-movement; for all counter-movements and counter-
forces are essentially codetermined by that which they are counter to.”\textsuperscript{344} Any attempt to overcome by way of a counter-movement remains reactionary or, as Heidegger puts it, “re-aktiv” (re-active).\textsuperscript{345} “A counter-movement never suffices for an essential transformation of history” – it never escapes the determinative force of that to which it is counter.\textsuperscript{346} Rather, “the task is an overcoming of metaphysics out of its ground.”\textsuperscript{347}

Insofar as the historical and conceptual apparatus of the \textit{Leitfrage} is grounded in the subject matter of the \textit{Grundfrage}, even if this fact is obscured, the \textit{Grundfrage} “lies hidden in” the \textit{Leitfrage}.\textsuperscript{348} When the insufficiencies of the \textit{Leitfrage} become apparent, so does the necessity of a rupture and another beginning for thought (“something utterly different must commence”).\textsuperscript{349} The conceptual apparatus of the \textit{Leitfrage} is unable to establish this because of the determinative force of the historical and conceptual foundations defining it. Instead, a preparatory project that fractures or deconstructs those foundations is necessary (as found, for instance, in Heidegger’s work from the 1920s and early 1930s). One can imagine, as much Continental philosophy did during the 1990s and early 2000s, that the deconstructive project might potentially be carried on indefinitely and come to define the project of philosophy. Ultimately, however, that would perpetuate the error belonging to the \textit{Leitfrage}, since philosophy would be defined in relation to the \textit{Leitfrage}’s remnant inscriptions. From a perspective within the horizon of this deconstructive project, then, resolving the \textit{Leitfrage}’s error requires a rupture and radical shift – a so called “leap” – initiating another beginning. According to Heidegger, this can be accomplished via the problematic of truth: “what is carried out is a leap into the truth

\textsuperscript{344}GA65 186/146. 
\textsuperscript{345}GA65 173/136, italics modified. 
\textsuperscript{346}GA65 186/146. 
\textsuperscript{347}GA65 173/136. 
\textsuperscript{348}GA65 76/60. 
\textsuperscript{349}GA65 186/146.
(clearing and concealing) of beyng itself.”\textsuperscript{350} In the language of the event, this means that a historical event must take place accomplishing a radical reconfiguration of the terrain of thought.

Nevertheless, the historical and conceptual configuration of the \textit{Leitfrage} is not suddenly annihilated. Instead, the shift establishes the possibility that it be re-appropriated or grounded in a more originary way. “Although no progression is ever possible from the guiding question to the basic question, yet, conversely, the unfolding of the basic question does at the same time provide the ground for taking back up into a more original possession the entire history of the guiding question rather than simply repudiating it as something past and gone.”\textsuperscript{351} Overcoming metaphysics out of its ground entails that the transition through the \textit{Grundfrage} to another beginning “free[s] up a creative ground” and offers the possibility of re-appropriating the apparatus of metaphysics and mobilizing it in a non-reactive way.\textsuperscript{352} This, however, would entail a fundamental transformation of the terms of the \textit{Leitfrage}, of metaphysics, and of the way we understand the nature of beings. It should be emphasized, however, that Heidegger’s primary concern was with rethinking the nature of being in terms of the event, not the re-appropriation of metaphysics.

\textbf{2.1.3: The Ontological Difference}

The shift from being to its conceptual successor, beyng, also leads to an important shift in how Heidegger understands difference. I will address this briefly here and return to it in Sections 2.2.2-2.2.7. In \textit{Sein und Zeit}, the \textit{Seinsfrage} was oriented by the ontological difference or

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{350} GA65 76/60.
\textsuperscript{351} GA65 77/61.
\textsuperscript{352} GA65 186/146. For more of Heidegger’s comments on the non-reactive nature of this shift see §§85 and 92. For more on the \textit{Leitfrage} vs. the \textit{Grundfrage} see §§85, 91, and 172.
\end{footnotesize}
difference between being and beings. In *Beiträge*, the question of beyng cannot be oriented by the ontological difference because in that configuration being remains codetermined by the differential relation between it and its counterpart – beings. This shift is not meant to abandon or reject the ontological difference. Rather, Heidegger aims to give an account of the ground whence this very difference is possible. As I hope to show, through the problematic of the essence of truth in *Beiträge*, Heidegger shifts the key differential relationship from one between being and beings to a self-differential operation “internal” to beyng itself. Recall the passage cited on page 155 again, this time with respect to the ontological difference: “There is no immediate difference between beyng and beings, because there is altogether no immediate relation between them. Even though beings as such oscillate only in the appropriation [Ereignung], beyng remains abyssally far from all beings.”

2.1.4: An Error in Sheehan and Meillassoux’s Correlationist Interpretation of Heidegger

On the basis of these distinctions, it is easy to demonstrate that Heidegger is not a correlationist of the sort Meillassoux and Sheehan make him out to be. A central tenet of Heidegger’s account in *Beiträge* is that being itself (as beyng) is dependent neither upon any relation with human existence nor any other beings. Rather, as I have emphasized, it becomes a central task to think beyng in light of just this independence, which Heidegger does in terms of Ereignis. Sheehan and Meillassoux’s failure to recognize this shift means that they define Heidegger’s project within the framework of the Leitfrage and reduce his core subject of inquiry to Seiendheit.

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353 For a more detailed discussion of the ontological difference and the ambivalent meanings of the Greek “ὄν,” see TPT 10-15.
354 GA65 477/375.
It is important that I clarify my point to avoid a misunderstanding. Against my interpretation, it might be objected that several of Heidegger’s texts after the early 1930s do in fact argue that the disclosure of a world of meaning requires that being is locked into a codependent correlation with human existence – as in the account of Ereignis as a reciprocal need and mutual appropriation of human existence and being. How, then, could my point be correct? My response is that I agree with this… but only as far as it goes: insofar as Heidegger gives an account of meaning or of being insofar as being is involved in the constitution of meaning, that account involves a codependent correlation of being and human existence, or at the very least being with beings. This ‘giving an account of meaning’, however, does not exhaust Heidegger’s project: he articulates this and more. For Heidegger, essential aspects of being exceed that correlation and are independent of it. Thus, the correlationist interpretation is inadequate to Heidegger’s account.

2.1.5: Some Related Errors in Capobianco and Polt’s Interpretations of Heidegger

Recall Capobianco and Polt’s shared interpretation that “Ereignis” is simply an alternative name for “anwesen” (presencing) or “das Anwesen des Anwesenden” (the presencing of what is present), “ἀλήθεια,” “φύσις,” or “the giving of the given” (cf. Heidegger’s formulation, “es gibt”). Both authors agree that these terms indicate not only the manifestation of worlds of beings or meaning, but what enables such manifestation at all. I would like to respond to this with two critical points.

First, the Capobianco/Polt interpretation conceives Ereignis on the basis of a relation to that which comes to presence, is unconcealed, or is given, i.e., to beings. As I have argued, this is
clearly a mistake: it determines the conception of being in terms of characteristics of beings. In fact, this interpretation replicates the problem with conceiving being as a condition of possibility for beings. Even if aspects of ἀλήθεια, for instance, are taken to be structurally prior to beings or meaning, so long as ἀλήθεια is defined in terms of the unconcealment of beings or of meaning, that definition is derived in terms of a relation to them. Likewise, if beyng as Ereignis is understood as the giving of the given, it is conceptually defined in terms of a relation to what is given.

It should be said that Polt walks a fine line with respect to this issue. He affirms that Seyn must be thought purely on its own terms, although he frequently addresses Seyn in terms of the giving of the given or meaning of beings and the mutual appropriation of human existence to Seyn and Seyn to human existence. As he formulates it, “the question of be-ing [Seyn] does not begin with particular beings, or with beings as such and as a whole, but with a leap into be-ing itself. We must experience beings as pointing to be-ing as ‘their other,’ which must be approached purely on its own terms.” This statement, however, harbors the crucial error: if Seyn remains conceived as the “other” of beings, then it is still conceived on the basis of a relation to them. The concept of Seyn is determined by a differential correlation with that of which it is the other. Thus, a defining relation to beings remains inscribed in Polt’s conception of Seyn.

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355 See, for instance, Polt’s characterization of Ereignis as follows: “imagine the ultimate reinterpretive event, or rather interpretive event – an event that makes possible interpretation and meaning themselves, that allows the hermeneutic ‘as’ to come forth, not just for an individual but for a community and for an age. Such an event would be the emergency in which this shared being-there and the ‘there’ itself first emerged” (Polt, Emergency 79). I don’t think such a characterization is false, but it does not get to the heart of Heidegger’s characterization of Ereignis, which is prior to its role in making possible interpretation and meaning. For more on Polt’s concept of “reinterpretive event,” see Emergency 78-79. As an example of Polt’s occasional correlationism, he writes “be-ing needs us, and cannot occur at all without involving us in some way” (Polt, Emergency 68).

356 Polt, Emergency 62.
My second critical point is that by failing properly to mark the distinction between being and beyng, and beyng’s independence from beings, Capobianco’s interpretation conflates Ereignis with being. Capobianco lists citations from Beiträge, Besinnung (GA66), Die Überwindung der Metaphysik (GA67), Die Geschichte des Seyns (GA69), and Über den Anfang (GA70) that rightly substantiate that for Heidegger Ereignis is Seyn, or Seyn is Ereignis. This also rightly establishes that for Heidegger the question of Seyn and the question of Ereignis are not two different or inconsistent philosophical questions, but one and the same. Capobianco then goes on to distinguish between Seyn and Sein, but fails to register the full significance of this distinction established in Heidegger’s recasting of his problematic, which is seen particularly well in Beiträge. The problem, then, is that by identifying Ereignis with Seyn and Seyn with Sein, he mistakenly identifies Ereignis with Sein. This lays the (false) foundation for Capobianco’s claims that “Ereignis” is just a different name for ἀλήθεια, φύσις, etc., and that, in turn, “Ereignis” was not intended to name something more originary than being. It was intended precisely to name something more originary than being, namely beyng.

2.2: The Event and the Essence of Truth

With the programmatic and conceptual transformations I have already outlined in mind, let us return to the question of truth and its role in explicating beyng as event. As I will show, Heidegger’s move to think beyng independently from beings has important consequences for his treatment of the problematic of truth. As a point of emphasis, the problematic of truth is an

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357 EH, 39-43.
358 EH 44.
359 As Capobianco states his view, “there is neither sufficient nor convincing textual evidence to maintain that [Heidegger] ever considered Ereignis as a more fundamental matter for thought than das Sein” (EH 34).
essentially ontological problematic.\textsuperscript{360} It is an epistemological or logical problematic only in derivative forms.

For a number of reasons, Heidegger’s account of truth in \textit{Beiträge} is crucial for working the evental nature of beyng. Paramount is that the question of truth provides the primary conceptual pathway by which thought can gain a first, grounded stance within the event. The essence of truth, moreover, constitutes certain essential structures and dynamic operations of the event itself. Indeed, it is through Heidegger’s account of truth that he is able to begin developing a properly grounded account of the event, or of beyng \textit{as} event. To these points, he writes, “The precursory question \textit{[Vor-frage]} of truth is simultaneously the basic question \textit{[Grund-frage]} of beyng; and beyng qua event essentially occurs \textit{[west]} as truth.”\textsuperscript{361} Consequently, the way the essence of truth is understood here directly impacts the way the evental nature of beyng is understood.

In a number of other texts from the early-mid 1930s, like “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit,” Heidegger maintains the account of the essence of truth given in terms of the dual, correlative structures of ἀλήθεια (originary unconcealment or openness) and λήθη (originary concealment or withdrawal), as discussed earlier.\textsuperscript{362} Much available scholarship on \textit{Beiträge} assumes that Heidegger’s account of truth in this text should be understood through this originary \textit{a-lēthic} schema.\textsuperscript{363} In this section, I argue such an interpretation falls short of the account of truth Heidegger gives in this text. Of course, the structures of ἀλήθεια and λήθη remain crucial.

However, by inquiring into the ground whence these very structures are originated, \textit{Beiträge}

\textsuperscript{360} I mean “ontological” here simply as pertaining to the problematic of being (or beyng), not the sense of Heidegger’s technical use in this text.
\textsuperscript{361} GA65 348/275.
\textsuperscript{362} For other instances, see: \textit{Einführung in die Metaphysik} (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1983) and “Der Ursprung der Kunstwerke,” in \textit{Holzwege} (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 2003).
\textsuperscript{363} As a general statement of such a position: “For Heidegger, the essence of truth is always understood in terms of unconcealment” (Mark A. Wrathall, “Unconcealment,” in \textit{A Companion to Heidegger}, ed. Hubert L. Dreyfus and Mark A. Wrathall [Malden: Blackwell, 2005], 337).
argues for an account of the essence of truth more primal than the \textit{a-lēthic} schema. \textit{Ἀλῆθεια} and \textit{λήθη} are grounded in an originary difference or self-differentiation [\textit{Unterschied} or \textit{Entscheidung}], which constitutes an essential aspect of beyng as event itself. In other words, Heidegger’s concept of truth in \textit{Beiträge} is most primally differential, not \textit{a-lēthic}.

Demonstrating this establishes a differential logic belonging to the event, which can then be developed to explain a number of related aspects of the event.

My earlier examination of the problem of \textit{Seiendheit} was necessary for making sense of a parallel shift Heidegger advances regarding the essence of truth: the essence of truth must be detached from or independent of what is true. Explaining this will frame my account of his reformulation of the essence of truth as “die Lichtung für das Sichverbergen” (“the clearing for self-concealing”) or “Lichtung des Sichverbergens” (“the clearing of self-concealing”) (which I condense as “the clearing for/of self-concealing”), together with a discussion of his conception of difference in \textit{Beiträge}.\textsuperscript{364} Though these formulations are recognizably related to the \textit{a-lēthic} formulation of truth found in “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit,” they in fact articulate a fundamental transformation. “The clearing for/of self-concealing” is a differential formulation, that is, it articulates the differential dynamic that constitutes the essence of truth. To be clear, \textit{Beiträge} contains no \textit{overt assertion} that the essence of truth is differential in nature. Rather, this position becomes evident by tracking the specifics of Heidegger’s treatment of the problematic of truth, which drive thought beyond the \textit{a-lēthic} account into a differential account entailed in its logic and confirmed in his thinking of “the decisional essence [\textit{Entscheidungswesen}] of beyng.”\textsuperscript{365}

\textsuperscript{364} GA65 348/275, italics removed, and 329/261. The connection of this with beyng is again highlighted in the alternative formulation: the essence of truth is “die lichtende Verbergung des Seyns” (“the clearing concealment of beyng”) (GA 380/300).

\textsuperscript{365} GA65 455/359, italics removed. Heidegger’s movement toward an account in which a differential operation is at the heart of beyng as event is verified by statements regarding difference in \textit{Das Ereignis}, composed in 1941-42. GA71: \textit{Das Ereignis} (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 2009); English: \textit{The Event}, trans. Richard Rojcewicz (Bloomington, IN: Indiana Univ. Press, 2013).
seems to me that *Beiträge* is richer in this respect than its author likely recognized. Yet despite the major development that the differential conception of truth in *Beiträge* constitutes in Heidegger’s program, I take *Beiträge* to lack a satisfactorily *explicit* elaboration of how originary difference originates the *a-êthic* structures, even though the differential concept of truth is poised to do just that. Thus, I offer a proposal as to how Heidegger’s concept might be developed in this way. One consequence of this account of the essence of truth and, subsequently, the event, that I will only partially address here, is that it provides a basis for rethinking the nature of worlds of beings. This is because the processes involved in the manifestation of worlds of beings are originated by the dynamics of the event. The analysis of these processes entails that the beings grounded upon them are of a very different nature than in the pictures provided by the tradition of metaphysics.

2.2.1: The Originary Grounding of Heidegger’s *A-êthic* Framework: The Essence of Truth as the Clearing for/of Self-Concealing

The core discussion of the essence of truth in *Beiträge* opens by posing an alternative formulation of the question of truth as one “about the truth of the truth.”

366 Heidegger is well aware this is likely to draw charges of circularity or “vacuity.”

367 It escapes this because “truth” is used in two different senses, one of which signifies the ground or essence of the other.

Heidegger’s distinction between these two senses aligns his analysis of truth with the shifts I have already discussed (*Sein/Seyn; Leitfrage/Grundfrage*). “Truth,” here, signifies on the one

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366 GA65 327/359: “*nach der Wahrheit der Wahrheit.*” The core discussion of truth in *Beiträge* is found in §§ 204-237 or division V, part C: *Das Wesen der Wahrheit.*

367 GA65 327/259.
hand “die Wahrheit selbst” (“truth itself”) and on the other “das Wahre” (“what is true”).

By “what is true” Heidegger means the world of disclosed beings or meaning, the domain of the “Da,” or the “Entwurfsbereichs” (“domain of projection”).

“Truth itself” is prior to what is true on the diagenic axis and is the essence of truth or the ground enabling what is true to be or come to presence. In other words, truth itself “is the original [ursprüngliche] truth of beyng (event).”

The question of the truth of the truth inquires into truth itself, not what is true. Thus, we are no longer asking about the domain of projection itself as, for instance, in Sein und Zeit, where the existential analytic operated within the bounds of the horizon of temporality constituted by Dasein as thrown projection. Rather, “what counts here is the projection [den Wurf] of the very domain of projection [Entwurfsbereichs].”

For Heidegger, the immediate upshot is that truth – that is, truth itself – is “definitively detached [abgelöst] from all beings.” Stated more poetically, “truth is the great disdainer of all that is ‘true.’”

Truth itself is an operation of the event prior to and independent of that which it enables to become manifest. This is a structural priority, that is, a priority on the axis of ground. This independence is, again, one-directional, for the manifestation of what is true is dependent upon truth itself. Conceptually separating these casts the disassociation of beyng from beings in terms of the problematic of truth. It is evident why Heidegger would want to make this rather striking move: if to think being on the basis of a relation to beings produces an account that remains metaphysical, and truth is an essential dimension or process of beyng itself, then truth

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368 GA65 345/273.
369 GA65 327/259.
370 GA65 329/261.
371 GA65 327/259, my italics.
372 GA65 329/261.
373 GA65 331/262, italics removed.
itself must be accounted for independently of any relation it has to beings, lest the account of it remain metaphysical or re-inscribe beyng with metaphysical content.

Let us briefly reconstruct a line of reasoning in the text that supports this detachment of the essence of truth from what is true. It is drawn primarily from Heidegger’s analysis of “Offenheit” (“openness”) in *Beiträge* §204-207 and employs some conceptual language absent from “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit.” Heidegger initially situates this analysis in a critique of the confusion of truth with its derivative form, “Richtigkeit” (“correctness”).374 Correctness operates on the level of a disclosed world of beings or meaning. Schematically, correctness can be taken as a syngenetic equivalent to such a world, cast in a traditional, representational model of truth. In contrast, on the diagenic axis, correctness is consequent upon truth’s essential structure of openness. Since openness is the ground enabling truth as correctness, truth as correctness always bears inherent reference to openness. Now, if we aim to give an account of openness itself – as part of our account of the essence of truth – it is tempting to do so in terms of its relation to correctness, that is, to understand openness “as a condition” for correctness.375 However, this would replicate the metaphysical folly of the *Leitfrage* and its orientation to *Seiendheit*. Instead, Heidegger recognizes that if openness is an ontological structure diagenically antecedent to correctness, and if correctness is thus produced only diagenically consequent upon openness, then openness is not dependent upon any relation it has to its consequent. Openness could be cast as a *condition* only if misunderstood on the basis of its relation to correctness, such that openness would be conditioned *by* correctness. Heidegger’s position, rather, is that openness must be articulated independently. Heidegger begins to offer an account of this independence on the basis

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374 GA65 327/259, italics removed.
375 GA65 328/260.
of what he calls “das wesentliche Ausmaß” (“the essential extent”) of truth.\textsuperscript{376} Here, structurally prior (i.e., prior on the axis of ground) to the breaching or inception of openness, there is no extended dimension whatsoever. The essential extent of truth is the originary clearing or breaching of a place or an extended dimension, yet undetermined with respect to any finite world.\textsuperscript{377} Openness is this cleared realm or “amidst” in which beings come to stand.\textsuperscript{378} As Heidegger writes: “the essential extent itself determines the ‘place’ (time-space) of openness: the cleared ‘amidst’ of beings.”\textsuperscript{379} We should recall that concealment plays a key role in the origination of the essential extent of openness, which I will return to shortly. In part, then, truth itself consists in these essential structures and processes, which are the ground enabling the origination of any world of beings (and, thus, correctness), but which are not themselves determined on the basis of any relation they have to those beings (i.e., not conditioned by beings).

The decisive point is that since truth’s essential structures are the ground enabling the determination of any world of beings, beings are dependent on truth itself but truth itself is not dependent on beings, i.e., what is true. There is, again, a one-directional dependence. Truth itself must be thought as independent or “detached” from any relation to beings. Daniela Vallega-Neu puts the point nicely in the register of beyng and its \textit{lēthic} dimension as follows: “there is no immediate relation between be-ing [\textit{Seyn}] as enowning withdrawal and beings, even if a being shelters the truth of be-ing [\textit{Seyn}]. …Why not? Because the essential swaying [\textit{Wesen}] of be-ing

\textsuperscript{376} GA65 329/261.
\textsuperscript{377} It would be mistaken to take this to mean truth is originally \textit{infinite}. There is no infinite–finite dichotomy at play here, according to which truth could fall on the side opposed to the finite. Rather, the originary clearing or breaching of openness arises from the differential operation constituting the essence of truth, where that differential operation is precisely the mechanism of the event’s self-coagulation or intensification, distension, and elaboration in the more derivative \textit{a-lēthic} structures of truth.
\textsuperscript{378} GA65 329/261.
\textsuperscript{379} GA65 329/261.
[Seyn] occurs in (but not only in) the ‘not’ of beings, because the withdrawal of be-ing [Seyn] is precisely what withdraws in the concealing-sheltering [verbergen] of truth."  

The danger, it seems, is that this independence of truth (and for that matter of beyng) from beings might mean Heidegger reinstates a metaphysical transcendence into his ontology, that is, a vertical arrangement of different levels of reality. I don’t think he does. I would like to suggest truth itself, while structurally prior to worlds of beings, is simultaneously immanent to them, while enabling them to be. By “immanent” here, I do not mean that truth itself is on the same syngenetic or equiprimordial plane of ground as worlds of beings, which would render Heidegger’s ontology a thoroughly “flat ontology.” Rather, I mean truth itself (as the truth of the event) is implicated within beings or worlds of beings, without any real distinction (Descartes) between them and without positing any hierarchy of substantialized planes of reality that would make truth or the event transcendent to this plane. This renders Heidegger’s ontology a “curved” ontology. He nicely allegorizes the immanence of truth’s dimension of openness, for instance, as follows:

The open realm, which conceals itself at the same time that beings come to stand in it..., is ...something like an inner recess [hohle Mitte], e.g., that of a jug. Yet ... the inner recess is not just a haphazard emptiness which arises purely on account of the surrounding walls and which happens not to be full of ‘things.’ It is just the opposite: the inner recess itself is what determines, shapes, and bears the walling action of the walls and of their surfaces. The walls and surfaces are merely what is radiated out by that original open realm which allows its openness to come into play by summoning up, round about itself and toward itself, such-

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380 HCP 112.
381 See GA65 §152. For another short discussion on the non-transcendent nature of beyng, see Walter Brogan, “Da-sein and the Leap of Being,” in Companion to Heidegger’s Contributions to Philosophy, eds. Charles E. Scott, Susan M. Schoenbohm, Daniella Vallega-Neu, and Alejandro Vallega (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2001), 176-178. I abbreviate this volume as CHCP.
382 In fact, Heidegger argues the concept of transcendence belongs to the derivative configuration of truth as correctness and of beings as objectively present (See GA65 §7 and §227).
and-such walls (the particular form of the vessel). That is how the essential occurrence of the open realm radiates back from and in the embracing walls.\textsuperscript{384}

This allegory offers a way to reconcile the independence of truth itself with Heidegger’s commitment that neither truth nor beyng is metaphysically transcendent. For Heidegger the essence of truth is not dependent upon any relation to beings, while remaining immanent to them. From the standpoint of beings, we can understand the openness of truth as structurally prior on the diagenic axis, and yet as an immanent structure through which the singular, finite contours of their being are determined and given the space to be differentiated from one another: “Truth, as the event of what is true, is the abyssal fissure \textit{[abgründige Zerklüftung]} in which beings are divided \textit{[zur Entzweiung kommt]} and must stand in the strife.”\textsuperscript{385} Truth itself, though, does not arise on account of beings. The openness of truth is a structure of the essence of truth; that is, it is a structure of the event as it occurs in and through truth.\textsuperscript{386}

Here, a few outlines of the structure of the event can be discerned. The openness of truth is not dependent upon any relation with beings. It is an aspect of the event that originates worlds of beings, such that beings cannot be without them. Beyng as event “summons up” beings, “round about itself and toward itself,” in the sense that beings bear a structural reference to the event which constitutes their ground, enables their manifestation, differentiation, temporality, and spatiality. Yet the event in its own right does not bear a constitutive structural reference to beings that would make it dependent upon them. Clarifying this is essential to a clear account of Heidegger’s approach to the core topic of \textit{Beiträge} and other post-\textit{Kehre} texts: working out the evental nature of beyng.

\textsuperscript{384} GA65 338-339/268.
\textsuperscript{385} GA65 331/263.
\textsuperscript{386} It would be an interesting project to compare this with Spinoza’s distinction between \textit{Natura naturans} and \textit{Natura naturata} (E1P29S).
What, then, are we to make of the formulation of the essence of truth as the clearing for/of self-concealing? To explain this, Heidegger follows the question of ground, driving thought into a terrain more originary than that articulated by the a-lēthic account. If the major dimensions of the a-lēthic account are originary openness (unconcealment, disclosedness) and concealment (closedness, withdrawal), which co-determine each other and operate in a dynamic that, while independent of any relation to beings, enables any world of beings to become manifest, the question Heidegger raises is: whence and wherefore concealment and openness? That is, what is the origin of and reason explaining these two primordial moments of the essential structure of truth? This question marks a major development in Heidegger’s ontology.

It is important to point out that Heidegger poses this question as: “whence and wherefore concealment and unconcealment?” (“woher und weshalb Verbergung und Entbergung?”).387 Though he uses the term “Entbergung” here, he quickly makes it clear that the question at hand does not take this in the derivative sense of the unconcealment of beings, nor even as the more originary “openness of beings as a whole”; it is to be understood in its essence, as “the openness of self-concealing (being),” that is, the openness of the essence of truth.388 This crucial question about the origin of the a-lēthic structures is easily overlooked. It is posed parenthetically in §207 and, though Heidegger returns to the task it poses in a number of places, the question itself is not emphasized prominently in the text elsewhere. However, it is key for making sense of the distinction drawn in Beiträge between truth as ἀλήθεια and truth as clearing for/of self-concealing: as Heidegger writes, “truth as the clearing for self-concealing is… an essentially different projection (Entwurf) than is ἀλήθεια.”389 Of central concern, he argues, is that the interpretation of concealment in terms of the a-lēthic framework is ultimately insufficient: “A-

387 GA65 330/261.
388 GA65 335/266.
389 GA65 350/277. For more, see GA65 §226.
λήθεια means un-concealment and the un-concealed itself,” but in that case “concealment itself is experienced only as what is to be cleared away, what is to be removed (a-).” Arguably, this definition of ἀλήθεια does not express the richest account of the concept in his work. Yet the point is that accounting for the structures of truth within the a-lēthic framework misses the important question: it “does not address concealment itself and its ground.” It consequently fails to rethink these structures within the framework of the Grundfrage, that is, on the basis of their immanent ground in the event rather than their role as ground for worlds of beings. Heidegger’s point is not simply that concealment is neglected when we formulate truth as ἀλήθεια, and that we must rectify this neglect. Rather, it is that we must press beyond concealment on the diagenic axis, to a ground from out of which concealment and openness are themselves originated. Casting the essence of truth in terms of the a-lēthic framework fails to do this. The difference between the a-lēthic account of the essence of truth and the account as clearing for/of self-concealing is established precisely in the moment of asking about the originary ground of concealment and openness. It is important to be clear what this does not mean: it does not mean Heidegger disavows his earlier accounts of truth as ἀλήθεια. Rather, it means the a-lēthic framework must be understood as grounded by a more originary essence of truth: the clearing for/of self-concealing.

In “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit,” the withdrawing action of originary concealment both opened up the primal opening (Da-sein as the ground via which beings are disclosed) and refused the possibility of total disclosure, thus enabling the finite disclosure of a world of beings. In this arrangement concealment is arguably more originary than openness on the diagenic axis.

390 GA65 350/277.
391 An instance of a richer account, ἀλήθεια is frequently understood as the structure of openness serving as part of the ground for unconcealment, as I have discussed.
392 GA65 350/277, my italics.
393 GA65 350/277.
Moreover, these were the most primordial ontological structures thinkable – they formed the limit or horizon of thought’s ability to articulate the nature of truth, ground, and being.

In *Beiträge*, after disassociating the structures of originary concealment and openness from beings and affirming the consequent necessity of rethinking them, their basic arrangement is reconfigured via the question of the ground whence they are originated. Here, Heidegger rotates them onto a syngenetic, equiprimordial axis with respect to one another, then questions along the diagenetic axis into the ground enabling the origination of these structures themselves. This is structurally akin to Hegel reframing Kant by arguing that the very differentiation between the phenomenal and noumenal is itself a moment in the absolute.

We gain a sense of how radical this question is by isolating one dimension for a moment and asking: *whence and wherefore concealment?* What is the genesis or origin of concealment itself? Such a question was unthinkable via the conceptual structure available in “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit” because its problematic horizon was still determined by thinking the essence of truth as that which enables the manifestation of beings. To ask “whence and wherefore concealment?” is to investigate the origination of the most originary ontological structure thinkable prior to this point.

Nevertheless, Heidegger’s question is not just about concealment. Concealment and openness are correlative; they always go hand in hand. Concealment is a withdrawal from or refusal of openness and openness is a breaching of concealment. Like the apparent “two sides” of a Möbius strip, they present themselves as irreconcilably conflictual or in strife, yet an “ursprüngliche Innigkeit” (“original intimacy”) must hold for them to correlate at all.\(^{394}\) Otherwise, there would be a real or substantial difference between them preventing any relation whatsoever. Thus, the question, *whence and wherefore concealment and openness?* inquires into

\(^{394}\)Möbius strips have only one side. GA65 345/275.
the intimacy that itself differentiates and generates these two, into the very fabric that distends into them, or into the curve that traverses the difference between them. This question asks how these very structures are originated.

The formulation “the clearing for/of self-concealing” is meant to articulate the answer to this question. How, then, are we to understand this such that it grounds and originates concealment and openness? The key, I think, is in Heidegger’s concept of decision, difference, or self-differentiation. It is important to emphasis here that how one understands Heidegger’s account of the essence of truth directly impacts how one understands his account of the event. Understanding the essence of truth to be most fundamentally \( a\)-\( lêthic \) leads to an account of the evental nature of beyng in terms of the \( a\)-\( lêthic \) framework. That, however, is not the full picture. As I shall continue to argue, Heidegger’s account of the essence of truth in Beiträge moves to a ground more originary than that of the \( a\)-\( lêthic \) framework. Namely, it moves to an account of originary difference constituting the essence of truth, the dynamics of which originate the \( a\)-\( lêthic \) structures. Thus, a differential account of the essence of truth establishes a more originary account of the evental nature of beyng. I turn to this now.

2.2.2: Difference and Decision

As mentioned, Heidegger’s account of difference undergoes a major reconfiguration in Beiträge. Under the rubrics of Unterschied and Entscheidung, we see a concept of originary difference or self-differentiation being developed, which constitutes an essential operation of beyng as event. This idea can be developed via two more local tacks: one oriented by the problematic of the
“ontological difference” (*ontologischen Differenz*) and the other by the problematic of historical “decision” (*Entscheidung*).\(^{395}\)

### 2.2.3: The Ontological Difference

The ontological difference is the difference between being and beings so crucial to Heidegger’s earlier work. In *Beiträge*, this is seen as a transitional concept to be replaced by an account of the more originary ground enabling that difference to be conceived at all. This is necessary because the concept of the ontological difference is insufficient for the program of inquiring into the nature of beyng as event – it remains fundamentally structured by the problematic of the *Leitfrage* and thus carries the inscription of metaphysics. Namely, on the basis of the ontological difference between being and beings: 1) being is understood in a way codetermined by its counterpart – beings, 2) being is understood as the being *of* beings, and thus 3) the question of being is oriented by the question of the being of beings. In Heidegger’s words: “as necessary as the distinction [between being and beings] is and even if it must be thought in terms of the tradition in order to create a very first horizon for the question of beyng, it is just as fatal – since it indeed arises precisely from an inquiry into beings as such (beingness).”\(^{396}\)

Yet the concept of the ontological difference is not simply discarded. Rather, “The question of beyng, as the basic question [*Grundfrage*],” is “driven immediately to the question of the origin [Ursprung] of the ‘ontological difference.’”\(^{397}\) Through this second question Heidegger arrives at a more originary conception of difference that operates at the heart of the

\(^{395}\) GA65 465/366 and 87/70.  
\(^{396}\) GA65 250/197. Or again: “The ‘ontological difference’ is a passageway which becomes unavoidable if the necessity of asking the basic question is to be made visible on the basis of the guiding question” (GA65 467/367).  
\(^{397}\) GA65 465/366.
essence of truth and, in turn, beyng as event. The conceptual difference between being and beings is possible, Heidegger argues, only because beyng is of such a nature that it “sets itself off in relief [abhebt] over and against beings.” In other words, this setting itself off in relief is the mechanism by which beyng is structurally able to crystallize in the conception of the difference between being and beings. Yet it “can originate only in the essential occurrence [Wesung] of beyng.” Why, then, is beyng such that it sets itself off in relief over and against beings? In Heidegger’s words, it is because:

Beyng, as the “between” which clears, moves itself into this clearing and therefore, though never recognized or surmised as appropriation [Ereignung], is for representational thinking something generally differentiable, and differentiated, as being. This applies already to the way beyng essentially occurs in the first beginning, namely, as φύσις, which comes forth as ἀλήθεια but which is at once forgotten in favor of beings (ones that are perceivable only as such only in virtue of ἀλήθεια) and is reinterpreted as a being that is most eminently, i.e., as a mode of being and specifically the highest mode.

In other words, because beyng brings itself to determination (in part) in the operation of truth, the possibility is established for thought to account for beyng in terms of that determinate dimension, and to distinguish that dimension in terms of a co-determinate differential relation with beings. Certainly, one might deny (as Heidegger does in Sein und Zeit) that being, thus differentiated from beings, must be a being that is most eminently. Yet the ontological difference remains structurally determined as a difference between two “things.” Framing the problematic of beyng in terms of the ontological difference ‘captures’ beyng in this differential relation with beings. It casts beyng in terms of a difference from beings. The crucial point Heidegger recognizes in Beiträge is that this difference points to a character of beyng more originary than

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398 GA65 465/366.
399 GA65 465/366.
400 GA65 466/366-367.
itself. The ontological mechanism required for determining the ontological difference at all must be prior to that difference. For Heidegger, here, the ontological difference is exhibited as “the merely metaphysically conceived, and thus already misinterpreted, foreground [Vordergrund] of a de-cision [Ent-scheidung] which is beyng itself.”\(^{401}\) The clearing operation – to which we first gain access as the essence of truth – belongs to the essential occurrence of beyng as event. This clearing, furthermore, operates precisely as a de-cision or differentiation – which is not a difference between two beings, but, rather, is difference itself. That is, this clearing is an operation of self-differentiation that originates things that have differences between them, but is not to be understood on the basis of those things or their differences. It is more originary. In part, the heart of beyng as event is self-differentiation. “The event of ap-propriation includes the de-cision: the fact that freedom, as the abyssal ground, lets arise a need [Not] out of which, as the excess of the ground, the gods and humans come forth in their separateness.”\(^{402}\) This originary self-differential operation of the event Heidegger calls the “Entscheidungswesen des Seyns” (“decisional essence of beyng”).\(^{403}\)

\(^{401}\) GA65 474/373.
\(^{402}\) GA65 470/370.
\(^{403}\) GA65 455/359. Beistegui’s *Truth and Genesis: Philosophy as Differential Ontology* provides one of the most sustained examinations of difference in *Beiträge* available. He rightly recognizes that difference plays a key role in Heidegger’s shift to thinking beyng as Ereignis; and he shows this has important implications for how we understand Heidegger’s ontology, for which previous scholarship did not fully account. However, his analysis falls short of registering the extent to which Heidegger rethinks difference: it fails to register the move to a concept of difference more originary than the ontological difference. Just when his analysis is on the brink of Heidegger’s concept of primal difference and the logic of self-differentiation entailed by it, he slips back into the vestiges of the framework of Seiendheit. In Beistegui’s words: for Heidegger, “the sense of being… with which being comes to be identified, is that of difference. But… the sense of difference itself has shifted, and radically so, freeing being of ontotautology altogether. By difference, we must now understand the originary event in the unfolding of which the world takes place. The sense of being that is at issue here is entirely contained within the space of the ontological difference” (Beistegui, *Truth and Genesis* 109). The point is made again: “Being is only in and through its difference from beings” (ibid. 111). Note that in these passages Beistegui uses “being” to name the central theme of Heidegger’s inquiry; he is not using the term in the technical sense described in Section 2.1.1 and distinguished from “beyng.”
2.2.4: Decision

Heidegger articulates this self-differentiation or clearing earlier in *Beiträge* (division 1: Prospect) as the ground of historical “decision” (*Entscheidung*) or “de-cision” (*Ent-scheidung*).\(^{404}\) Again, decision is meant here in the sense of separating or, as Vallega-Neu describes, “partedness” or “parting.”\(^{405}\) As should be clear, it is in no way “a human act,” “choice, resolution, the preferring of one thing and the setting aside of another.”\(^{406}\) Such a mistake would fall under “the ‘existentiell’ misinterpretation of ‘decision,’” which is indeed an “existentiell-antropological” misinterpretation: it takes the human being as a subject making this decision, whereas for Heidegger the human being is subject to or structured by the dimensions of truth generated in originary decision.\(^{407}\) It should be noted that, certainly, the notion of decision comes into play heavily in Heidegger’s account of history and the role of the human being in establishing another beginning for thought (see GA65 §43-49). But those issues address consequent structures based on this antecedent, more primal ground: “What is here called de-cision… proceeds to the innermost center of the essence of beyng itself.”\(^{408}\) William McNeill nicely calls this the “event of differentiation.”\(^{409}\) Vallega-Neu understands it as “a differencing which occurs within the essential swaying (*Wesen*) of be-ing (*Seyn*).”\(^{410}\) Decision should be understood in the current context as this separating, differentiation, or differencing occurring in the essence of truth, that is, it should be understood as the event insofar as it occurs in and through the essence of truth. As Heidegger writes: “de-cision refers to the sundering [Auseinandertreten] itself, which separates

\(^{404}\) GA65 87/69.  
\(^{405}\) HCP 109.  
\(^{406}\) GA65 87/69.  
\(^{407}\) GA65 88, 87/70, my italics.  
\(^{408}\) GA65 88/70.  
\(^{410}\) HCP 111.
[scheidet] and in separating lets come into play for the first time the appropriation [Er-eignung] of precisely this sundered open realm [Offenen] as the clearing for the self-concealing.”

Heidegger’s movement toward an account with a differential operation at the heart of beyng as event – as we see opened up in Beiträge by the problematic of truth – is verified by statements regarding difference in GA71 Das Ereignis, where he addresses “der Unterschied als das Sichunterscheiden (Ereignis)” [“the difference as self-differentiating (event)”]. I cite the following passages to support this key point:

- “Inasmuch as nothingness is beyng, beyng is essentially the difference (Unterschied) as the inceptually concealed and refusing departure (Ab-schied).”
- “The difference is a matter of the event (the resonating of the turning).”
- “The difference… which first allows beings to arise as beings, and separates (scheidet) them to themselves, is the ground of all separations (Scheidungen) in which beings can first ‘be’ these respective individuals.”
- “Beyng as the difference – essentially occurring as the departure (Abschied).”
- “The difference, as beyng itself, appropriates (er-eignet) the differentiation (Unterscheidung) in which at any time obedience is involved.”
- “The difference (Unterscheidung) as the essential occurrence of beyng itself, which differentiates itself (sich unterscheidet) and in that way lets beings arise in emergence

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411 GA65 88/70.
412 GA71 122/104.
413 GA71 124/106.
414 GA71 123/105.
415 GA71 125/106, italics removed.
416 GA71 126/107.
417 GA71 126/108.
(Aufgang). The differentiation is inceptually the difference” ("Die Unterscheidung ist anfänglich der Unterschied").

- “Without having experienced the truth of beyng as event, we will be unable to know the difference and, thereby, the differentiation.”
- “The difference, in which the differentiation essentially occurs, is the departure as the downgoing of the event into the beginning.”

The essence of beyng – the most originary element of the evental structure – is difference, or, avoiding the substantive, differentiation. To emphasize a couple of points I made earlier, this is not a difference relegated to marking a distinction between two “things.” Further, it is in no way dependent upon an identity prior to it, which it would differentiate (as, for instance, in the case of Aristotle’s specific difference, which can be marked only on the basis of the identity of a common genus). Consequently, this originary difference cannot be defined by derivative or external terms. Instead, it must be pure self-differentiation, that is, difference differing from itself. This is the operation of beyng as event by which it self-coagulates or intensifies, distends, and becomes elaborated in distinct structures and dynamics; that is, it is the origination of the “Da” expressed in the term “Da-sein.” Heidegger understands the concept of truth (along with those of ground and time-space) to articulate just this elaboration. Consequently, the essence of truth must be differential, that is, the clearing for/of self-concealing must be defined by a differential logic, part of which it articulates. Indeed, as I indicated, clearing is the decision or self-differentiation of difference. But what is this differential logic?

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418 GA71 127/108.
419 GA71 129/109, italics removed.
420 GA71 129/109, italics removed.
Furthermore, returning to my earlier question posed, how must it be, such that it originates the \textit{a-lēthic} structures of truth?

With this we run up against a limit of Heidegger’s ability to articulate his problematic. He claims that difference or self-differentiation must be the originary character of beyng as event. He articulates this in terms of evental structures originated by difference (truth, ground, time-space). But he is unable to present explicitly a unified logic of difference explaining the origination of these structures, and thereby rigorously defining them. This, however, does not deny that such a logic underwrites them and constitutes their consistency. Indeed, it must. In what follows, I go beyond Heidegger’s text to develop a few moments of the logic of self-differentiation that I understand to perform this function. I maintain that this logic is not only consistent with, but required by and entailed in Heidegger’s ontology. To be clear, by “logic” here, I do not mean the structure or formal relations of propositions, but the structure of beyng, how parts of that structure relate, and how some lead into others. The logic of difference is the dynamics of difference insofar as it constitutes and generates the evental structures of beyng. Such a logic might sound abstract, but I think it is actually quite straightforward. I also think it is able to explain the more derivative terms of Heidegger’s ontology without recourse to mysticism.

2.2.5: The Originary, Differential Grounding of Concealment and Openness

The essence of truth as the clearing for/of self-concealing is differential in the sense I have indicated. As I have said, Heidegger stops short of developing a full account of the operations through which this originary difference generates the \textit{a-lēthic} structures. I nevertheless think the resources for doing so are present in \textit{Beiträge}, even if its author did not recognize this. In the
terms used earlier (Section 2.2.3), self-differentiation is the way beyng “moves itself into the clearing.” For reasons I shall explain shortly, I hold that this movement can be accurately described as a self-intensification or distension, although I am not aware of Heidegger using this language often. “The clearing for/of self-concealing” articulates this differential self-intensification in the terms of the register of truth. In Heidegger’s words: “Inasmuch as truth essentially occurs, comes to be [wird], the event becomes [wird] truth. The event eventuates [das Ereignis ereignet], which means nothing else but that it and only it becomes truth, becomes that which belongs to the event, so that truth is precisely and essentially the truth of beyng.”

Openness and concealment are two structures in which the event elaborates itself. It is worth noting that since two key structural aspects of the relation between openness and concealment are their simultaneous strife and intimacy, any account of the origination of these structures should be able to account for these relations in a rigorous way. Though this is not the primary focus of the following account, it can serve as a partial gauge of its success. On the basis of Heidegger’s terms, I propose the following genetic account of concealment and openness.

If beyng as event is originary difference or the differentiation of difference from itself, then derivative terms cannot be imported to describe this without first defining them in differential terms. The genesis of openness and concealment has to be explained in terms of originary difference, even if the structures of openness and concealment methodologically pre-figure its logic. But how? Originary difference can differ only from itself. Yet precisely in so doing, a determination occurs, that is, a set of correlated structures are originated. On the one hand, there is what could be called the “field” of difference insofar as difference is differentiated from itself. What else could the a-lēthic structure of openness be at this most originary level but this field? On the other hand, a correlated structure must arise simultaneously. For it is difference

421 GA65 349/276.
differing from itself that originates this field; difference originates this field by differentiating itself from it. Thus, this correlated structure is that of difference that differentiates itself from what it originates. What else could concealment here be but this “withdrawal” or “refusal” of difference from itself, the refusal of difference to be identical with itself and that which it originates?422

Now, since originary differentiation does not occur in any ontologically prior medium but through difference itself, the aspects of difference that are differentiated – the field and the difference differing or withdrawing from that field – bear structural reference to one another. Both are constituted by precisely the same operation of difference and each has its determination by its contrast or difference from the other. Because these aspects are simultaneously constituted by their difference from and structural reference to one another, I take them to constitute a field of ontological tension. That is, the differentiation of difference from itself entails the generation of an immanent field of tension, i.e., the self-intensification of beyng. But since difference and difference alone accomplishes this, it equally can be called self-distension, or just distension.

Bringing this together, I propose the following differential, genetic definition of the essence of truth. Concealment and openness are or rather essentially occur (west) in their differentiation from one another. As a point is extended into a line, openness is breached or generated as the distention of differentiation differing from itself. As the limits of a line recede, drawing it out, difference refuses to be that which it generates; concealment is or essentially occurs as this refusal, generated as differentiation differing from itself.

422 I do not use “refusal” here in a voluntarist sense. In the context of the relation of concealment to openness, I use “refusal” to describe the fact that what withdraws from openness is inherently not open: it “refuses” to be assimilated to openness. I argue that this situation should be explained in terms of originary difference. In that context, “refusal” should be understood to describe the movement of difference insofar as difference differs or repels from itself (if it did not do this, it would not be originary difference of the type Heidegger suggests at all).
I will clarify this logic or ontological dynamic by highlighting each aspect of the formulation of the essence of truth as the clearing for/of self-concealing: 1) the clearing for/of self-concealing, 2) the clearing for/of self-concealing, 3) the clearing for/of self-concealing, and 4) the clearing for/of self-concealing.

First, the famous Lichtung or clearing for/of self-concealing is originary differentiation. It is a clearing in the sense of a distancing or a “sundering” (“Auseinandertreten”): as two passing ships are said to “clear” one another, concealment clears openness and openness clears concealment.\(^423\) Since this sundering originates and grounds the structures of openness and concealment, which in turn ground worlds of beings, this sundering cannot take place between two already established “things.” Clearing is an operation of self-differentiation prior to and originary of any such things and the differences between them. Clearing is difference differing from itself such that a sundering of openness and concealment is originated. Yet openness and concealment remain correlative, for this sundering or distancing is itself the breaching open of openness, the breaching of the “essential extent” (the most originary extended dimension or place) mentioned earlier. Clearing is the breaching of a space “between” or, rather, a distension that itself constitutes openness and concealment by constituting their difference. In this sense, with respect to concealment, for instance, Heidegger writes: “That a clearing might ground what is self-concealing – that is the meaning of the dictum that truth is primarily clearing-concealing.”\(^424\) Here, the clearing for/of self-concealing cannot be one or the other, concealment or openness. As Heidegger points out, to think the essence of truth is to think that which

\(^{423}\) GA65 88/70.  
\(^{424}\) GA65 342/271.
originates concealment and openness; namely, pure difference.\(^\text{425}\) This exhibits the fault in the common interpretation that the essence of truth (and in turn of the event) in Beiträge is self-concealment.\(^\text{426}\) It is not. Such a mistake misses the critical question: whence and wherefore concealment and openness? Self-concealment is a moment of the evental dynamic. The essence of truth is difference differing from itself, self-distending in the manner of clearing for/of self-concealing.

Second, this dynamic of the essence of truth is clearing for self-concealing because differentiation both generates concealment and clears or sunders it from openness. Concealment owes its distinctness from openness to clearing (differentiation), without which it could not occur at all. That is, the differentiation of difference from itself enables concealment to occur – where concealment is difference’s refusal to be the openness or distention it generates – while that very operation of differentiation is also the sundering of concealment from openness.

Third, this dynamic is a clearing of self-concealing because concealment itself takes part in generating the clearing of openness. Concealment plays a constitutive role in the originary determination of the structure of openness. That is, without concealment, the differentiation or clearing of concealment from openness could not occur. Openness could be granted no determinateness and no distinctness from concealment, i.e., it could not occur at all.

Finally, the clearing for/of self-concealing involves self-concealing because it is differentiation itself that withdraws from its own clearing: concealment is the self-refusal enacted by differentiation.

\(^{425}\) It is worth pointing out that such difference is the Heideggerian version of what Meillassoux refers to as “hyper-Chaos” in After Finitude. Likewise, the origination of the structures of truth articulates the origination of what Meillassoux refers to as “contingency.”

\(^{426}\) Another version of the a-èthic interpretation.
It is important to emphasize that openness and concealment must be originated simultaneously by the operation of difference differing from itself. That is, the same operation constitutes the two by constituting their difference. It cannot be the case that one is logically prior to the other, because each gains structural determination only in its correlation with the other. For the same reason, it also cannot be that they are ultimately discrete. In that case, they could have no correlation. Using my earlier geometrical imagery, that would amount to placing concealment at one end of a line and openness at the other, with the line marking their absolute divorce. Rather, the account of originary difference allows us to understand openness as the distension of difference differing from itself, i.e., in the position of the line itself, and concealment as the self-refusal simultaneously enacted by difference differing from itself, i.e., in the place of the receding limit by which the line is drawn out.

On the basis of all this, I return to the problem of evaluation mentioned above. As a criterion of this differential account’s success, it should be able to ground what Heidegger calls the simultaneous strife and originary intimacy structurally characterizing the relation between openness and concealment and explain the logic of this relation with conceptual precision. I think it can. That which is in strife must be characterized by a simultaneous intimacy, since without intimacy there could be no relation. Likewise, that which is intimate must be characterized by a simultaneous strife, since it must be distinguished from that to which it is related (otherwise intimacy would simply be identity). The challenge is to provide an account of the simultaneous strife and intimacy of openness and concealment, rather than simply asserting it (as Heidegger sometimes seems to do).

The intimacy of openness and concealment consists in each being grounded in and originated by precisely the same operation of originary difference: the differentiation of
difference from itself. Here, difference differs from itself, simultaneously drawing itself out or breaching open openness and differing from or refusing to be that openness, i.e., originating concealment. Though sundered, openness and concealment each are constituted by the same differential operation and bear a structural reference to it.

However, they are originated by that operation only insofar as it originates their difference. The strife of openness and concealment consists in the differentiation of difference from itself, insofar as this originates a clearing or sundering of each from the other whereby each gains structural determination. That is, this strife is the differentiation of difference from itself by which it simultaneously draws itself out (breaching openness) and withdraws from that openness (originating concealment). Moreover, openness and concealment each require the contradistinction this establishes from the other. Openness is structurally determined by its contrast with concealment and concealment by its contrast with openness. Their strife lies in this constitutive contradistinction and the differentiation by which it is originated.

Yet this also means the structure of each bears constitutive reference to the other, both at the level of contradistinction and of originary difference. In this relation, intimacy is structurally implied in strife and strife in intimacy.

As I believe this shows, the account of originary differentiation does in fact satisfy the evaluative criterion noted above: it explains the origination and logic of the strife and intimacy Heidegger claims belong to the essence of truth. Moreover, I take this account to imply that Heidegger’s terminology of strife and intimacy is one of ontological intensity. The differential logic at the heart of Heidegger’s understanding of beyng as event and the essence of truth, generating the determinateness required for anything to be, entails that his ontology is an intensive ontology.
2.2.6: A Recapitulation and Clarification of the Status of Originary Difference

As indicated earlier, the problematic of the essence of truth is crucial in *Beiträge* because it is the problematic preliminary to that of beyng as event. That is, thought first gains a properly grounded stance within the event by way of the problematic of truth. We can now specify that it accomplishes this by opening up access to the logic of originary differentiation articulating both the essence of truth and the structure and dynamics of the “decisional essence of beyng,” i.e., the event. Here, “the clearing for/of self-concealing” articulates originary differentiation and its logic in the register of truth. It allows us to unfold this in the terms of its problematic: clearing, concealing, openness, and so on. And exactly this provides a foothold in this logic. Even if Heidegger insufficiently elaborates originary differentiation, it is, in his account, prior on the diagenic axis to the *a-lēthic* structures. Thus, Heidegger’s account of the essence of truth in *Beiträge* is most primally differential, not *a-lēthic*. Interpretations of truth in *Beiträge* that remain within the *a-lēthic* framework are unable to access the differential logic and consequently botch Heidegger’s account of the event.

The notion of originary difference might understandably seem abstract. Its status, and that of its logic, can be clarified briefly by recalling that, in *Beiträge*, the problematic of the essence of truth is directly related not only to that of the event, but also to those of ground and time-space. Truth, ground, and time-space are three key registers in terms of which the evental nature of beyng is worked out.\(^{427}\) Each of these three coincides with the others in important ways. But they are not reducible to each other. Rather, Heidegger elaborates an account of the event by articulating it in the terms of these different registers.

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\(^{427}\) For Heidegger’s discussion of ground and time-space in *Beiträge*, see especially §238-242.
In this way, differentiation is not indexed solely to the register of truth. The structures and dynamics of time-space and ground are originated by the differential operations of the event as well. As in the account of truth, those of time-space and ground articulate the evental nature of beyng and its differential logic in the terms of their respective registers. Thus, we must not mistakenly take originary difference to be within time or space, since it is originary of time-space. Likewise, it is not consequent upon the structures of ground, because it is originary of those very structures. It would be equally inaccurate to take difference as eternal or as transcendent to the domain of ground. No dichotomies according to which difference could fall on the side of the transcendent are at play here. Rather, time-space and the structures of ground arise from the operation of originary differentiation, which is immanent to them and which is precisely the mechanism of the event by which it self-intensifies, distends, and becomes elaborated. I turn to these topics in Chapter III.

2.2.7: The Event

As I have argued, the problematic of the essence of truth has provided a first properly grounded stance for thought in the evental structure of beyng, that is, in the logic of difference at the heart of the event, which is the logic whereby further evental structures are generated. Beyng is the event, that is, it is the differentiation of difference from itself together with the ontological structures of the essence of truth, ground, and time-space thereby generated. The origination of these structures is the generation of the Da. Da-sein is the event’s self-determination in those structures.
The stance provided by the problematic of truth enables further elaboration and definition of the structure of the event in the terminology of the event itself. As modulations of “Ereignis” the following terms are of particular importance: “Er-eignis” (appropriating-event) or “Er-eignung” (appropriating eventuation or ap-propriation) and “Enteignis” (expropriation) or cognates thereof. These terms must be defined by the differential logic constituting the essence of beyng as event (Ereignis). In part they articulate differently the same movement of intensification and distension seen in terms of the clearing for/of self-concealing. But Heidegger’s properly evental terminology entails further elaborations of the logic of difference, aspects of which are irreducible to the framework of truth.

In order to define these terms, it is first necessary to make a few remarks about the role of Enteignis in Beiträge. In other texts from Heidegger’s later period (the 1969 Zur Sache des Denkens, for example) the word “Enteignis” appears as an essential correlate of “Ereignis.” In Beiträge the term does not appear in its substantive form, but only the cognate “enteignet,” and that quite rarely. Rojcewicz and Vallega-Neu translate “enteignet” as “disappropriated.” Stambaugh translates “Enteignis” as “expropriation,” which would suggest rendering “enteignet” as “expropriated.” I prefer the latter translation because it better conveys the “out of” sense of the German prefix “ent-” and because the alternative, “disappropriation,” more strongly suggests that what it describes was previously proper, belonged as proper, or was appropriated, which would make Enteignis secondary to or derivative of Ereignis (or more accurately, of Er-eignis). In Heidegger’s account, appropriation and expropriation are equiprimordial. Now, in Beiträge, both uses of “enteignet” describe the forgetting or abandonment of beyng characteristic of human existence. Yet, this human or historical errancy is generated on the basis of or as a derivative configuration of the ontological distention constituted by appropriation and appropriation.

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428 It is found once at the end of §57 and again at the end of §118.
expropriation. As I will argue in Section 2.2.8, this distension entails a distortion, which
Heidegger addresses in terms of the “Unwesen” or “distorted essence” of truth. It is this
Unwesen that leads to human or historical errancy. Despite the rarity of the term “enteignet” in
Beiträge, the elaboration of the structure of the event I offer here gives it a central role. This is
justified because the structure Heidegger elsewhere describes in terms of “Enteignis” is very
much present in Beiträge, but simply addressed in other terms: along with Unwesen are, for
example, “Verlasseneheit” (abandonment), “Weg-sein” (being-away), “Befremdung”
(alienation), “Un-grund” (distorted ground), self-concealing, etc.429 Using “Enteignis” or
“expropriation” here allows me to keep focus on the most originary sense of what these describe
and save treating each in particular for another time. Here, expropriation designates constitutive
alienation from propriety, which I will explain momentarily.

Beyng is Ereignis, the event, which at the most originary level occurs essentially (west)
as the differentiation of difference from itself. As seen in terms of the essence of truth, the logic
of difference entails the event’s self-determination or intensification, which is precisely the
origination of the Da, the structural distension captured in the term “Da-sein.” In the language of
the event, Heidegger articulates this intensification as an appropriation accomplished by beyng:
“the ‘there’ is appropriated [ereignet] by beyng itself.”430 In contrast to earlier texts like “Vom
Wesen der Wahrheit,” which understood Da-sein in relation to human existence, in Beiträge
“Da-sein moves (though not localizable anywhere) away from the relation to the human being
and reveals itself as the ‘between’ [Zwischen] which is developed [entfaltet] by beyng itself so as
to become the open domain for beings that protrude into it.”431 For Heidegger, the intensification
of the event or origination of the Da is an appropriation, and one occurring at the most originary

429 GA65 310/246 italics removed, 324/256, 347/275, and 380/300.
430 GA65 299/236.
431 GA65 299/236.
level of beyng. But what sense can there be in calling this an *appropriation*? According to Heidegger, what occurs is the origination of “das Eigentum” or the “domain of what is proper,” which I will suggest is a structure of propriety and the most basic form of ontological determinateness described in his system. As he puts it,

Da-sein is the axis [Wendungspunkt] in the turning of the event, the self-opening center of the counterplay between call [Zuruf] and belonging [Zugehörigkeit]. Da-sein is the ‘domain of what is proper’ [Eigentum], understood in analogy with the ‘domain of a prince’ [Fürsten-tum], the sovereign center of the appropriating eventuation [Er-eignung] as the assignment [Zueignung], of the ones who belong [Zu-gehörigen], to the event and at the same time to themselves: becoming a self.\textsuperscript{432}

Clearly, we should not confuse “becoming a self” at this level with the origination of a cogito, human self, or any other self ascribed to a being (“Selfhood is more originary than any I or thou or we”).\textsuperscript{433} For what is at stake is the generation of the ontological structures without which beings could not be at all, the origination of finitude. Appropriation is an operation of the event whereby an ontological structure of propriety is originated, a structure such that all that falls within its range (des Zu-gehörigen) bears an assignment (Zueignung) to that structure or, in the case of that structure itself, to that whereby propriety is originated. And this is all that “becoming a self” refers to at this level. Though Heidegger is vague about what he means by “Zueignung,” I take this to designate a structural reference constitutive of all that falls within the range of propriety, including the basic structure of propriety itself. To be clear, then, propriety at this most originary level is an ontological structure such that all its aspects are constituted by structural reference to some other aspect, namely, to that ontological operation whereby they are originated.

\textsuperscript{432} GA65 311/246-247, italics removed.
\textsuperscript{433} GA65 320/253, italics removed.
Similarly, all that is secondarily constituted on the basis of propriety (beings) bears such reference both to that structure and, in turn to the ontological operation of appropriation. To help make sense of this last point, it can be translated into the terminology of truth by recalling that beings like humans, pine trees, and rocks are constituted on the basis of openness (together with concealment), while openness is constituted on the basis of the differential operation of clearing. Thus, such beings bear constitutive structural reference both to openness and in turn to the differential operation of clearing. Here we see the elaboration of a diagenic axis.

For the sake of clarity, it will be useful to answer the following question: at the most fundamental level of the event, what is required for there to be a domain of propriety at all? First there must be the origination of a structural distension of the event. Without a distension differentiating one part from another, there could be no constitutive reference, but only simple identity, or, since Heidegger’s ontology does not maintain an ontological priority of identity, utter indeterminateness or lack of finitude. Second, or rather equiprimordially, for there to be a domain of propriety, the parts differentiated in distension must bear constitutive reference to the operation of the event whereby distension is enabled to occur, i.e., whereby appropriation is accomplished. These two characteristics – distension and constitutive reference – are genetically inseparable and articulate the most basic determinateness of beyng. Their origination marks the logical transition of indeterminate difference to determinate difference.

I would like to make two quick asides here on the basis of these requirements. First, if there is no structure of constitutive reference ontologically prior to appropriation while at the same time an operation of the event originates such a structure, this means that that operation is liminal – it is simultaneously intrinsic to and in excess of appropriation. That is, an operation of the event is ontologically prior to, irreducible to, and yet constitutive of appropriation. I return in
a moment to a more precise account of the excess involved here. Second, regarding Heidegger’s
counts of essence and ground, recall that he understands essence as that which is most proper
to something or that which enables it to be whatever it is, i.e., its ontologically constitutive
ground. For the terminology of essence to make sense, there has to be a distension or disjoint
inherent to whatever it is applied to whereby more essential aspects are differentiated from less
essential or more derivative ones. This is seen, for example, in the relation between “that which
is true” and “the essence of truth.” Accordingly, the framework of essence can be established
only through the origination of something a) differentiated from the operation whereby it was
originated, but b) bearing constitutive reference to that operation (to that which enables it to be).
Likewise, recall that Heidegger understands something’s ground to be the ontological structures
enabling it to be whatever it is. The relation between ground and that which is grounded can be
established only in the same manner as the framework of essence. This means that as an
articulation of the origination of constitutive structural distension and reference, Heidegger’s
concept of appropriation describes the origination of the very frameworks of essence and ground.

Returning to Heidegger’s concept of appropriation, it is one thing to state that it is an
operation of the event whereby propriety is originated, and it is another to explain how this
occurs, i.e., to give a genetic account of appropriation. So, how does it occur? Just as should be
expected given the differential conception of beyng already discussed, Heidegger claims that as
event, “the essence of beyng essentially occurs in the ap-pro-pria-tion [Er-eignung] of de-cision
[Ent-scheidung].”434 That is, appropriation is accomplished by and as decision – the
differentiation of difference from itself. As Vallega-Neu puts it, this operation is “the
differencing, i.e., the de-cision in which en-owning [Er-eignis/appropriating event] occurs.”435

434 GA65 95/75.
435 HCP 113.
This position assumes greater conceptual precision when understood through Heidegger’s logic of difference. Beyng as event is the differentiation of difference from itself. Difference refuses to become identical with itself, that is, it differs from itself. By differing from itself, difference distends. This was articulated by the concept of clearing in the register of truth. This distension is the origination of a field such that some aspect of difference is differentiated from some other aspect. That is, rather than pure indeterminateness, difference generates determinateness or finitude by generating aspects of itself defined in their difference from one another: this distended dimension of difference is difference that comes to be defined via the origination of contrast from that difference that refuses to be it. But with this we find exactly the structural elements that go into a domain of propriety: 1) distension or the distinction of aspects of a structure and 2) constitutive reference. There is the origination of an aspect of difference that is distended from another aspect of difference, while the self-differentiation of one aspect from “itself” and in turn from the other aspect is exactly that origination. Thus, each aspect is also determined by the other, such that it bears a structural, constitutive reference to the other, i.e., to that which enables it to be.

Thus, we have a genetic explanation of the domain of propriety on the basis of the logic of difference constituting the heart of beyng as event. Moreover, the differentiation of difference from itself can be said to enact appropriation in two essentially correlated senses: 1) it is the origination of a domain of propriety, and 2) since that domain is constituted by nothing other than determinate difference, it is the appropriation – in the sense of taking over – of difference in a determinate, intensive structure. Appropriation is the self-determination of beyng. It is worth keeping in mind that this is the same movement articulated in terms of the problematic of truth.
In that context, the structure of distension is articulated as the field of openness. The origination of openness is the event’s self-appropriation or origination of a domain of propriety.

What, then, of Enteignis or expropriation – the event’s origination of a structural alienation from propriety? To make sense (genetically) of this, we can begin by recalling that concealment is correlative with the origination of openness. Not only are concealment and openness generated by the same operation of the event, but each is structurally dependent upon the other, from which it gains contrast. On the one hand, concealment is the event’s self-refusal from the openness that it originates, and therefore it is defined in contradistinction from openness. On the other, openness is the field of the event’s distension, but it is originated by the event’s refusal, in contradistinction from which openness gains determinacy. In terms of the framework of truth, if openness is a domain of propriety, then concealment (the event’s refusal or withdrawal from that propriety) is expropriation – the origination of a constitutive alienation from propriety. In this case, the event’s self-appropriation as openness entails its simultaneous self-expropriation as concealment. In other words, precisely the same operation by which the event self-determines in the structure of appropriation/openness entails the self-determination of the event in the structure of expropriation/concealment. Each is genetically bound to the other. This arrangement provides an initial account of expropriation.

But beyng as event is not reducible to the framework of truth. So expropriation, like appropriation, must be given a systematic definition in terms of the logic of difference rather than merely being cast as concealment. Beyng as event is the differentiation of difference from itself. By differing from itself, difference distends. This distension is the origination of a domain of propriety, i.e., distention is appropriation. But appropriation is accomplished only by the refusal or withdrawal of difference from itself. Expropriation is exactly this differentiation of
difference from itself (as appropriation). But in expropriation, that dimension of difference that differs from appropriation becomes determined since it becomes endowed with a structural reference to appropriation, namely, one precisely of alienation from or not being proper to appropriation. Expropriation is difference that repels or withdraws from the appropriation of the domain of propriety, thereby enacting the distension of difference that constitutes that appropriation, but also gaining a determinateness of its own, namely as bearing a constitutive reference to that which it refuses to be (propriety). It is the origination of structural alienation from propriety.

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The concepts of appropriation and expropriation, as defined by the logic of difference, supply a precise account of the basic structure of the event in Heidegger’s ontology, and specifically of the way the event self-intensifies or originates determinateness or finitude. But there is another crucial point that must be made with respect to this arrangement. As noted, the event’s differential logic must include an aspect that is irreducible to or in excess over the logic of appropriation and expropriation (i.e., over the logic of determination) and this renders evental differentiation liminal in character. In Beiträge, Heidegger refers to this in the terminology of the Abgrund or abyss, which I will return to in my discussion of the problematic of ground in Chapter III. For now, it is sufficient to see why this excess is necessary and how it fits into the logic already articulated. I will make the point first in the terminology of truth, where it is more easily recognizable, and then in the terminology of the event itself.

Though I have looked at appropriation and expropriation sequentially, to make sense of the excess involved in the event it is necessary to keep in mind that they are structurally
equiprimordial. They must be simultaneously generated by the differentiation of difference from itself, each forming a portion of the logic that unfolds from it. Each is partially defined in contradistinction from the other, that is, each is constitutively codependent upon the other. This means that appropriation and expropriation are structurally continuous with one another; the logic of one can be traced seamlessly to that of the other, via both their constitutive codependence and their shared genesis. Taken together, their origination is the origination of a logic of determinateness.

In terms of the problematic of truth, the shared genesis of appropriation and expropriation is articulated as the clearing for/of self-concealing. The clearing for/of self-concealing is the articulation of evental differentiation insofar as it originates the a-lethic structures of openness and concealment. But since these structures are generated by pure difference, such difference has to be ontologically prior and irreducible to them. It is only as a consequence of difference differing from itself that the clearing for/of self-concealing is enacted at all. As prior, this primal difference can have no character of openness or concealment. The origination of determinateness in those structures relies upon difference that differs from or is deferred beyond even its own logic of self-determination, that is, difference that is necessarily in excess over the clearing for/of self-concealing.

In the terminology of the event, the differentiation of difference from itself is the shared genesis of appropriation and expropriation. But this genesis is possible only because beyng as event is most primally pure difference or differentiation. The operation by which the event self-determines is consequent upon difference that is ontologically prior to that operation and that must exceed it for it to occur. In expropriation, for instance, the determination of difference in a structural contrast from propriety is dependent upon the fact that beyng is difference. Only
because of that does it self-differ from propriety. Such difference, ontologically prior to
determination in appropriation and expropriation, can have none of the determinate structures
characteristic of them (distension and constitutive reference). The origination of determinateness
in those structures relies upon difference that differs or is deferred beyond even its own logic of
self-determination, that is, difference that is necessarily in excess over the logic of appropriation
and expropriation.

Thus, though appropriation and expropriation are essential dimensions of the event, the
event appropriates and expropriates only by a differing of difference that is in excess over those
very processes. The event’s origination of a logic of determinateness entails an emission of
difference from that logic. For terminological clarity, I will call this excess “primal difference.”
Since primal difference is not the property of the logic of determinateness (the reverse being the
case), I will call the differentiation characteristic of primal difference anterior to that logic
“primal expropriation.” After Beiträge, this is what I take Heidegger to designate with the term
“Abschied.” Primal difference and primal expropriation should be distinguished from what I
have called “originary” difference and “originary expropriation” or just “expropriation.” These
refer to the most primordial aspects of difference or the event insofar as it is involved in the
origination of the logic of determinateness, i.e., of the Da. As noted, the interminable,
inexhaustible primal expropriation of difference can alternatively be called “the abyss.” The
event, then, must be said to include not only the logic of appropriation and expropriation, but
also the abyss of differentiation exceeding even the structures it differentiates and thereby
generating them.
2.2.8: Complication in the Structure of the Event: The Distorted Essence of Truth

Sections 2.2-2.2.6 worked out how Heidegger’s treatment of the problematic of truth enables a first properly grounded stance for thought in the logic of the event. Sections 2.2.5-2.2.6, in particular, worked out a portion of this logic in the terms of the problematic of truth, or as it pertains to the differential essence of truth and the origination of the \(a\text{-lēthic}\) structures. Section 2.2.7 further developed the logic of the event in the terminology of the event itself. But there is something important that I have thus far set aside.

In Heidegger’s account, the structure of the event entails self-distortion. He designates this the “Un-wesen” or “distorted essence” of beyng, and elaborates on it especially in terms of the “distorted essence” of truth, or “Un-wahrheit” (un-truth), and “Machenschaft” (machination).\(^{436}\)

Given Deleuze’s later critique of representation, it is worth mentioning that Heidegger sometimes equates machination with “that interpretation of beings as representable and represented” or the view that “beings as such are the represented, and only the represented is a being.”\(^{437}\) The distortion involved here is a crucial part of the ground whence the historical and conceptual distortion constituting metaphysics is generated. Consequently its analysis forms an essential element of a Heideggerian radical critique of metaphysics, though I will not complete this here. At the level of the dynamics of the event, this distortion describes the curvature of beyng that makes Heidegger’s ontology a curved ontology, not a flat one or one vertically organized by metaphysical transcendence. This curvature results in structures of folding or

\(^{436}\)GA65 107/85, 347/274, 356/281, and 126/99. To avoid a common confusion: “in the context of the question of being, it [machination] does not name a kind of human conduct but a mode of the essential occurrence of being” (GA65 126/99).

\(^{437}\)GA65 108-109/86.
complication generated by the event. Since I have focused on articulating the event in terms of truth in this chapter, I will limit myself to addressing this distortion in terms of the distorted essence of truth. I believe I have established that the structures of the essence of truth are, for Heidegger, structures of the event. I also take it that since the differential logic of the event defines the structures of truth, it must equally define the structures of the distorted essence of truth. Thus, I reconstruct the distorted essence of truth in terms of the logic of difference, even though Heidegger does not explicitly connect the two here.

Heidegger’s account of the distorted essence of truth articulates an originary “Irre” (errancy), “Anschein” (semblance), or “Verstellung” (distortion) and forms the basic structure on which human and historical errancy takes hold.438 While these are generally undesirable and often quite harmful, the originary distortion of the essence of truth is not a failure of beyng and must not be taken as pejorative. It need not and cannot be eradicated or excised. Distortion is a structurally essential aspect of the event and is “proper” to its logic of determinateness. In Heidegger’s words, “the distorted essence belongs intrinsically to the essence [of truth].”439 How so? As I shall argue, truth distorts itself. It does so on at least two levels, so there is a “double meaning” of the distorted essence of truth.440 The second pertains to the alienation of human existence from beyng, which I will not treat in detail here. My focus is on a first, originary level of distortion.

Heidegger offers little direct explanation of this, though I think a good account can be pieced together. If the distorted essence belongs intrinsically to the essence of truth, this means that the essence of truth intrinsically entails its own distortion. And distortion must arise as a constitutive aspect of the essence of truth, not from extrinsic factors. But the essence of truth is

438 GA65 347/274-275.
439 GA65 347/274.
440 GA65 348/275.
the event as articulated in the register of truth, i.e., originary difference as elaborated in the

clearing for/of self-concealing. Since the structures of the essence of truth are generated through
the evental logic of difference, the same logic must simultaneously generate distortion. But in
what sense? Since the structures in question are ontologically prior to the regime of
representation or even of thinking beings, this distortion cannot be an error in representation,
judgment, or any other epistemological function. And since it is likewise prior to the
determination of distinctive beings in a world, it similarly must not be reducible to any distortion
operating in that domain. At the most originary level, it must be a distortion characterizing beyng
as articulated in the ontological structures of the essence of truth itself, the differential clearing
for/of self-concealing.

Heidegger associates the originary level of distortion characterizing the essence of truth
with the essential “negativity [Nichtigkeit] of being,” or more precisely, with the “negativity
[Nichtung] of the ‘there’ [Da]” since truth is beyng insofar as beyng is projected into the
“there.” Most scholarship on Heidegger has understood the negativity of being (and of beyng)
in terms of λήθη. If beyng as event is interpreted within the a-lēthic framework rather than the
differential one, that makes good sense, for in that view λήθη is an irreducible character of beyng
(perhaps the most originary one). In that case, since λήθη presents itself as a withdrawal, self-
concealment, or lack, beyng can be said to have an essentially negative character. However, if, as
I have argued, the a-lēthic structures must be grounded by the logic of difference, it can no
longer be maintained that that negativity is an irreducible character of beyng. Beyng cannot be
characterized primally in terms of that negativity. Consistent with this, Heidegger claims that the
negativity involved in the distorted essence of truth is “by no means a sheer lack” but a

441 GA65 347/274 and 348/275, correction of translators’ omission of italics on “there.”
“resistance” (“Widerständiges”). I take this to challenge many dominant interpretations of Heidegger. Indeed, the *a-lēthic* interpretation is unable to support consistency between such a claim and Heidegger’s association of originary distortion with ontological negativity, since resistance is not λήθη. In contrast, the differential interpretation of the essence of truth I have advanced supports this and, in fact, offer an explanation of resistance. To show this, it must first be demonstrated how the differential account explains the originary level of distortion.

To begin, in the differential logic of appropriation and expropriation (or, in the terms of truth, of openness and concealment), each of these two moments entails contrast from the other. Stated genetically, the origination of each entails the dynamic expulsion of the other. More precisely, this expulsion should be called an expropriation, though this new use of the term requires the following clarification. From the perspective of the domain of propriety or openness, the origination of that domain is dependent upon the expulsion or expropriation of difference. The difference expropriated gains determinateness as a structure of alienation from propriety. I discussed this in detail in section 2.2.7. From the perspective of the domain of expropriety or concealment, the origination of that domain is likewise dependent upon the expulsion of difference, but here insofar as difference is determined in the structure of propriety or openness.

The domains of propriety and expropriety are equiprimordial and so the logic of one should not be given determinative priority in comparison with the other. This means that expropriety must be no more consequent upon propriety than propriety upon it. In fact, since the structural elements of expropriety are what is proper to it, expropriety has in its own terms a certain propriety. Yet the genesis of this structure (in its own propriety) entails the expulsion of difference determined as openness/propriety, in other words, an expropriation of just such

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442 GA65 356/281. Heidegger clarifies this to a certain degree here by interpreting resistance “as that self-concealing which comes into the clearing as such.” Since this articulates the implication of self-concealing in clearing, which in turn, implies in openness, this interpretation is consistent with the one I develop.
difference. Thus, in the origination of the logic of determinateness, i.e., of appropriation and expropriation, each of these structures becomes what it is by way of an expropriation of the other. Stated in terms of truth, the generation of openness entails an expropriation of concealment and the generation of concealment entails an expropriation of openness. Stated in terms of the logic of difference, originary difference self-appropriates as each moment – openness and concealment – in a way codetermined by the expropriation of the other.

How, though, does this help explain distortion? The answer is that each moment – appropriation/openness and expropriation/concealment – entails the structural obfuscation of the other. That is, it constitutes a form of semblance. From its own perspective, the logic of the one seems to exclude the logic of the other and vice versa. In terms of truth, neither openness nor concealment is adequate to the essence of truth; each entails a blind spot with respect to the other. This constitutes a structural distortion: from any point within the logic of determinateness some aspect of that logic is obfuscated. This obfuscation or distortion is an inescapable aspect of the constitution of each moment of that logic; each moment gains its structural determinateness in contrast with the other.

Due to this essential correlation between moments and because appropriation/openness and expropriation/concealment are generated by one and the same logic of difference, there is, in fact, continuity throughout their logics: together they form a continuous logic of determinateness. Yet each obfuscates not only the other but, by that very fact, aspects of the logic of difference whereby it is originated. This means that structural distortion is proper, i.e. essential, to the logic of determinateness. The logic of determinateness cannot be originated except in such a way that entails distortion. I take this to be the sense of Heidegger’s claim that the distorted essence of truth belongs intrinsically to the essence of truth.
This also means that the genesis of the logic of determinateness through the evental logic of difference entails that all aspects of the determinateness generated bear a structural alienation from evental difference, i.e., from what enables them to be, their essence, or their ground. It is because of the distorted essence of truth or of the event that a distinction arises between the more and the less essential, that is, between the ground and the grounded. This is the distinction that supports Heidegger’s whole program up to the point of articulating the evental nature of beyng.

Now, if the essential negativity of beyng is resistance, what else could this resistance be but the tension held in the logic of determinateness, the tension held between moments of appropriation and expropriation, simultaneously consistent and inconsistent with one another? This is what Heidegger means when referring to the “intimately conflictual essence of truth.”

Here, negativity is not an irreducible character of beyng, but generated by the excess of difference. This is a crucial point that, I believe, places Heidegger closer to Spinoza and Deleuze and moves him further from Hegel, Derrida, and the “deconstructive” interpretations of Heidegger dominant since the mid-1980s. The famous “not” or negativity characterizing Heidegger’s thought is ultimately derived from an excess of difference.

Conclusion

In Chapter I, I proposed a methodology for reconstructing Heidegger’s account of beyng as event based upon the complex evolution of his concepts along diagenic axes. I gave an overview of his concept of event and outlined some of the central issues that are debated in relation to it. I then gave an analysis of the framework of Heidegger’s project, showing how he argues that

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443 GA65 348/275.
fundamental ontology must be pursued by way of the existential analysis of Dasein. This set up the work to be done in Chapter II.

Here, I focused on Heidegger’s claim that the question of the essence of truth is the question that is preliminary (Vorfrage) to the basic question (Grundfrage) of philosophy: how does being essentially occur (west)? Heidegger’s answer to the latter in Beiträge is that beyng essentially occurs as event. I applied the methodology developed in Chapter I by tracking the evolution of Heidegger’s conception of truth along a diagenic axis. As I argued, for Heidegger it is by pursuing the question of the essence of truth that thought is able to gain a properly grounded stance in the logic of the event. I began showing how this functions by analyzing the way the problematic of truth is grounded in that of Dasein in Sein und Zeit. This showed the connection of the problematic of truth with that of being and allowed an explanation of the first, phenomenological stage of Heidegger’s a-lēthic account of truth. I then turned to “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit,” where Heidegger advances along a diagenic axis and argues that truth is not grounded in Dasein, but that Dasein is grounded in the a-lēthic structures of truth. These structures are taken to be ontological structures prior to and grounding not only Dasein, but the manifestation of beings in a meaningful world. This constitutes a second stage in Heidegger’s a-lēthic account of truth and implies a movement in his work toward a version of ontological realism. This has a particular importance for my project because it shows Heidegger challenging the horizons for philosophical thought maintained by Kant and phenomenology. Insofar as the critique of these horizons is also a central task of Deleuze’s Différence et répétition, this places Heidegger and Deleuze into direct contact.

Most interpreters take Heidegger’s conception of truth in Beiträge to remain within the framework of the second stage of the a-lēthic account. Since it is by way of the problematic of
the essence of truth that an account of the evental nature of beyng is to be developed, this leads to an understanding of the event within the a-lēthic framework. This, however, is a fundamental mistake and results in disjointed or mystical accounts of Heidegger’s evental concepts. In contrast, as I have argued, Heidegger advances again along a diagenic axis by inquiring into the ground whence the a-lēthic structures of truth are generated. This ground is understood in terms of originary difference and the dynamics or logic of that difference. “The clearing for/of self-concealing” articulates the logic of difference insofar as difference originates the a-lēthic structures. Consequently, Heidegger’s account of the essence of truth in Beiträge is not most fundamentally a-lēthic but differential. By pursuing the problematic of truth, thought gains a grounded stance in the differential logic of the event, which enables an elaboration of that logic, first in the terminology of truth and then in that of the event.

According to the logic of difference underwriting Heidegger’s ontology in Beiträge, beyng as event is the differentiation of difference from itself, together with the logic of determinateness this originates. The logic of determinateness is the logic of beyng’s self-intensification, distension, and elaboration, i.e., the origination of the Da expressed in the term “Da-sein.” This logic is articulated not only in terms of truth, but also in the properly evental terminology of appropriation and expropriation. Yet the logic of the event includes an excess of difference over the logic of determinateness, which makes the event liminal with respect to determination. As such, beyng as event is irreducible to appropriation and expropriation. This is a point most interpretations of Heidegger’s concept of event fail to discern. Additionally, the event’s self-determination entails structural distortion, which is the basis for human and historical errancy, the metaphysical regime of representation, and the famous “forgetting” of beyng these involve. This account of the genesis of distortion is important for my overall project.
because it parallels Deleuze’s treatment of repetition, where repetition in part figures the ontological operation whereby distortion is generated, particularly as manifest in the framework of representation. As a consequence, for both philosophers the theory of distortion is crucial for the project of radical critique, i.e., the project of demonstrating not only the shortcomings of metaphysics or representation, but the genesis of the distortions they manifest. In Deleuze’s ontology, two central claims are that being is difference and that the “differentiation” of difference whereby worlds of quasi-stable beings are generated is evental. My analysis of the differential logic of the event in Heidegger’s ontology shows that he is much closer to Deleuze in this regard than is recognized in available scholarship. I return to these comparative points in greater detail in Chapters IV and V.

In this chapter, my focus has been on how truth forms a key register in terms of which the evental structure of beyng is articulated in Heidegger’s ontology. However, in Beiträge the evental structure must also be articulated in terms of the problematics of ground and time-space. These three – truth, ground, and time-space – form interrelated registers of the event. The account of the differential logic worked out here in Chapter II provides the basis for elaborating the structure of the event further in terms of ground and time-space, which shall be my task in Chapter III.

444 I discuss differentiation in detail in Chapters IV and V.
Chapter III

Heidegger: Event, Ground, and Time-Space

Chapter Overview

In this chapter I build upon the reconstruction of Heidegger’s ontology of the event given in Chapter II in order to establish the event’s connection with the problematics of ground and time-space. In Chapter II, I focused on 1) how the problematic of truth provided a grounded stance within the logic of beyng as event, 2) the differential formulation of the essence of truth as the clearing for/of self-concealing, 3) the differential logic of the event elaborated in terms of the structures of the essence of truth and the structures of appropriation and expropriation, i.e., what I have called “the logic of determinateness”, and 4) the structural distortion entailed in the logic of determinateness. In Chapter III, I begin by showing that the problematics of ground and time-space articulate the problematic of the event in a way structurally parallel to that of truth and provide additional fundamental registers for elaborating the logic of the event. I then reconstruct the two main senses of “ground” in Beiträge: 1) “Ergründen” or “fathoming”/“fathoming the ground” which describes the ways alienated human existence re-grounds itself in the event, and 2) “gründende Grund” or “grounding ground,” which describes the inherent grounding character of the event.445 I focus particularly on gründende Grund, which has three main modalities: “Abgrund” or “abyssal ground,” “Ur-grund” or “primordial ground,” and “Un-grund” or “distorted ground.” I then turn to the problematic of time-space. First, I look at a problem Heidegger

445 Unless otherwise indicated, all translations of Heidegger’s terms in Beiträge are those provided in Martin Heidegger, Contributions to Philosophy: Of the Event, trans. Richard Rojcewicz and Daniella Vallega-Neu (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2012). Rojcewicz and Vallega-Neu sometimes translate “Ergründen” as “fathoming” and sometimes as “fathoming the ground.”
locates in traditional representations of time and space, which prompts his analysis of time-space. I then provide a basic definition of time-space in terms of the differential logic of the event. This enables me to reconstruct a number of cryptic technical terms that Heidegger uses to articulate time-space, ultimately leading to an account of what he calls “Entrückung” or “transporting” and “Berückung” or “captivation,” which are terms for the event’s origination of temporality and spatiality. Taken together, the different structures involved in the problematics of ground and time-space contribute to a fuller definition of beyng as event in Heidegger’s ontology.

1: Introduction: Event, Ground, and Time-Space

Time-space is the abyss [Abgrund] of the ground – i.e., the abyss of the truth of being.446

Truth, ground, and time-space are three key registers in terms of which Heidegger works out the evental nature of beyng in Beiträge. Each of these three overlaps the others in important ways, yet none is reducible to the others. As I discussed in Chapter II, the problematic of the essence of truth is crucial because 1) it is the problematic preliminary to that of beyng as event and 2) the structure of truth is part of the structure of the event. In Chapter II, I reconstructed Heidegger’s account of the event in terms of truth. I argued that the way Heidegger’s account of truth evolves from the time of Sein und Zeit to that of Beiträge – advancing along a diagenic axis – provides a first properly grounded stance within the event. I showed that the problematic of truth accomplishes this by opening up access to the logic of originary differentiation articulating both the essence of truth and the structure and dynamics of the “decisional essence of beyng,” i.e., the event. The essence of truth formulated as “the clearing for/of self-concealing” articulates

446 GA65 35/28.
originary differentiation and its logic in the register of truth. This formulation allows this logic to be unfolded in the terms of the problematic of truth: clearing, concealing, openness, etc.

As defined in my reconstruction of Heidegger’s account of beyng as event in Chapter II, the heart of the event is pure difference that is prior to and originary of any determinate “things” that have a difference between them. In particular, this difference is diagenically prior to the ontological difference between being and beings. This diagenically prior difference, according to Heidegger, is that which originates the ontological difference, which is thus a derivative difference. The event is the differentiation of pure difference from itself together with the ontological structures originated thereby (the essence of truth, ground, and time-space) and the primal difference that exceeds those structures. I alternatively describe the origination of these structures on the basis of the logic of evental difference as the origination of a “logic of determinateness.” In the terminology of the event, the logic of determinateness is articulated as originary appropriation and expropriation. The origination of the logic of determinateness in appropriation and expropriation (and in the structures of truth, ground, and time-space) is the generation of the “Da” expressed in the term “Da-sein.” Da-sein is the event’s self-determination in those structures. I have argued that this self-determination can be described as the event’s self-intensification or distention and elaboration, forming the basic ontological structures enabling worlds of beings to be. Further, an essential aspect of the event’s logic of determinateness is structural distortion. Distention and distortion explain the negativity of beyng, which Heidegger argues is not an absolute character of beyng because it is originated by the excess of difference. Instead, the negativity involved in the event is the “resistance” held in distension and distortion.

Though in Chapter II I focused on the relation of the problematic of truth to the event, it should be clear by now that the event and its logic of difference are not indexed solely to the
register of truth. As I will show in Chapter III, the structures and dynamics of time-space and ground are originated by the differential operations of the event as well. As with the account of truth elaborated in Chapter II, Heidegger’s accounts of time-space and ground articulate the evental nature of beyng and its differential logic. As I will show, time-space and the structures of ground arise from the operation of originary differentiation, which is immanent to them and is the mechanism by which the event self-intensifies, distends, and becomes elaborated. In other words, time-space and the structures of ground form additional aspects of the logic of determinateness whereby the event constitutes the Da of Da-sein. In the present chapter, I continue to reconstruct the account of the evental nature of beyng found in Beiträge, but now in terms of the problematics of ground and time-space. The structures of ground and time-space are “grounded” in the differential logic of the event, while that logic is elaborated in terms of ground and time-space. Heidegger’s accounts of ground and (especially) time-space are very condensed and often opaque, employing formulations that contain a number of unusual technical terms. Explaining ground and time-space, and thereby developing a fuller account of the event in Heidegger’s ontology, will require a highly technical analysis of these passages, particularly when it comes to time-space. Accomplishing this will take up the main body of this chapter. As I bring my analysis of Heidegger’s evental ontology to a close, in my conclusion I will also recall some of the main points I have made over the past three chapters that will form points of contact with Deleuze’s ontology of the event in Différence et répétition. It is my view that Heidegger and Deleuze’s mutual concern with the concept of event and the key role it plays in their philosophical systems requires that they be taken as intersecting thinkers. The ontological problematic of the event is a basis on which conversation between these two may be developed
in a concrete and rigorous way. In my analysis of Deleuze in Chapters IV and V, I will develop several of these points of contact.

2: The Event and Ground

The more originarily we master the essence of truth, the more pressing the problem of ground must become.\textsuperscript{447}

In \textit{Beiträge}, “ground” is one of the essential registers of the event. The structures and operations of ground compose aspects of the structures and operations of the event. Sometimes Heidegger makes this point by saying that, as with truth, one of the ways the event essentially occurs (\textit{west}) is as ground. In fact, some of the evental structures composing the essence of truth also compose the structures of ground – “ground” and “truth” both articulate the event, but in different conceptual registers. Heidegger doesn’t always keep these registers strictly parsed. Sometimes he describes grounding characteristics of truth and sometimes aspects of the essence of truth that belong to ground. The overarching reason for this is that at the level of the logic of the event, both truth and ground articulate the event’s origination of the Da, or what I have called the logic of determinateness, and some of the most fundamental structures of that logic. As I will discuss in Section 3 of this chapter, the same is the case with time-space. One of the reasons I find the concept of ground so fascinating in Heidegger’s work is its role in the logic of determinateness: not only is “ground” one of the concepts in terms of which Heidegger tries to explain how one thing supports, leads to, or constitutes another, but in a broader sense it is also a concept he uses to explain why beyng is such that it enables the resistance, thickness, or viscosity of the world. In terms I used in Chapter II, the concept of ground contributes to Heidegger’s account of the event’s self-intensification or coagulation and distention.

\textsuperscript{447} \textit{WG} 130/102.
At a cursory level, the relation of the evental structures of the essence of truth (the clearing for/of self-concealing) to those of ground can be specified in three ways: 1) The essence of truth grounds what is true: “truth itself is that wherein what is true has its ground.”

In other words, the essence of truth serves as a ground enabling worlds of beings to be. 2) Consequently, an aspect of the essence of truth is a ground. That is, the character of grounding is proper to the essence of truth. Stated in the register of ground, part of the structure of ground involves or is coextensive with the structure of the essence of truth. 3) Even though truth and ground are what they are partially in and through each other, neither is a subset of the other. Truth has its character of ground on the basis of “that whereby the ground is a ground, i.e. …the event,” not on the basis of truth.

Ground and truth are partially coextensive because they are both originated through the same operations of the event.

In what follows, I elaborate on Heidegger’s account of beyng as event in *Beiträge* through an analysis and interpretation of his account of ground. As I discussed in Chapter II, the conceptual framework of truth articulates a variety of structures and operates at more than one level in Heidegger’s ontology (as seen, for instance, in the distinction between the unconcealment of beings in a world and the ontological structures of openness and concealment that enable that unconcealment to occur). The case is similar with ground.

Despite Heidegger’s widespread use of the concept of ground, some scholars are hesitant to associate it too closely with his ontology. The fear seems to be that the terminology of ground is metaphysical and thus cannot properly be used in Heidegger’s core problematic. The suggestion is that his discussions of the concept of ground are contained in historical

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448 GA65 345/273.
449 GA56 383/303.
450 Note that Heidegger’s treatment of ground in *Beiträge* is informed by earlier projects addressing the same topic, especially *WG* (1929) and *Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik* (1929).
commentary (on Leibniz, for example) or are the subject of deconstructive analysis. I believe that I have shown (in Chapter I) that this is mistaken. It will be useful, though, to briefly summarize what ground is *not* for Heidegger, i.e., how his concept of ground is distinguished from a metaphysical one. First, Heidegger clarifies that the grounding character of beyng is neither a \( \psi \varphi \theta \zeta \) nor a condition of possibility, and thus neither a κοινόν nor υποκείμενον.\(^{451}\) In other words, ground is not a fully determinate substratum, foundation, substance, or principle conceived on the basis of the time determination of presence. I discussed the reasons why ground is not a condition of possibility in Chapter II: defining ground as a condition of possibility would limit it to the relation between condition and conditioned (where beings are the conditioned), thus defining ground within the framework of *Seiendheit* and rendering it metaphysical.\(^ {452}\)

Heidegger distinguishes between two main registers of ground in *Beiträge* and these mirror the two major movements coursing through the text.\(^ {453}\) The first movement is that of regrounding human existence insofar as it has become alienated from beyng. Methodologically speaking, in the context of Heidegger’s project this is the movement of *Grundlegung* involved in radical science. It is as a part of this movement that I defined the historical sense of the event in Chapter I. In *Beiträge*, the register of ground that Heidegger calls “Ergründen” (“fathoming”/“fathoming the ground”) correlates with this movement. The second major movement aims to work out the nature of beyng as event independently of any relation it has to beings. In other words, this second movement aims to think the event on its own terms. The register of ground that Heidegger calls “das ursprüngliche Gründen des Grundes” (“the original grounding of the ground”) or simply “gründende Grund” (“grounding ground”) correlates with

\(^{451}\) GA65 183/144. Here, Rojcewicz and Vallega-Neu translate the Greek term υπόθεσις as “what is laid down underneath” and υποκείμενον as “what lies underneath.”

\(^{452}\) See Chapter II, Section 2.1.1.

\(^{453}\) GA65 §187 outlines these two registers of ground.
this second movement.\textsuperscript{454} It is as a part of this second movement that I defined the ontological sense of the event in Chapter I.\textsuperscript{455} Heidegger develops a technical formulation for grounding ground as “das Sichverbergen im tragenden Durchragen” (“self-concealing in a protrusion that bears”).\textsuperscript{456} Determining what this means will rest upon my analysis in Section 2.2 of the nature and relation of a set of different modalities of \textit{gründende Grund}. Though I treat both \textit{Ergründen} and \textit{gründende Grund}, my focus will be on the latter.

2.1: \textit{Ergründen} (Fathoming the Ground)

\textit{Ergründen} operates at the level of human existence or, more properly, the relation of human existence to the event, particularly as the event is articulated in the registers of truth, ground (\textit{gründende Grund}), and time-space. It describes ways in which “grounding ground, as such, is attained and taken up” by human existence.\textsuperscript{457}

Heidegger provides a broad definition of \textit{Ergründen} as “den Grund als gründenden \textit{wesen} lassen” (“to let the ground \textit{essentially occur} as grounding”).\textsuperscript{458} This designates a set of five related ways human existence can comport itself: 1) carrying out the methodological movement

\textsuperscript{454}GA65 307/243.
\textsuperscript{455}See Chapter I, Section 2.2.
\textsuperscript{456}GA65 379/300.
\textsuperscript{457}GA65 307/243. Heidegger also discusses a narrower form of \textit{Ergünden}, using the hyphenated \textit{Er-gründen} to express a sense of creative grounding. He connects this to “building” (“bauen”), in the sense of building on a ground or “bring[ing] something to the ground,” and sees it exemplified in works of art and poetry (GA65 307/243). \textit{Er-gründen} is the operation through which human existence builds a work that preserves the essence of truth and nature of the event in a way exposed in the world, such that “Art is that process by which the truth of beings sets-itself-to-work, comes-to-pass in a work, the work of art” (\textit{TPT} 405). Since this sense of grounding is not essential to the logic of the event, I focus exclusively on the “fathoming” sense of \textit{Ergründen}. Two of Heidegger’s main published texts that address “bauen” are 1) “Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes,” in \textit{GA5: Holzwege} (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 2003); English: “The Origin of the Work of Art,” in \textit{Off the Beaten Track}, ed. and trans. by Julian Young and Kenneth Haynes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002) and 2) “Bauen Wohnen Denken” in \textit{GA7: Vorträge und Aufsätze} (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 2000); English: “Building Dwelling Thinking,” in \textit{Poetry Language Thought}, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York, NY: Perennial Classics, HarperCollins, 2001).
\textsuperscript{458}GA65 307/243.
of Grundlegung, 2) uncovering its own ground and recovering ownership of itself, 3) disclosing the truth of beyng, 4) grounding Da-sein, and 5) contributing to the transition to a new beginning for thought and history.

The first of these senses of Ergründen (which enables the others) is that of carrying out the methodological movement of Grundlegung that I described in Chapter I. This is the way in which human existence engages in radical science and inquires into the nature of being, progressing along a series of renditions of the ontological problematic arrayed along a diagenic axis. Each rendition is generated by problematizing the Grundbegriffe of a previous rendition (for example, those of the a-lēthic account of the essence of truth provided in “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit”). One tracks the implicit but previously unrecognized logic entailed in the ontological features articulated by those Grundbegriffe (but that exceeds the account they offer) to a more originary and appropriate standpoint (for example, to the conception of originary difference). One then recasts Grundbegriffe to articulate the subject matter of being in a more originary and appropriate way, that is, one lays new grounds for the ontological problematic (for example, unfolding the differential logic of the event in terms of the clearing for/of self-concealing). The account constituted by laying these grounds enables a reconfiguration of the problematic field at hand. This sense of fathoming the ground describes precisely the evolution of Heidegger’s ontology that I reconstructed in Chapters I and II by setting the problematic of fundamental ontology as the existential analysis of Dasein in Sein und Zeit, demonstrating the essential connection of the problematic of truth to that of being, tracking the evolution of the ontological problematic of truth through its two a-lēthic stages and into its differential stage in Beiträge, and then developing a concept of the event through the logic of difference that the problematic of truth rendered accessible.
In a second but closely related sense, *Ergründen* names the way human existence uncovers its own ground, recovering ownership of itself from the alienation involved in inauthenticity, machination, representation, and the broader historical framework of metaphysics. Heidegger describes this sense of *Ergründen* by saying that from the human perspective, grounding is a matter of “letting the ground be” (*Grund-sein-lassen*) whereby “humans once again come to themselves and win back selfhood.”459 The *wesen lassen* or *sein lassen* involved here should be understood in a way similar to the mode of comportment defining freedom in “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit” (discussed in Chapter II).460 There, freedom as letting beings be (*das Seinlassen von Seiendem*) was defined as being attentive to the ontological ground enabling beings to be (i.e., to come into and recede from presence) insofar as this or that distinctive set of beings is in fact in this process, and preserving the experience of those beings as grounded in this way. In *Beiträge*’s discussion of *Ergründen* as a mode of human comportment, Heidegger is focused on the way human existence is attentive to its own ground. Here, the ground of human existence is Da-sein, i.e., the event, insofar as it originates the logic of determinateness defined in terms of the structures of truth and the operations of appropriation and expropriation. The “self” that human existence might win back by *Ergründen* is, of course, not a soul, psyche, subject, or any other principle of personal identity (“selfhood is more originary than any I or thou or we”).461 It is the kind of self that I earlier described as an ontological structure arising on the basis of the event’s domain of propriety (*Eigentum*).462 Winning back selfhood refers to the way alienated human existence might gravitate toward being properly grounded and away from alienation (the analogues in *Sein und Zeit* would be Dasein’s gravitation toward authenticity and

459 GA65 31/27, italics removed.  
460 See Chapter II, Section 1.2.  
461 GA65 320/253, italics removed.  
462 See Chapter II, Section 2.2.7.
away from inauthenticity). As Heidegger puts it, “the relation back [Rückbezug] which is named in terms of ‘self,’ to ‘itself,’ with ‘itself,’ and for ‘itself’ has its essence in appropriation [Eignung].”⁴⁶³ And “the domain of what is proper [Eigentum]” is “the ground of selfhood.”⁴⁶⁴ In this sense of “letting the ground essentially occur as grounding,” human existence rethinks and transforms itself on the basis of the dynamics of the event, in a way analogous to the transformation of the problematic of being described in terms of the movement of Grundlegung.

These first two senses of Ergründen cannot be separated from a third: human existence disclosing the truth of beyng, rather than eclipsing and forgetting it. In contrast to the first, methodological sense of Ergründen and the second sense focused on a transformation of human existence, this third sense designates the disclosure of beyng and attentiveness involved in maintaining that disclosure.

A fourth sense of Ergründen designates something that sounds quite strange: the way humans “place themselves back into Da-sein, thereby grounding Da-sein, in order thus to place themselves out into the truth of beyng.”⁴⁶⁵ If Da-sein is the ground of human existence, how can human existence ground Da-sein? Since Da-sein is the ground enabling the human being to exist, when human existence forgets or covers over its ground, it becomes alienated or expropriated from that ground and seems unconnected to it. In terms of Da-sein, this alienation means that Da-sein has expropriated or alienated part of itself from itself via human errancy. Thus, when the human being uncovers the ground of its existence in Da-sein and rethinks itself on that basis, Da-sein re-appropriates itself: it is re-grounded. Human existence grounds Da-sein.

In a fifth and final sense, Ergründen names the way that, by disclosing the truth of beyng, human existence is involved in the transition from the first beginning of thought or history to a

⁴⁶³ GA65 320/253, italics removed.
⁴⁶⁴ GA65 320/253.
⁴⁶⁵ GA65 317-318/251.
new beginning; in other words, the way human existence is involved in the event in its historical sense. This is to be accomplished precisely through the first four senses.

2.2: Das Ursprüngliche Gründen des Grundes (The Original Grounding of the Ground) or Gründende Grund (Grounding Ground)

The different modes of Ergründen are enabled by the structures of ground essential to the event. That is, the modes of Ergründen (fathoming the ground) are themselves grounded in a more originary gründende Grund (grounding ground). In a preliminary way, Heidegger understands “gründende Grund” to be that which enables what is grounded on it to be (in the sense I discussed in Chapters I and II). Recall that in “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit” he casts ground as “Grund der Ermöglichung” (ground of enabling). In Beiträge, this is sometimes carried over in the tentative formulation, “Grund der Möglichkeit” (ground of possibility). The notion of Grund der Möglichkeit in Beiträge, however, is understood within the framework of the Grundfrage (How does beyng essentially occur?), while the earlier notion of the Grund der Ermöglichung was tied to the Leitfrage (What is the being of beings?) and thus defined ground on the basis of its relation to beings. Although Heidegger holds that “ground of possibility” “is still a metaphysical expression,” it is modified insofar as “it is thought out of the abyssal and steadfast belongingness [Zugehörigkeit]” characteristic of beyng. In Chapter II, I demonstrated that Heidegger defines Zugehörigkeit (belongingness) in terms of the way the event generates a domain of propriety (Eigentum) such that all that falls within the range of that domain bears a constitutive structural reference or assignment (Zueignung) to that domain. Or, in the case of the

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466 WW 177/136 fn. a and GA65 297/234.
467 GA65 297/234.
structures of the domain of propriety itself, belongingness describes the constitutive structural reference they bear to that whereby propriety is originated (the evental logic of difference). In other words, “ground of possibility” is conceived on the basis of the genetic logic of structural reference or the inherent grounding character of the event, and not derived on the basis of a relation between that character and what is grounded. Nonetheless, it is true that ground is also that which is most proper to what is grounded. In this sense, ground is tied to Heidegger’s notion of essence (recall that in “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit,” “essence” was understood to mean “ground of enabling” or “ground of the inner possibility”). The essence of something is the ground enabling it to be. This is not to resort to a circular definition of ground in terms of essence and essence in terms of ground, but to indicate that the terminologies of “ground” and “essence” are both used to describe aspects of the same thing. As I showed in Chapter II, this same thing is the relation whereby one thing is generated by and bears constitutive structural reference to another thing, while this type of relation is established most fundamentally by the event’s structure of propriety.468

Heidegger’s technical formulation of ground in Beiträge as “self-concealing in a protrusion that bears” applies at the level of gründende Grund. There are three main modes of this register of ground, and they articulate different dimensions of the event and its essential unfolding via the structures of truth and time-space. These modes are “Ab-grund” (“abyssal ground”), “Ur-grund” (“primordial ground”), and “Un-grund” (“distorted ground”).469 In the core discussion of these terms (which closely ties them to time-space), Heidegger provides a condensed statement of the relations between these modes of ground and their relation to truth: “Truth grounds as the truth of the event. The event, grasped from the perspective of truth as

468 See Chapter II, Section 2.2.7.
469 GA65 380/300, italics removed.
ground, is therefore the *primordial ground*. The primordial ground opens itself up, as what is self-concealing, only in the *abyssal ground*. Yet the abyss is completely disguised through the *distorted ground*. In what follows, I unpack these terms and relations, defining them in terms of the differential logic of the event. I begin with *Ab-grund*, then turn to *Ur-grund*, and finally move to *Un-grund*. In brief, Heidegger characterizes *Ab-grund* as the “the staying away [*Wegbleiben*] of ground,” which gives rise to *Ur-grund*. *Ur-grund* is ground insofar as it is determinate and thus able to “bear” or function as a support (i.e., as “ein Tragen”). *Un-grund* is *Ur-grund* that manifests distortion by occluding *Ab-grund*.

### 2.2.1: Ab-grund (Abyssal Ground)

Heidegger defines *Ab-grund* as “the originary essential occurrence of the ground [*ursprüngliche Wesung des Grundes*].” As “originary,” *Ab-grund* is the most primal of the three modes of *gründende Grund*; it is that dimension of the event whence the other modes of ground are originated and gain their grounding characteristics. For Heidegger, “the ground [Grund] is the essence of truth,” i.e., it is the clearing for/of self-concealing. Describing the essence of truth as ground makes sense because the structures of the essence of truth manifest tension or resistance capable of bearing more derivative structures. In Chapter II, I showed that the clearing for/of self-concealing is the event, insofar at the event originates the structures of truth (clearing, concealing, openness, etc.). I also showed that the event is the differentiation of pure difference from itself, together with the logic of determinateness this originates, and that “the clearing for/of

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470 GA65 380/300.
471 GA65 379/299.
472 GA65 379/300.
473 GA65 379/299.
474 GA65 379/299.
self-concealing” articulates this logic of determinateness in the register of truth. In terms of the logic of the event, difference differs from itself, simultaneously drawing itself out or breaching open openness and differing from or refusing to be that openness, i.e., originating concealment. The origination of the determinate logic of openness and concealment can be defined alternatively as the origination of domains of propriety (appropriation) and alienation from propriety (expropriation). Together these form a seamless (though structurally distorted) logic of determinateness. For Heidegger, to say that “abyssal ground is… the originary essence of the ground, of its grounding” means that Ab-grund is the originary essence “of the essence of truth.” In other words, Ab-grund is that which originates the structures of the essence of truth. As such, Ab-grund can be defined in terms of the event.

Ab-grund has two main aspects. If Ab-grund is that which originates the essential structures of truth, one of its aspects is originary difference, insofar as originary difference differs from itself (breaching open openness) and simultaneously differs from or withdraws from openness (originating concealment). In this aspect, Ab-grund is the track of evental difference differing from itself, specifically insofar as this difference withdraws from the structures of the essence of truth that it originates. Heidegger describes this as follows: “the abyssal ground, as the staying away of the ground…, is the first clearing of the open as ‘emptiness’ [Lichtung des Offnen als der ‘Leere’].” He then specifies that emptiness here should not be taken “in the sense that space and time, as forms of ordering and as frameworks for calculable and objectively present things, are simply vacant, i.e., not in the sense of the sheer absence of such things therein, but, rather, in the sense of a temporal-spatial emptiness, an originary yawning open in

475 GA65 379/299.
476 GA65 380/301.
hesitant self-withholding.”\(^{477}\) I understand this to mean that “emptiness” describes the field of originary openness as this is generated by the evental dynamics of difference.\(^{478}\)

Yet Ab-grund cannot be defined solely in terms of difference’s role in originating the logic of determinateness: the logic of determinateness is originated because beyng as event is at its heart pure difference. This difference differs from itself and thereby distends into the logic of determinateness. This means that an aspect of beyng as difference is prior to and in excess over the logic of determinateness. In Chapter II, I called this excess of difference “primal difference,” as opposed to “originary difference,” which is difference insofar as it is involved in the origination of the logic of determinateness. Ab-grund in its first aspect as originary difference is originary by reason of primal difference. Consequently, Ab-grund is most fundamentally the event’s excess of primal difference: difference that exceeds the logic of determinateness. Stated differently, this second part of the Ab-grund is the event’s primal self-expropriation or the excess of difference differing from itself; it is the abyss of the event’s self-differentiation.

Though Heidegger does a poor job of distinguishing these two aspects, Ab-grund must include both: primal difference and originary difference. Ab-grund is the event insofar as the event is primal difference and primal difference gives rise to the originary differentiation of the determinate structures of propriety, alienation from propriety, truth, and ground. If the origination of the logic of determinateness is the event’s self-intensification, Ab-grund is the curve between the intensive structures originated and the difference that differs from them, where this curve tends toward primal difference, which has an intensity of zero.

Ground, insofar as it is determinate and thus able to “bear” or function as a supportive ground, is Ur-grund (primordial ground). In contrast to the bearing character of Ur-grund that I

\(^{477}\) GA65 380-381/301.

\(^{478}\) “In withholding itself, the ground preeminent brings into the open, namely into the first opening of that emptiness which is thereby a determinate one” (GA65 379-380/300, my italics on “determinate”).
will discuss shortly, Heidegger claims that the “mode of grounding” belonging to Ab-grund is the staying away (Weg-bleiben) of ground. Yet he also insists that the abyssal staying away of ground “is not sheer self-withholding in the sense of sense of simple withdrawal and going away” or absence of ground: “the lack of the ground is the lack of the ground” (“der Ab-grund ist Ab-grund”). Though Heidegger’s limited explanation of these claims is unsatisfying, my explanation of Ab-grund in terms of the differential logic of the event can illuminate them. Ab-grund is the staying away or lack of ground because it is that dimension of evental difference that withdraws from the structures of the logic of determinateness. “Ab-grund” designates the event’s self-concealing or withdrawal from openness and, exceeding even this, the event’s dimension of primal difference. But it is precisely these aspects of Ab-grund that give rise to grounding. Thus, the Ab-grund’s mode of grounding is the staying away of ground. As Heidegger puts the point, to say that Ab-grund is a staying away of ground means that it is “ground in self-concealing, as self-concealing in the mode of the withholding of the ground. Yet withholding is not nothing; instead, it is a preeminent and originary kind of leaving unfulfilled, leaving empty. It is thereby a preeminent kind of opening up.” Ab-grund originates or grounds Ur-grund, but it does so precisely insofar as it is an abyss of difference.

At the same time, from the perspective of Ur-grund, Ab-grund is the lack of the ground, i.e., it is the lack of ground inherent to ground. That is, Ur-grund bears an inherent and structural reference to this lack or staying away. It does so because Ab-grund is that whence Ur-grund is originated. Ab-grund enables Ur-grund to be a ground.

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479 GA65 379/300.
480 GA65 379/300.
Before moving on to define *Ur-grund*, a final characteristic of *Ab-grund* must be defined. Heidegger uses an opaque term to describe it: “Zögerung” or “hesitancy.”  

*Ab-grund* “abides in hesitancy,” he says. The notion of hesitancy becomes particularly important in his account of time-space, so it will be helpful to define it here in terms of ground. Heidegger offers a limited explanation of hesitancy as follows: “inasmuch as the ground, even and precisely as abyss, still grounds and yet does not properly ground, it abides in hesitancy.” This sounds rather mysterious when read outside of the context of the differential account of the event that I have argued for. However, I believe that that account can provide “hesitancy” with a rigorous definition. I take the *Ab-grund*’s hesitancy to be its simultaneous inclination to stay away from ground and to ground. In other words, the *Ab-grund* is hesitant because it is both primal and originary difference. Hesitancy describes the *liminal* character of the event in the register of ground.

2.2.2: *Ur-grund* (Primordial Ground) and *Un-grund* (Distorted Ground)

The second mode of grounding ground, which I have already begun to define, is *Ur-grund* or primordial ground. If *Ab-grund* is the event’s abyss of difference or the staying away of the ground, then *Ur-grund* grounds. In and through *Ur-grund* the event becomes able to bear (*tragen*) what it bears; namely, more derivative ontological structures, worlds of beings, and human existence. *Ur-grund* is the Da of Seyn, or, more precisely, the most originary structures of Da-sein. Heidegger elaborates this in terms of the essence of truth and time-space; I will discuss the former here and take up its relation to time-space in Section 3.

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481 GA65 380/300.
482 GA65 380/300.
483 GA65 379-380/300.
For Heidegger, “the primordial ground (Ur-grund), the one that grounds, is beyng, but in each case as essentially occurring in its truth.” That is, Ur-grund is the event insofar as the event self-intensifies, self-determines, or self-appropriates through the clearing for/of self-concealing, unfolding the structures of truth. This definition enables a precise reconstruction of Heidegger’s concept of Ur-grund in terms of the account of the logic of the event, particularly with respect to the origination of the logic of determinateness in terms of the essence of truth. This reconstruction requires two things: first, a genetic definition of Ur-grund, i.e., an explanation of its origination in terms of the logic of the event; second it requires an explanation of the basic mechanism of bearing or grounding that characterizes Ur-grund.

A genetic definition of Ur-grund can be given fairly straightforwardly, since in Chapter II I worked this out in terms of the event’s origination of truth and the domains of propriety and alienation from propriety. Stated in terms of truth, evental difference differs from itself (abysally), simultaneously drawing itself out or breaching open openness and differing from or refusing to be that openness, i.e., originating concealment. As I have shown, Heidegger incorporates the terminology of Ab-grund in his explanation of the origination of Ur-grund in a way that fits this genetic definition. In this sense, the staying away of Ab-grund (i.e., the event’s abyss of difference) originates the Ur-grund (in the guise of the structures of truth):

The staying away of ground – is that not the absence of truth? Yet the hesitant self-withholding [of the Ab-grund] is precisely the clearing for concealment and is thus the presencing of truth. Certainly, ‘presencing,’ but not in the way something objectively present has come to presence; instead, the essential occurrence of what first founds [begründet] the presence and absence of beings.

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484 GA65 380/300, my italics on “as.”
485 GA65 381/301.
“Ur-grund” names “what first founds the presence and absence of beings,” which Heidegger frequently explains in terms of truth. This defines an essential aspect of the event: “the event, grasped from the perspective of truth as ground, is … the primordial ground [Ur-grund].”

While these passages define Ur-grund in the terminology of truth, Ur-grund can also be given a genetic definition in terms of the event’s operations of appropriation and expropriation (as I defined them in Chapter II). In the logic of the event, difference differs from itself and by doing so distends. This distension is the origination of a field such that some aspect of difference is differentiated from some other aspect. Rather than there being pure indeterminateness, difference generates determinateness or finitude by generating aspects of itself defined in their difference from one another: this distended dimension of difference is difference that comes to be defined via the origination of contrast from that difference that refuses to be it. This distention is the origination of both a domain of propriety (appropriation) and a domain of alienation from propriety (expropriation). A domain of propriety is originated because 1) in the distention of difference, aspects of difference become structurally distinguished or determinate and 2) those aspects bear constitutive reference to the operation of the event whereby distension is enabled to occur, i.e., whereby appropriation is accomplished. It should be added that each aspect is also determined by the other, and so each also bears a structural, constitutive reference to the other. The distention of difference whereby a domain of propriety is originated simultaneously originates a domain of alienation from propriety, for appropriation is accomplished only by the refusal or withdrawal of difference from itself. Expropriation is this differentiation of difference from itself (as appropriation). In expropriation, that dimension of difference that differs from

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486 GA65 380/300.
487 See Chapter II, Section 2.2.7.
appropriation becomes determined since it becomes endowed with a structural reference to appropriation, namely, one of alienation from or not being proper to appropriation. Expropriation is difference that repels or withdraws from the appropriation of the domain of propriety, thereby enacting the distension of difference that constitutes that appropriation, but also gaining a determinateness of its own, namely as bearing a constitutive reference to that which it refuses to be (propriety). The event self-intensifies through the dynamics of appropriation and expropriation. In other words, the event originates the Da expressed in the term “Da-sein.” *Ur-grund* is constituted by the evental structures of propriety and alienation from propriety.

The second task required for reconstructing Heidegger’s concept of *Ur-grund* is to explain the basic mechanism of bearing or grounding that characterizes it. This, in turn will entail an explanation of the third mode of *gründende Grund: Un-grund* (distorted ground). At one level, *Ur-grund* is a ground that bears in the same sense that openness and concealment ground worlds of beings (in Heidegger’s account prior to *Beiträge*). I discussed this in Chapter II and will not return to it again here since there is a more originary sense of bearing at stake in *Ur-grund*.

At this more originary level, *Ur-grund* is a ground that bears because it manifests the distinction of ontological structures from each other, where those structures are endowed with constitutive reference both to their counterpart and to the *Ab-grund* whence they are originated. The origination of these structures is the differentiation between something grounded and something serving as the ground enabling it to be or bearing it. The domain of propriety, for instance, is borne by the domain of alienation from propriety together with the abyss of difference. The domain of alienation is borne by that of propriety and the abyss of difference. In the register of truth, openness is borne by originary concealment and the abyss of difference,
while originary concealment is born by openness and the abyss of difference. Yet as described in terms of the Ab-grund, the whole logic of determinateness that these structures comprise is originated by the abyss of difference.

My hypothesis is that Ur-grund is able to bear derivative ontological structures and beings because in it is constituted the structural tension or resistance described in Chapter II. In both structural couplings, “openness and concealment” and “propriety and alienation from propriety,” each term is constitutively bound to its counterpart, while also being what it is only by being differentiated from that counterpart. I described this in terms of what Heidegger calls the simultaneous “strife” and “intimacy” characterizing openness and concealment, which, I argued, constitutes a structural tension. The origination of the structures involved in simultaneous relations of strife and intimacy is the event’s self-intensification or coagulation, i.e., the projection of the Da.

This intensification also involves the origination of structural distortion, described by Heidegger in terms of the distorted essence of truth, the distorted essence of beyng, and, now, the distorted ground or Un-grund. Un-grund is the grounding character of the event insofar as the event constitutes distortion. As I discussed with respect to the distorted essence of truth in Chapter II, the distortion at stake at this level of the event is structural and not to be taken in a pejorative sense. Yet it is the ground enabling historical and human errancy, which are to be taken in a pejorative sense. In historical and human errancy, distortion is manifested in the historical framework of metaphysics, the forgottenness of being, representationalism, calculation, machination, etc. Though Un-grund is not the same thing as these distortions, it is the ground enabling them and enabling the broader tendency of human existence to become

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488 See Chapter II, Sections 2.2.5, 2.2.7, and 2.2.8.
estranged from *gründende Grund*. *Un-grund* thus leads to the need for *Ergründen* or fathoming the ground.

The distortion involved here is the curvature of the event whereby the abyssal logic of difference is eclipsed. Vallega-Neu describes this as follows: “When the truth of be-ing [*Seyn*] remains hidden in its occurrence as abyss and in its occurrence as enowning [*Ereignis*], be-ing refuses its essential occurrence and, therefore, sways as unessential ground [*Un-grund*].”\(^{489}\) This account organizes Heidegger’s concepts correctly, but my account of the structural distortion belonging to the essence of truth explains evental distortion, rather than just describing it in Heidegger’s terms. More precisely, I claim that *Un-grund* involves two closely related senses of structural obscurement: as I defined them in Chapter II, each term of the couplings “openness and concealment” and “propriety and alienation from propriety” entails 1) the obscurement of the other and 2) the obscurement of aspects of the evental logic of difference whereby the term is originated. From its own perspective, the logic of each term of each coupling *seems* to exclude the logic of the other term and vice versa. In terms of truth, neither openness nor concealment is adequate to the essence of truth; each entails a blind spot with respect to the other. This constitutes a structural distortion: from any point within the logic of determinateness some aspect of that logic is obscured. Yet because appropriation/openness and expropriation/concealment are generated by one and the same logic of difference, there is, in fact, continuity throughout their logics: together they form a continuous logic of determinateness. Additionally, because each term entails a structural obscuration of the other, from any position within the logic of determinateness aspects of the event whereby the terms of that logic are originated are obscured. That is, from within the logic of determinateness aspects of the logic of difference that are essential to the event are obscured. These two aspects of structural obscurement constitute what

\(^{489}\) *HCP* 80.
Heidegger calls “resistance” (Widerstand), which he understands to be the most basic negativity belonging to beyng as event. A consequence of this (as I highlighted earlier) is that the genesis of the logic of determinateness entails that all aspects of the determinateness generated bear a structural alienation from evental difference, i.e., from what enables them to be: the Ab-grund.

The tension and resistance constituted in Ur-grund and Un-grund enable beyng as event to bear (that is, to support) more derivative structures and ultimately worlds of beings. Such tension and resistance constitute an ontological viscosity or Heideggerian version of inertia. The derivative structures borne are folds and complications of this tension. Their genesis should in principle be traceable from out of the logic of the event. It is in this sense that Heidegger describes the grounding character of ground as a protruding (Durchragen): “And what is the ground? It is that which veils itself and also takes up [Sichverhüllende-Aufnehmen], because it bears [weil ein Tragen] and does so as the protruding [Durchragen] of what is to be grounded.” This protruding is the self-intensification of the event, a crystal growing out of pure difference. The grounding function of the event, i.e., the way it enables something more derivative to be, is the track of the logic of tension whereby that thing is generated. Since that tension is itself partially generated by the event’s dimension of self-concealing and also essentially includes structural distortion, gründende Grund essentially includes modes of self-concealing. Thus, in Heidegger’s condensed technical formulation, ground is “das Sichverbergen im tragenden Durchragen” or “self-concealing in a protrusion that bears.”

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490 GA65 379/300.
491 GA65 379/300.
3: The Event and Time-Space (*Zeit-Raum*)

As is well known, Heidegger consistently argues that the problematic of time is essential to the problematic of being.\(^{492}\) In *Beiträge* he posits that space is equiprimordial to time and that both are originated by an ontological process that is neither properly temporal nor spatial. He designates this process “Zeit-Raum” or “time-space.”\(^{493}\) As I have argued, the more prominent components of Heidegger’s ontology in *Beiträge* are underwritten by the differential logic of the event. The event is the differentiation of difference from itself together with the ontological structures originated thereby and the primal difference that exceeds those structures. By engaging the notions of truth and ground, I have analyzed two of the three core registers in terms of which those structures are articulated. Time-space is the third. The ontological structures composing truth, ground, and time-space are all originated by the same evental factor: the abyss of difference or the differentiation of difference from itself. Stated more precisely, the essence of these ontological structures is the abyss of difference, particularly insofar as that difference originates the logic of determinateness or the Da expressed in the term “Da-sein.” In the register of truth, this essence is named “Lichtung” or “clearing,” in that of ground, it is named “Abgrund” or “abyssal ground,” and in that of temporality and spatiality, it is named “Zeit-Raum” or “time-space.”

Heidegger’s discussion of time-space is framed by a brief and condensed summary of the failings he finds in the historical treatment of time and space. This summary is discontinuous, incomplete, and contains several statements that are not well explained in the text. For my

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\(^{492}\) Recall, for instance, his claim in *SZ* that “the central problematic of all ontology is rooted in the phenomenon of time” (SZ 18/40, italics removed).

\(^{493}\) Heidegger works out his account of time-space in *Beiträge* most directly in Division V, Part D: “Time-space as the abyssal ground” (§§238-242).
purposes of explicating time-space in relation to the event, these shortcomings of the text are not
detrimental. In order to move to Heidegger’s direct treatment of time-space, I need only
summarize the problem he sees in traditional accounts of time and space and establish how time-
space is grounded in the structure of the event.

3.1: A Problem with Traditional Accounts of Time and Space

Heidegger sees the central problem with the historical treatment of space and time as the ways in
which they are represented as categorically distinct schemata or forms of order. Such a
representation, Heidegger argues, rests upon certain mistaken historical and metaphysical
presuppositions. To elaborate this, he engages a large number of canonical figures, but comments
most extensively on three: Aristotle, Descartes (under the rubric of “the modern era” as a whole),
and Kant. In brief, these presuppositions are rooted in Aristotle’s interpretation of being as οὐσία
and thereby in terms of the time determination of presence. Here, “posited along with presence is
the πέρας [‘limit’], the περιέχον [‘that which encloses’].”\(^{494}\) The result, Heidegger states, is that
“for Aristotle… the ποῦ [‘where’] and the ποτέ [‘when’] are categories, determinations of
beingness, of οὐσία.”\(^{495}\) In the modern era, space and time become represented as schemata for
mathematical calculation. This is exemplified by the Cartesian coordinate system used for
plotting mathematical points in three-dimensional space. Adding a fourth, temporal dimension
here adds another order, one in which changes in position or changes in the values of a function
can be plotted over time. With Kant, the positions of space and time shift: they become part of
the subject’s cognitive apparatus, rather than objective milieux within which the subject is

\(^{494}\) GA65 376/297.
\(^{495}\) GA65 376/297.
located. As is well known, Kant argues that space and time are the forms of outer and inner intuition. All three of these examples share the conviction that time and space are entirely distinct forms of order.

The representation of space and time as categorically distinct forms of order fails in each instance, Heidegger suggests, because in such a representation the concept of space entails temporal determinations and the concept of time entails spatial determinations. In other words, the absolute categorical distinction can never be established because spatiality and temporality are intrinsically intertwined. The temporal order is represented in one way or another as a “space of time” (*Zeitraum*): the span between \( T_1 \) and \( T_2 \), for instance.⁴⁹⁶ Likewise, space, having no duration in itself, is purely present. As Heidegger makes the point, “in a particular respect, space can be represented as an *ordo* and as the sphere for things conjointly at hand, which indicates that space, as so represented, is representable in terms of a presencing (a determinate mode of temporality).”⁴⁹⁷ In fact, Heidegger emphasizes, “space and time… [have been] thought together since antiquity.”⁴⁹⁸ Despite the best efforts of the tradition to represent space and time as purely distinct orders, this codetermination remains and indicates to Heidegger that space and time are ontologically entwined in some manner.

This does not mean that Heidegger collapses space and time into one order. He does not hold, for example, that time-space is a four-dimensional fabric of reality. Instead, he maintains that time and space are radically distinct, but that their distinction is generated by a shared process of origination. Their entwinement is found in this origin.

⁴⁹⁶ GA65 377/298.
⁴⁹⁷ GA65 377/297-298.
⁴⁹⁸ GA65 374/296.
Space and time are not only different in the number of “dimensions” they are ordinarily thought to possess but are also radically different, different in their most proper essence, and only in virtue of this extreme difference do they point back to their origin, time-space. The more purely the proper essence of each is preserved and the deeper their origin is placed, so much more readily is their essence grasped as time-space in its belonging to the essence of truth as clearing ground for concealment.\footnote{GA65 377/298.}

The question, then, becomes how to understand spatiality and temporality, both with respect to their radical distinctness and their entwinement in a shared ontological origin. For when we inquire into the essence of either space or time, the concept of the one implicates the other; yet space and time are not one and the same thing. Obviously, Heidegger put a great deal of effort into rethinking the nature of time and space in the years prior to \textit{Beiträge}.\footnote{See Chapter I, Section 4.2.} In \textit{Beiträge}, Heidegger advances his account to a position on the diagenic axis more originary than the one given in \textit{Sein und Zeit}, for example: rather than understanding time to be the ecstatic structure of human Dasein’s existence and the horizon for the understanding of being, time and space are grounded in time-space, which is a process of the event and as such is diagenically prior to human existence and the constitution of worlds of beings. It is important to emphasize that this undermines the tradition’s representations of time and space because it undermines the whole machinery of representation. It does so by moving to a ground that is more originary than representation: “the issue here is not at all the mere modification of representation and of the directionality of representation; rather, what is called for is a dislodging of the essence of the human being into Da-sein.”\footnote{GA65 372/294.} Heidegger rethinks temporality and spatiality on the basis of time-space, defining them with the technical terms “Entrückung” or “transporting” and “Berückung” or “captivation.” I return to these terms shortly.
3.3: Preliminary Clarification of Time-Space

Heidegger writes, “Time and space, as belonging to the essence of truth, are originally united in time-space and are the abyssal grounding of the ‘there’; through the ‘there,’ selfhood and what is true of beings first come to be grounded.”\footnote{GA65 376/297.} In the following sections of this chapter, I use my earlier reconstruction of Heidegger’s account of the event, truth, and ground to explicate his understanding of time-space. This, in turn, will offer a more detailed picture of the structure of the event.

First, a few preliminary clarifications and terminological distinctions must be made. As indicated above, for Heidegger time-space is not the same as time and space. It is the ground enabling time and space to be. That is, time and space are generated by or unfold from time-space: “space and time, each represented for itself and in their usual conjunction, arise out of time-space, which is more originary than they themselves and than their calculatively represented conjunction.”\footnote{GA65 372/294.} In \textit{Beiträge} §§238-242, Heidegger’s use of the terms “space” and “time” often signify the spatial and temporal dimensions of the event insofar as these dimensions are governed by the historical determination and conceptual structure of metaphysics. For the sake of consistency in my analysis, I will reserve this sense for the terms “space” and “time.” In contrast, the terms “spatiality” and “temporality” will designate the spatial and temporal dimensions generated by the event and understood on the basis of the event. These terms designate space and time as properly grounded, not metaphysically represented. Within this context, “Räumung” or “spatialization” and “Zeitigung” or “temporalization” name the operations of time-space by which the event becomes spatial and temporal, that is, generates
spatiality and temporality. “Time-space” designates the operation of the event by which the event spatializes and temporalizes itself, together with that spatialization and temporalization. My main goal will be to reconstruct Heidegger’s account of time-space, its processes of temporalization and spatialization, and the connection of all this to the event.

Heidegger begins his account of time-space by orienting time-space in relation to the essence of truth and the event. Time-space and truth, Heidegger argues, have a co-determinative relationship. In one sense, time-space belongs to the essence of truth: “time-space belongs to truth in the sense of the originating essential occurrence of being as event.” 504 In another sense, a full understanding of truth requires elaborating it in terms of time-space: “what truth itself is cannot be immediately and sufficiently said in itself, but only in grasping time-space.” 505 That is, explaining time-space offers a more detailed account of the essence of truth and the event. “The question,” though, “is how and in what guise time-space belongs to truth.” 506 I take the basic answer to be that truth is a primary conceptual register for articulating the Da in “Da-sein,” while time-space does the same thing in a different register. Working out the nature of time-space provides greater elaboration of the ontological origination and structure of the Da. Heidegger makes this point as follows: we must understand “time-space as arising out of, and belonging to, the essence of truth and as the thereby grounded structure (joining) of the ‘there,’ a structure of transport-captivation [Entrückungs-Berückungsgefüge].” 507 Here, the concept of “transport” articulates the structure of temporality, while the concept of “captivation” does the same for spatialization. Temporality and spatiality are two structures of the Da.

504 GA65 372/294.
505 GA65 372/294.
506 GA65 372/294.
507 GA65 371/293.
3.4: Time-Space, Temporality, and Spatiality as Defined by the Logic of the Event

Heidegger offers two working definitions of time-space, the first focused on a notion of “sundering” and the second on “gathering:”

Time-space is the appropriated sundering [Erklärtung] of the turning paths [Kehrungsbahnen] of the event, the sundering of the turning between belonging [Zugehörigkeit] and call [Zuruf], between abandonment by being [Seinsverlassenheit] and beckoning intimation [Erwinkung].

Time-space is the gathering [sammelnde] embrace [Umhalt] that captivates and transports at once; it is the abyssal ground which is structured [gefügte] in this way, which disposes [stimme] accordingly, and whose essential occurrence becomes historical [geschichtlich] in the grounding of the ‘there’ by Da-sein (by its essential paths of sheltering [Bergung] the truth).

While their cryptic terminology in these passages is off-putting, the text offers a key for deciphering them:

Even in their unity, space and time have nothing in common; instead, what unifies them, what allows them to emerge in [an] … inseparable referentiality, is time-space, the abyssal grounding of the ground: the essential occurrence of truth. This e-mergence [Ent-springen], however, is not a tearing off [Losriss]; just the opposite: time-space is merely the unfolding of the essence of the essential occurrence of truth [Wesensentfaltung der Wesung der Wahrheit].

This allows us to see that time-space is the abyssal grounding of the ground. It is the essential occurrence of truth or, rather, the unfolding of the essence of the essence of truth. My previous analysis of these aspects of the event and the differential logic defining them provides a basis for defining the terminology in these passages and, in turn, reconstructing Heidegger’s account of time-space itself. In the differential logic of the event, the abyss is originary

508 GA65 372/294.
509 GA65 386/305.
510 GA65 386/304-305.
difference together with the track of primal difference that exceeds the logic of determination. In
the register of truth, the abyssal differentiation of difference from itself is the clearing or
sundering whereby openness and concealment are originated. The “unfolding of the essence of
the essence of truth” is the clearing or sundering of difference into the co-determinate structures
of openness and concealment. In the register of ground, the “abyssal grounding of the ground” is
the liminal differentiation of difference from itself, or the staying away of ground whereby Ur-
grund and Un-grund are originated. In terms of the event itself, the genetic operation described is
that by which the event self-determines (appropriates and expropriates) in structures of propriety
and alienation from propriety, while this operation is enabled by the primal expropriation of
difference that exceeds those structures. Consequently, given Heidegger’s definitions, time-space
is at root this same evental process, the abyssal differentiation of difference from itself whereby
the event originates a logic of determinateness. But here, that logic of determinateness is the
logic of temporality and spatiality. Time-space is the event insofar as the event temporalizes and
spatializes itself (i.e., originates temporality and spatiality) by the abyssal differentiation of
difference from itself. It is the operation of the event by which the event becomes temporal and
spatial.

Even if all this is accepted, a major question is still on the table: how, exactly, does the
event’s differential logic temporalize and spatialize? Answering this requires defining the key
terms used in the passages cited above, as well as a few additional terms. This will ultimately
lead to a definition of transporting or temporalization and captivation or spatialization as
structures unfolded from the event.

To begin, I return to the partial definition of time-space in the first passage just cited (the
“sundering” definition of time-space) and its claim that “appropriated sundering of the turning
paths of the event.” Good sense can be made of this because these terms have been defined already in the terminologies of truth and the event itself. “Sundering” occurs at two essentially related levels here. At the first level, in the terminology of truth, the sundering of the turning paths of the event is the clearing of openness from concealment and concealment from openness, i.e., the differentiation of difference from itself such that it simultaneously modulates into these counter-posed but co-determinative structures. Likewise, in the terminology of the event itself, the sundering is the twisting apart or splitting accomplished in difference’s simultaneous self-appropriation and -expropriation in the structures of propriety and alienation from propriety. At the second, most fundamental level, sundering must also refer to the simultaneous, dual inclinations of the event toward the logic of determinateness and toward the abyss of primal difference. In both the terminology of truth and that of the event itself, the “turning paths of the event” are the tracks of the event’s self-determination into the counter-posed moments of the logic of determinateness and, more fundamentally, the tracks of the event insofar as it inclines toward both determinateness and the abyss. Consequently, if time-space is the appropriated sundering of the turning paths of the event, this should be taken to mean that time-space is the evental differentiation of difference from itself insofar as this originates (or appropriates itself in) a logic of determinateness comprised of counter-posed structures of spatiality and temporality. The turning paths here are the event’s logics of spatialization and temporalization.

We shouldn’t be thrown off by Heidegger’s specification of the sundering involved in time-space as a “sundering of the turning between belonging [Zugehörigkeit] and call [Zuruf], between abandonment by being [Seinsverlassenheit] and beckoning intimation [Erwinkung].” Rather, this confirms the account I have just given. Within the context of the event, belonging or Zugehörigkeit is exactly the constitutive structural reference that (together with the
differentiation of distinct aspects of a structure) defines the domain of propriety.\textsuperscript{511} Call or Zuruf is the constitutive structural reference characterizing the domain of alienation from propriety insofar as that reference is one by which that domain is defined in its withdrawal or contrast from the domain of propriety, i.e., from that from which it is alienated. The structural reference to the domain of propriety that is inscribed in the domain of alienation constitutes a drag within or “call” to the domain of alienation. Likewise, at the more fundamental level, Erwinkung or beckoning intimation is the recession of the abyss of difference insofar as this draws the event into determinate structures like openness and concealment, propriety and alienation from propriety. Heidegger uses the notion of Seinsverlassenheit or abandonment by being frequently to describe the state of human existence and its alienation from being. At the level of the event, however, the abandonment by being cannot be defined in terms of human existence, since what is at stake is the structural ground enabling human beings to be at all. Instead it must articulate a structural aspect of the event. At the level of the event, the abandonment by being is the alienation from the event’s abyssal dimension that is necessarily constituted in the logic of determinateness insofar as that logic entails structural distortion (in the distorted essence of truth, distorted ground, etc.). In other words, and for that reason, the logic of determinateness is characterized by an abandonment by being. What remains to be seen is how these characteristics become manifested by the spatialization and temporalization of the event.

Before turning to the terminology presented in the second definition of time-space quoted at the start of this section (the one focused on “gathering”), it is necessary to elaborate on some of the terms I have just defined. This will allow the definition of a set of additional terms that are needed to make sense of the “gathering” definition. I return first to intimation. “Intimation” is a

\textsuperscript{511} See Chapter II, Section 2.2.7.
term Heidegger uses to describe an aspect of the event’s genetic operation. It plays an important role in his explanation of transporting and captivation. Heidegger writes:

The intimation [Wink] is the hesitant self-withholding. The self-withholding creates not only the emptiness of privation and austerity but also, along with these, an emptiness as one that is in itself transporting, i.e., transporting into the ‘to come’ [Künftigkeit] and thereby simultaneously bursting open what has been [Gewesendes]. The latter, by making an impact together with what is to come, constitutes the present [Gegenwart] as a move into [Einrückung] the abandonment that remembers and expects [erinnernd-erharrende].

As with Ab-grund, time-space’s intimation entails a character of hesitancy. Earlier in this chapter I defined hesitancy within the register of ground. There, hesitancy describes Ab-grund’s liminal status. In other words, Ab-grund’s character of hesitancy is its simultaneous inclination to stay away from ground and to ground via it’s origination of the structures of primordial ground. This is not simply to say that the abyss performs two different actions, but that it is simultaneously inclined in these two ways. This character of Ab-grund is also found in the structure of the event more generally. In Chapter II, I explained that evental differentiation is liminal in character because it simultaneously includes both an aspect determined in the logic of appropriation and expropriation and an aspect exceeding that logic (primal difference). The event has a character of hesitancy because its differential logic is simultaneously inclined in both of these ways. The abyss’ hesitancy is its simultaneous inclination to determine or intensify itself and refuse itself from determination or to tend toward an intensity of zero. The same thing applies to abyssal difference rendered as time-space. Time-space is hesitant because it is liminal with respect to temporality and spatiality: time-space is the abyss of difference that exceeds the

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512 GA65 383/303.
513 See Chapter II, Section 2.2.7.
logic of spatiality and temporality, but simultaneously originates and becomes determined in that logic. Hesitancy is a tension held between the dual inclinations of the event.

To see what hesitancy has to do with temporality and spatiality, it will be helpful to jump ahead for a moment. As I will show, temporality is the entirety of the logic of the event, run through in the direction of one of these inclinations, while spatiality is the entirety of the logic of the event run through in the other direction. The “to come” or futural aspect of temporality is primal difference, insofar as this exceeds the logic of determinateness and intimates its self-distention, i.e., originates that logic. “What has been” or the “past” aspect of temporality is the logic of determinateness, insofar as this trails behind the “to come” or abyssal recession of difference. In the concept of hesitancy, the inclination toward the abyss of difference prefigures transporting or the temporalization of the event, while the inclination toward determinateness prefigures captivation or the spatialization of the event.

Returning to hesitancy for a moment, if the hesitancy of the event is its dual inclination to determine itself and to withdraw or withhold itself from that determination, Heidegger uses the phrase “hesitant self-withholding” to designate the latter of these inclinations – the inclination of evental difference to withdraw or withhold itself from self-determination. But the abyss’ hesitant self-withholding (the recession of difference from itself) generates the distention constituting the Da or the logic of determinateness. This is the sense of Heidegger’s claim that “the hesitant withholding is the intimation that beckons Da-sein.” That is, the abyss withdraws and thereby beckons or calls and originates Da-sein.

As I have discussed in other contexts, one of the primary structures of the Da “intimated” or generated here is originary “Leere” or “emptiness.” In the logic of the event, difference differs from itself and by doing so distends. This distension is the clearing or breaching open of

\[514\] GA65 380/300.
originary openness, “the first clearing of the open as ‘emptiness.’” Originary openness is a basic structure of the Da that is diagenically prior to more derivative ontological structures and worlds of beings, which it will help ground. In this sense, originary openness is not populated by anything, it is empty. Originary openness is an originary emptiness, not in the sense of an empty vessel, but (as I discussed when I was treating the notion of ground), “in the sense of a temporal-spatial emptiness, an originary yawning open in hesitant self-withholding.” Here, emptiness should not be confused with the abyss. Since emptiness is a structure of the Da, its origination is a coagulation, intensification, or “protrusion” of the event. Since Da-sein is the event insofar as it determines itself through self-appropriation or, in terms of truth, the clearing of/for self-concealment, emptiness is in fact a surging forth or self-protrusion of the event. Heidegger’s account of the intimation of emptiness is important here because it prefigures his account of spatialization. The logic of the event running from the abyss of primal difference to the breaching open of originary emptiness or openness (and the other structures of the Da) is one way of describing the spatialization of the event. The breaching open of openness is the origination of a distended field or space.

Heidegger’s concept of hesitancy prefigures his concepts of transporting or temporalization and captivation or spatialization. The evental structure of hesitancy is elaborated in terms of “Verlassenheit” or “abandonment.” As is well known, Heidegger usually uses the term “abandonment” to describe the alienation of human existence from being. However, as with the other terms used in the context of his account of time-space, here “abandonment” names a complex structure of the event. It has two essential dimensions: it “originally occurs as

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515 GA65 380/300.
516 GA65 380-381/301.
remembering and expecting [erinnernd-erwartend]."  An account of these structures of remembering and expecting comprising abandonment can bring us a step closer to Heidegger’s account of transporting and captivation.

Remembering and expecting are usually taken to be cognitive behaviors attributed to human beings and other animals. What sense can these terms have in the present context, dealing with structures of the event that are ontologically prior to the constitution of any beings? Heidegger clarifies their sense in a parenthetical remark: what remembering remembers is “a hidden belonging to beyng” and what expecting expects is the “call of beyng.” Generally speaking, something does not bear the character of abandonment without bearing the trace of what it was abandoned by, i.e., without bearing a “remembrance” or inscription referring to what it was abandoned by. Without such a reference to that from which the alien is alienated, it is not alienated. Without that trace, the abandoned would not be abandoned, it would just be. It is this trace structure that remembering and expecting.

As I have established, the event’s self-determination in the structures of the Da is enabled by the recession of abyssal difference. Additionally, the structures of the Da necessarily entail the distortion described by distorted ground and the distorted essence of truth. In that distortion, the structures of the Da obscure parts of other structures of the Da and, most importantly, obscure the abyssal dimension of the event whence they are originated. In this sense, the structures of the Da are characterized by an “abandonment” by or alienation from beyng. In this setting, if “remembering” remembers a hidden belonging to beyng, that belonging is the constitutive structural reference of the Da to that whence it is originated: the event’s abyss of difference. This belonging is hidden on account of the obscuration involved in distortion.

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517 GA65 384/303. As a terminological point, Heidegger also sometimes uses “das Erharren” to designate the “expecting” dimension of abandonment. GA65 384/303.
518 GA65 384/303.
contrast, if “expecting” expects the call of beyng, that call is the exact same constitutive structural reference of the Da to the abyss of difference, but with respect to the possibility that what has become alienated can turn back toward the abyss and be articulated in terms of the abyssal logic. Remembering and expecting, taken together, form a temporal loop in the logic of the event. Remembering traces the logic of the event in the sequence of the origination of the Da out of the abyss and into the structures of distortion. On the other hand, expecting traces the logic of the event in the sequence from the Da’s structures of distortion into the abyss. This loop is not a duration, but a movement of the genetic “temporality” of the event. Abandonment can be characterized by remembering and expecting only because the trace of what has abandoned remains essentially determinative of the structure of what has been abandoned.

This brings us to a point where Heidegger’s account of the processes of temporalization and spatialization can be defined. Again, Heidegger uses the technical term “Entrückung” or “transporting” to articulate the temporalization of the event. Transporting is the originary essence of temporality. The event’s abyssal dimension is the differentiation of difference from itself, such that difference distends and originates the logic of determinateness or structures of the Da (openness and concealment, primordial ground, temporality and spatiality, and the distortion entailed in these). The logic of the event is “hesitant” insofar as it simultaneously inclines both toward self-intensification in the Da and toward the abyss of primal difference, which has an intensity of zero. The event’s hesitancy, moreover, bears the trace structure described by abandonment and its modes of remembering and expecting. Transporting or the temporalization of the event is the event insofar as it constitutes a genetic sequence or an order of origination and structures originated, i.e., an order of grounding and structures grounded. In other words, transporting is the event insofar as the event originates diagenic axes. Here, that which comes
first and gives rise to what comes after is the futural dimension of the event, or what Heidegger refers to as the “to come.” The “to come” is the abyss of difference differing from itself. In contrast, “what has been” is that which the abyss has given rise to: the structures of the logic of determinacy and their unfolding in more derivative structures of finitude. Transporting or temporalization is the logic of the event insofar as it is oriented toward the abyss. In other words, “transporting” is the event insofar as the structures of the Da are originated (“intimated” or “beckoned”) by the abyss as it withdraws. Temporally speaking, the structures of the Da are the wake of the abyss. Yet by reason of the withdrawal of abyssal difference, the event is simultaneously the origination of the logic of determinateness or “what has been,” and this comprises part of the structure of temporality as well. Taking this into account, transporting must be said to be the structure of the event insofar as it simultaneously develops into what has been and what is to come, while both of these temporal dimensions are oriented by their structural reference to the abyss’ withdrawal.

If transporting is the technical term Heidegger uses for temporalization, “Berückung” or “captivation” is what he uses for spatialization: “captivation is the spatialization of the event.” Captivation is the origination of a structural distention. Such distention is the constitution or determination of differentiated structures of the event. I have defined core parts of this process already in terms of the event’s origination of “emptiness” or breaching open of openness, together with self-concealment. Here, difference differs from itself and distends, opening up a field of constitutive referentiality. The same operation is articulated by the origination of a domain of propriety. Moreover, the spatiality originated here includes the differential “distance” or distention between openness and concealment, the domain of propriety and that of alienation from propriety. Captivation, as the spatialization of the event, articulates exactly the same logic

519 GA65 384/303.
of the event as temporalization, but in the opposite direction. Captivation is the event’s inclination toward self-determination in the structures of the Da. It is the logic of the event run in a trajectory from the abyss of difference to the logic of determinateness. Captivation names the clearing of the abyss of difference from itself, the distention that generates, and the breaching open of an open realm that this enables.

To draw these core concepts together, in Heidegger’s ontology, time-space is the abyssal dimension of the event insofar as this self-temporalizes (transporting) and self-spatializes (captivation). Spatialization and temporalization are each the entirety of the logic of the event (the logic of determinateness together with the abyss of primal difference), but in inverted orders. Time-space is thus both 1) the shared origin of the temporalization and spatialization of the event and 2) that which constitutes their radical distinction in two different orders.

**Conclusion**

In Chapter I of this dissertation, I proposed an interpretive methodology for making sense of the development of Heidegger’s ontology over his career and, in particular, for making sense of his concept of event within that development. That methodology is organized around the relation between grounded and grounding terms and the distinction between syngenic axes (or axes of the grounded) and diagenic axes (or axes of ground) in Heidegger’s work. Rather than a chronological interpretation of Heidegger’s concepts, they should be interpreted in terms of their positions on these axes, i.e., their positions in Heidegger’s ontology as it advances along a diagenic axis. My position is that Heidegger’s account of the event in *Beiträge* and the related private manuscripts represents the rendition of his ontology in its state most advanced along a
diagenic axis. In Chapter I, I also established the basic philosophical framework in *Sein und Zeit* from which the evolution in his later work proceeded. Of particular importance was the formulation of the project of fundamental ontology in terms of the existential analysis of Dasein.

In *Beiträge*, Heidegger argues that the problematic of the essence of truth is the problematic preliminary to that of beyng as event. In Chapter II, I began by working through the problematic of truth, proceeding from *Sein und Zeit* to “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit” and finally to *Beiträge*. In *Sein und Zeit*, truth is grounded in the structure of the human being’s or Dasein’s existence and is manifest in the unconcealment and concealment of beings. This forms the first of two stages in Heidegger’s *a-lēthic* account of truth. In “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit,” the essence of truth moves to a position more originary on the diagenic axis than human existence. In that text, the problematic of being is cast in terms of the structures of ἀλήθεια or originary openness and λήθη or originary concealment, which enable human existence to be. This forms the second stage in Heidegger’s *a-lēthic* account of truth. Most Heidegger scholars hold that the treatment of the essence of truth in *Beiträge* remains within the scope of the second *a-lēthic* account. Since the problematic of truth prefigures that of beyng as event, this directly shapes the way these scholars understand Heidegger’s concept of event. In this case, the event is cast in terms of ἀλήθεια and λήθη or other concepts syngenically related to these. As I argued, however, this is a mistake that results in botching Heidegger’s ontology of the event. In *Beiträge*, Heidegger inquires into the ground whence ἀλήθεια and λήθη are generated, a ground prior on the diagenic axis to those structures. This ground is the pure difference or differentiation of difference from itself that Heidegger holds characterizes beyng as event at the most fundamental level. Consequently, Heidegger’s account of the essence of truth in *Beiträge* does not remain within the second *a-lēthic* stage, but moves to a third, differential one. Establishing this provided
me the basis for elaborating the logic of the differential heart of the event in terms of the structures of the essence of truth and then in terms of appropriation and expropriation, i.e., for providing a partial definition of the event in *Beiträge*. In Chapter III, I rounded out this definition by reconstructing Heidegger’s account of ground and time-space as further essential registers in which the structure of the event is elaborated.

On the basis of my analyses of the problematics of truth, ground, and time-space in their relation to the event, a detailed definition of Heidegger’s conception of the event can now be given. In Heidegger’s ontology, beyng as event is the differentiation of difference from itself, together with the structures of the Da or the logic of determinateness thereby originated and the abyss of primal difference that is irreducible to that logic. The structures of the Da, and thereby of the event, are articulated in a set of correlated registers: truth, ground, time-space, and the event’s logic of appropriation and expropriation. In terms of truth, the event’s differentiation of difference originates the determinate structures of openness, self-concealing, and the distorted essence of truth. In terms of ground, the event’s abyss of difference operates as *Ab-grund*, originating the structures of *Ur-grund* and *Un-grund*. It is on the basis of these ontological structures that historical human existence both becomes alienated from beyng and has the ability to re-ground itself in the logic of the event by way of fathoming the ground. In terms of space-time, space-time is the abyssal dimension of the event insofar as this is hesitant or simultaneously inclines toward both the primal excess of difference and the logic of determinateness. Space-time originates both spatiality and temporality via the processes of captivation (the becoming spatial of the event) and transporting (the becoming temporal of the event). Captivation and transporting are each the entirety of the logic of the event, but run through in inverted orders.
In the final two chapters of this dissertation, I turn to Deleuze’s ontology of the event as presented in *Différence et répétition*. I spend a good deal of time analyzing Deleuze’s ontology on its own terms, but one of my fundamental claims is that to come to grips with the full significance of the concept of event in Deleuze’s thought, its significance for Heidegger must be taken into account. Throughout my analysis of Deleuze, I highlight points of comparison and avenues of direct and indirect Heideggerian influence on Deleuze’s ontology. Of particular note are the two philosophers’ shared commitment to the critique of representationalism and of ontologies of substance in the Aristotelian tradition, Deleuze’s engagement with Heidegger’s ontological difference, the role in each ontology of a conception of difference more fundamental than the ontological difference, overlaps in Heidegger and Deleuze’s conceptions of ground and time, and Heidegger and Deleuze’s shared commitment to developing versions of what I have called “ontological realism” or accounts of ontological structures that are prior to and generative of human existence. In Chapter V, I examine in detail an avenue of Heideggerian influence on Deleuze via the twentieth century French mathematician and philosopher, Albert Lautman, which has until now been largely unexplored. Lautman developed a metamathematics or metaphysics of mathematics that drew heavily on Heidegger, particularly in order to construct a theory of non-mathematical dialectical Ideas or problems and their relation to mathematical theoretical solution fields. Deleuze’s ontology in *Différence et répétition* adopts much of this theory directly, which supplies the overall structure of his ontology and shapes the context in which his concept of event must be defined.

Furthermore, the key role the concept of event plays in both Heidegger and Deleuze’s ontologies sets a framework for direct systematic comparison between the two. As I will show in Chapter V, points for such comparison are found in 1) the status of determinate and
indeterminate difference within the logic of the event, 2) the nature of differential relations within that logic, 3) the presence of completely determined coordinates or what Deleuze calls “singularities” in the logic of determinateness, 4) the genetic progression unfolding from the event, i.e., the way an event composes or changes the field of determinate ontological structures and worlds of beings, and 5) ways in which an event can and cannot interrupt the logic of determinateness and fundamentally reconfigure it.
Part Two: Deleuze’s Evental Ontology
Chapter IV

*Deleuze: Difference and the Theory of Systems of Simulacra*

**Chapter Overview**

A set of crucial links exist between Heidegger and Deleuze’s ontologies of the event. I discuss several of these in the following two chapters, yet two are of distinctive importance. First, Heidegger’s ontology of the event specifically grounds the logic of beyng as event in a concept of pure difference. As I have argued, the logic of the event can be unfolded in terms of that difference, even though Heidegger developed this logic explicitly only to a degree. Deleuze picks up the project of working out a differential ontology and this becomes a core focus of his 1968 *Différence et répétition*. There, he provides a much more detailed analysis of difference than Heidegger and on this basis proposes a transformed ontology of the event. Through these innovations, Deleuze’s ontology follows through with the Heideggerian project, but surpasses it in a number of ways. Second, Deleuze’s ontology was profoundly influenced by Heideggerian, both directly and indirectly. Yet Deleuze rarely flagged his engagements with Heidegger. Consequently, they have been regularly overlooked in scholarship. Of particular importance is an indirect line of influence via Deleuze’s engagement with Albert Lautman’s metamathematical theory, which supplied much of the structure for Deleuze’s ontology. Understanding Deleuze’s theory of events requires understanding their ontological status and roles as part of that structure. Lautman developed his metamathematical theory in large part through an extensive engagement with Heidegger. Consequently, as I shall argue in Chapter V, registering the indirect influence of Heidegger on Deleuze via Lautman is crucial for making sense of Deleuze’s account of events.
In Chapter IV and especially Chapter V I address the influence of Heidegger on Deleuze extensively. I also reconstruct Deleuze’s ontology of events on his own terms. Making sense of this ontology requires making sense of the conceptual framework in which he understands events to operate, a framework that in comparison with the tradition of philosophy presents a radically revised vision of the world. Deleuze’s world is not one of self-identical beings enduring through time, but of a roiling entanglement of simulacra. Though I will provide a preliminary analysis of Deleuze’s concept of event in terms of his third synthesis of time, my primary goal in this chapter (which focuses on *Différence et répétition*, Chapter I) is to set the proper conceptual frame within which I can provide an analysis of Deleuze’s ontology of events in Chapter V (which focuses on *Différence et répétition*, Chapter IV). For Deleuze, being is difference, but difference differentiates by way of events. Differentiation describes the processes of determination through which simulacra are individuated. Explaining this requires a series of steps, each of which I will justify in what follows. In Section 1 of this chapter I begin by outlining the basic concerns of Deleuze’s project in *Différence et répétition* and a set of the most important points of contact with Heidegger (including the two just mentioned). These points show both the consonance of Heidegger and Deleuze’s ontologies and frame ways in which the latter ultimately goes beyond the former. That section provides an introduction to both this chapter and Part Two of the dissertation more broadly. Section 2 analyzes the core problems that organize Deleuze’s ontology: the subjection of difference to identity, the reduction of repetition to generality, and the perpetuation of the conceptual framework of representation. Here, I focus on Deleuze’s engagement with Aristotle, whose equivocal categorial system Deleuze finds to exemplify these problems. In Section 3, I turn to Deleuze’s analysis of ontological univocity. Arguing that being is univocal, rather than equivocal, forms a key step in Deleuze’s project of
developing affirmative concepts of difference and repetition liberated from identity, generality, and representation. Of particular importance here is Deleuze’s use of Nietzsche’s eternal return as a figure for univocity and a test or practical selection of difference enacted in the eternal return. I then reconstruct the basic logic of Deleuze’s three syntheses of time, which accomplishes two main goals: 1) it provides a register for clarifying the structure of the genetic flow of univocal being and 2) it provides a first account of the event in Deleuze’s ontology, since he gives a preliminary definition of the event in terms of the future as the eternal return or the pure and empty form of time in the third synthesis. In Section 4 of this chapter, I turn to Deleuze’s analysis of the Platonic dialectic, which leads to his conception of systems of simulacra. In effect Deleuze submits the Platonic dialectic to the test of the eternal return and thereby isolates certain elements of the dialectic that contribute to an affirmative ontology of difference and repetition, even though he does not describe his engagement with Plato in this way. These elements are simulacra and what Deleuze calls “question-problem complexes.” Affirming the being of these elements through the test of the eternal return produces a Deleuzian overturning of Platonism and the basic contours of an ontology of the world as systems of simulacra. Establishing this allows me in Chapter V to detail Deleuze’s ontology of dialectical Ideas or problems, which structure or determine simulacra. Deleuze’s theory of events is a theory of the ontological, differential processes involved in dialectical Ideas and their actualization in systems of simulacra.
1: Difference and Event: Introduction to Chapter IV and Part Two

In the realm of the guiding question, the understanding of the essence is determined on the basis of beingness (οὐσία–κοινόν ["beingness–common"]), and the essentiality of the essence consists in the greatest possible generality of the essence. This means, conversely, that the particular and manifold, which fall under the concept of the essence and from which this concept is established, are arbitrary; indeed, what is essential is the arbitrariness of beings, which nevertheless is precisely what the belonging to the essence indicates.

On the other hand, where beyng is conceived as event, essentiality is determined out of the originality and uniqueness of beyng itself. There the essence is not the general but is the essential occurrence precisely of what is unique in each case and of what constitutes the rank of the being.

-Heidegger, GA65 66/53

In contrast to Heidegger’s Beiträge and Deleuze’s own Logique du sens, in which are found extensive discussions of the concept of event, Différence et répétition directly addresses the event at a theoretical level only sparsely. Yet, when Deleuze does take up the concept, it is at key points of the text. Most notable are a cluster of uses in his account of the third synthesis of time in Chapter II: La répétition pour elle-même (Repetition for Itself) and then a more developed discussion at the heart of Chapter IV: Synthèse idéelle de la différence (Ideas and the Synthesis of Difference). I discuss both of these in the following two chapters, but focus especially on the second since it addresses the event in much greater detail than the first. After Deleuze outlines a history of error regarding the concepts of difference and repetition and establishes parts of a system rectifying those errors (his theories of difference, repetition, time, psycho-genesis, and the starting point for first philosophy) in the Introduction and Chapters I-III of Différence et répétition, in Chapter IV he presents his system in a more unified fashion. The role of the concept of event there endows it with a fundamental importance for the overall ontology advanced. It is there that Deleuze works out his account of the virtual and actual, within

520 Since Logique du sens builds upon the work done in Différence et répétition, which is quite complex, I shall focus on the latter.
521 Deleuze also makes use of the term without reflecting upon it in a number of additional instances throughout the text.
the framework of his theory of difference and dialectical Ideas or problems and corresponding solutions. “Ideal events” at the level of the Idea/problem/virtual and “real events on the level of engendered solutions” or the actual enable communication or movement between these levels and thus are the guarantors of the coherence of the system as a whole.\(^{522}\) My aim in the following two chapters is to explain this, the main relation of the concept of event to Deleuze’s theories of difference and repetition, and several important points of Heideggerian influence on Deleuze’s ontology of events. This will also enable me to draw a set of systematic comparisons to Heidegger’s ontology of the event, thereby forming a systematic ground for further comparative analysis of their accounts in the future.

Making sense of Deleuze’s concept of event in *Différence et répétition* requires explaining the particular conceptual context in terms of which it is defined and the broader shifts Deleuze’s system makes relative to a core set of positions commonly maintained by thinkers in the history of metaphysics and ontology. More specifically, Deleuze’s concept of event must be defined in terms of his theory of virtual dialectical Ideas and their actualization in systems of simulacra. Deleuze’s theory of Ideas and their actualization would be entirely misconstrued without establishing the ontological status of the systems in which they operate, i.e., of systems of simulacra. Both Ideal and actual events are ontological factors the effect of which is to determine the distinctive existence of simulacra. Thus, explaining the ontological status of systems of simulacra is a necessary step in explaining Deleuze’s theory of events. The ontological status of simulacra can be best explained in terms of Deleuze’s engagement with Platonism and the role that engagement plays relative to one of his core ontological claims: that being is univocal. The univocity of being for Deleuze is a univocity of difference and repetition, where difference and repetition are ontologically prior to identity, generality, and the regime of

\(^{522}\) *DR* 244/189.
representation. Rather than understanding the determination of beings in terms of a systematic priority of identity, generality, and representation, Deleuze’s univocal ontology enables an account of such determination on the basis of difference and repetition. Events are the moments of different/ciation defining the way determination occurs. Thus, explaining Deleuze’s theory of events also requires distinguishing his approach to the theory of difference from that of his philosophical predecessors. Deleuze critiques several historical accounts of difference and repetition (those provided by Aristotle, Leibniz, and Hegel, for example). Addressing the entirety of these engagements would go far beyond the scope of this dissertation. I shall focus particularly upon Deleuze’s engagement with Aristotle, since Aristotle’s system provides an excellent example of several of the characteristics of historical philosophies of difference that Deleuze critiques. I will set up my discussion of Deleuze’s engagement with Aristotle by looking at some of the broader reasons that Deleuze finds the problems of difference and repetition to be so important.

In *Différence et répétition*, Deleuze presents an ontology that appears radically different from Heidegger’s. Indeed it *is* different, particularly from versions of Heidegger advanced by many dominant scholars of his work. Deleuze’s rhetoric is different from Heidegger’s, many of his points of historical reference are different (the big exceptions are Plato, Aristotle, Kant, and Nietzsche), and so is the technical terminology he draws from those references. Nonetheless, as I hope my analyses of *Beiträge* demonstrate, much Heidegger scholarship has overlooked major elements of his ontology and the logic underwriting it. Attention to this shows an ontology more consonant with Deleuze’s than commonly recognized. Despite the rarity of Deleuze’s explicit references to Heidegger, close attention to the text reveals an extensive engagement with Heidegger within its pages. This engagement informed the problems, positions, and language
Deleuze took up in important ways. I discuss several instances of this influence in the following two chapters, especially in Chapter V. Of particular importance for me are ways that Heidegger’s influence on Deleuze (both directly and indirectly via Albert Lautman) informed Deleuze’s concept of event.

To begin with, though, it will be helpful to point out at a cursory level several important consonances between Heidegger and Deleuze that are related to their shared position that being is in one way or another evental in nature. 1) Perhaps most centrally, the concept of difference found in Heidegger’s *Beiträge* is remarkably close to that developed by Deleuze in *Différence et répétition*, as is its use in characterizing being. Specifically, like Heidegger, Deleuze contends that difference is understood only in a derivative sense if cast as the difference between two things: “The difference ‘between’ two things is only empirical, and the corresponding determinations are only extrinsic.”

Taking difference in such a way makes the identity belonging to each of the two things primary and the difference between them secondary, whereas Deleuze claims difference is ontologically prior to identity. As I emphasized in Chapter II, Heidegger is sensitive to this point to such a degree that he demands the ontological difference between being and beings be rethought on the basis of a more originary difference that is not misconstrued as a “difference between.” This originary difference forms an essential aspect of beyng’s evental character. 2) Deleuze and Heidegger’s respective theories of time have certain structural and ontological similarities. Ontologically, both Heidegger’s account of time-space in *Beiträge* and the three syntheses in terms of which Deleuze explains time in *Différence et répétition* maintain that time is originated through differential processes, that it is in certain ways a ground – even if ultimately an abyssal ground, and that it plays a crucial role in originating and constituting beings. Structurally, Heidegger’s distinction between the time and space of the

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523 DR 43/28.
world and time-space as the evental production of such time and space is paralleled by Deleuze’s distinction between the temporality of the actual, which he explains in terms of duration in the first synthesis, and that at the level of the virtual, which he explains in terms of a pure past and caesural future in the second and third syntheses. 3) Both Heidegger and Deleuze hold that producing a sufficient ontology requires undermining the orientation of philosophy by the Aristotelian question τί τὸ ὄν and the understanding of being in terms of οὐσία or substance. 4) Both Heidegger and Deleuze are committed to a radical critique of representation. 5) Both Heidegger and Deleuze undermine the subject-centered horizon for philosophy set in place by Kant and advance accounts of ontological structures that are prior to human existence. 6) The paradox formalized by Frege and the abyssal logic it figures plays an important role in both Heidegger and Deleuze’s work at methodological and ontological levels, even if Heidegger did not recognize this fact.

Deleuze’s *Différence et répétition* draws on two decades of work engaging the history of philosophy and literature, which produced a series of remarkable monographs. Yet reflecting upon his career in the 1993 preface to the English translation of the text, he famously wrote: *Différence et répétition* was “the first book in which I tried to ‘do philosophy.’”524 Its pages synthesize an alternative lineage or “minor history” of philosophy that challenges the canon by reconstructing the history of certain neglected problems and showing how these problems have been important factors organizing the history of philosophical systems and debates. Most prominent are the problems of the subordination of difference to identity and the reduction of repetition to generality. Together, these perpetuate the dominance of the conceptual framework of representation, which he argues has determined much of the history of philosophical discourse. The subordination of difference to identity, the reduction of repetition to generality,  

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and the framework of representation form three logically and conceptually intertwined nodes of
the problem complex Deleuze engages, with each becoming the point of focus in different parts
of the text. Since the critique of representation plays such an extensive role in Différence et
répétition, it is worth emphasizing the direct overlap this has with Heidegger’s target of critique.
For Heidegger, representation is an essential dimension of the modern edifice of metaphysics:
“The modern concept of the beingness of beings [is] (representedness [Vorgestelltheit]).”

Though I treat each of these three nodes in this chapter, my primary interest will be in
difference. This is because the problematic of difference directly connects Heidegger and
Deleuze’s ontologies at a systematic level. Both take the problematic of difference to be one of –
if not the – most essential problematics for working out the nature of being. And for both
philosophers the concept of event is defined at the most fundamental level in terms of the logic
of difference. For the Heidegger of Beiträge and the related private manuscripts, beyng as event
is the differentiation of pure difference from itself, together with the logic of determinateness this
generates and the abyss of primal difference that exceeds that determinateness. Though
difference has this key role in Heidegger’s ontology, Deleuze provides a much more extensive
analysis of the concept of difference. This leads to a more developed theory of difference and a
transformed concept of event.

The problem on which Deleuze focuses regarding difference, stated more precisely, is
that in the history of philosophy difference has been understood on the basis of identity,
mediated by representation, and reduced to conceptual difference. No adequate concept of
difference in itself has been produced. In Deleuze’s words, “the majority of philosophers …
subordinated difference to identity or to the Same, to the Similar, to the Opposed or to the
Analogous: they … introduced difference into the identity of the concept, they … put difference

525 GA65 89/71.
in the concept itself, thereby reaching a conceptual difference, but not a concept of difference.”526 I will explain these claims in Section 2 of this chapter. Deleuze sees his task as thinking difference “in itself” or “pure difference,” which entails developing “a concept of difference without negation” or “independent of the negative” and “liberated from the identical.”527 The subordination of difference to identity prevents the production of a concept of difference in itself. One reason Deleuze takes this to be a problem is that ontologies lacking a concept of difference in itself are insufficient; they are unable to account for the singular or absolutely unique. At best, they are able to account for particularity, where particularity is understood in terms of particular/universal or particular/general dichotomies. Correlatively, repetition is understood in terms of generality: this thing and that thing repeat each other insofar as both are particular instantiations of the same universal or general type. Fluffy and Mittens repeat each other because they are both instances of “cat.” This allows for numerical distinction between individuals, but not an account of the factors that make this individual singular. Consequently, the projects of producing concepts of difference in itself and repetition for itself inform one another in reciprocal fashion. In fact, Deleuze argues that each articulates different aspects of the same “thing”: being. In Chapter II of Différence et répétition, Deleuze writes: “repetition is, for itself, difference in itself.”528 I return to these points in detail below, with focus on the concept of difference.

Deleuze’s historical engagement plays a double role in Différence et répétition.529 On the one hand, it allows him to cast a history of error, in contrast to which he locates his own project. On the other, this history is simultaneously one of success. Despite their shortcomings, each

527 DR 43/28 and 2/xx, italics removed.
528 DR 126/94.
529 For commentary on Deleuze’s use of free indirect discourse, see Joe Hughes, Deleuze’s “Difference and Repetition” (London: Continuum 2009), 14-17.
figure he engages harbors an exposure to the power of difference or repetition and something significant to contribute to the philosophy of difference, of repetition, or the critique of representation. Deleuze draws these elements together as he develops his system.

With this problematic frame, Deleuze’s main aims in *Différence et répétition* can be stated more precisely: 1) to analyze the history of the subjection of difference to identity, such that he might produce a concept of pure difference, or difference in itself, 2) to analyze the history of the reduction of repetition to generality, such that he might produce a concept of repetition for itself, 3) to carry out a radical critique of representation, and 4) to produce a sufficient ontology, which incorporates these concepts of difference and repetition, shows the insufficiency of representation, and explains the genesis of representation within the broader ontological system. 1, 2, and 3 are fundamentally interrelated and form necessary components of 4. Deleuze’s ontology of events forms an essential part of that broader system.

By way of addressing these points, Deleuze presents a highly complex philosophical system. Since this system claims both to give an account of the nature of being and beings writ large and to do so in a way not grounded in the epistemological conditions constituted by a experiencing subject, it might be accused of failing to take into account the Kantian critical revolution. Yet, Deleuze’s ontology is not a new dogmatism. Understanding why is necessary for understanding the interrelation of the four tasks enumerated above. Deleuze has grand ambitions. As Joe Hughes emphasizes, *Différence et répétition* is in part an attempt to rewrite Kant’s *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*. Deleuze aims not only to recast the transcendental conditions for the possibility of experience, but, following Maimon’s critique of Kant, the ontological genesis of the subject, its faculties, and, in particular, the function of representation bound up with it. In Deleuze’s argument, *derivative* forms of difference and repetition (rendered on the basis of

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530 Hughes, *Deleuze’s “Difference and Repetition”* 1-5.
identity and generality) form the superstructure of representation. However, the genesis of this superstructure can only be accounted for on the basis of *originary* concepts of difference and repetition. These form its transcendental conditions: the processes of originary difference and repetition are ontologically prior to representation and provide the sufficient explanation for the actual genesis and existence of representation. Thus, Deleuze’s analyses of difference and repetition are fundamentally bound up with the critical operation of his project. Deleuze’s radical critique of representation moves well beyond the scope of the subject to prior ontological features generative of the subject. Consequently, it doesn’t constitute merely an epistemology or reduce ontology to epistemology, à la Kant. It integrates Kant’s critical revolution into the development of a full ontological system, in the sense of an account of being and the nature and genesis of beings. In short, Deleuze aims to work out the ground of the error constituting representationalism, rectify that error by reconstructing its ontological genesis, and supply a genetic ontology in its place. His concepts of difference and repetition enable him to do this.

In contrast to interpreters like Henry Sommers-Hall who take Deleuze’s project in *Différence et répétition* to be “giving us an account of the nature of the world, broadly construed,” Hughes makes a controversial claim. Namely, he argues that the story told in *Différence et répétition* is that of the genesis of the subject. I find Deleuze’s account of the genesis of the subject to be a crucial dimension of the text, however I also find it necessary to temper Hughes’ claim. This will be evident in my analysis throughout Chapters IV and V. The two central points I find should be made are: 1) Through Deleuze’s radical critique, the story of the genesis of the subject is rendered on the basis of a broader ontology, the core features of

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531 As I will discuss in Chapter V, Deleuze’s conception of the transcendental is also distinctively indebted to Heidegger’s conception of the transcendental as that which constitutively belongs to transcendence, i.e., to the dynamic of Dasein’s existence whereby it continually surpasses itself both A) temporally and B) along a diagenic axis when engaged in the project of fundamental ontology.

which are not essentially indexed onto the constitution of well-defined subjects. In other words, Deleuze’s ontology applies to worlds of beings independently of the role of well-defined subjects in those worlds. 2) The well-defined subject does not survive Deleuze’s radical critique. Rather, the subject arises through certain ontological processes which, when understood as essentially indexed to it are rendered processes by which distortion is generated. As Deleuze writes: “The modern world is one of simulacra. Man did not survive God, nor did the identity of the subject survive that of substance. All identities are only simulated.”533 Again: “What this book should therefore have made apparent is the advent of a coherence which is no more our own, that of mankind, than that of God or the world. In this sense, it should have been an apocalyptic book (the third time in the series of times).”534 Deleuze’s system is not organized by the matrix of the three Kantian transcendent ideas. He does adapt Kant’s theory of ideas, but in a way that eliminates the subjective necessity that we must think the ideas of God, man, and world in particular.535 Instead, as I will discuss at length in Chapter V, Deleuze focuses on the inherently problematic character of ideas and advances an account in which they are understood as modulating systems of virtual multiplicity. As I shall show, ideal events are differential elements that determine the structure and character of these ideas or multiplicities.

For Deleuze, an ontology capable of thinking the singular must think the singular in movement, not in an artificial stasis.536 In part, this involves thinking the time in which the movement of the singular occurs, or rather, the time constituted by the singular in its movement. Deleuze’s recasting of repetition is key in accomplishing this. The theory of repetition constitutes

533 DR 1/xix.
534 DR 4/xxi.
535 As is well known, Kant maintains that though there is a subjective necessity to think these three ideas, we slip into transcendental illusion when we posit the actual existence of objects to which they refer, since those supposed objects lie outside the horizon of possible experience.
536 Ref. DR 16-20/8-11.
an account of the movement of being (becoming), i.e., a theory of genesis and distortion. Yet showing how this operates requires his theory of difference. Difference is the dynamic ontological engine of the movement of repetition; it simultaneously structures reality and exceeds the structures generated.

In what follows in this chapter, I begin by reconstructing the problems motivating Deleuze’s ontology in more detail. Then, I turn to the way he begins to answer to these problems by arguing for a univocal ontology. I then reconstruct the basic logic of the three syntheses composing Deleuze’s theory of time, since they provide a register for specifying particular mechanisms involved in the univocal genetic flow of difference and repetition in his ontology and since his initial conception of the event is given in terms of the third synthesis. Finally, I examine Deleuze’s overturning of Platonism and the way this supplies him with an affirmative conception of systems of simulacra. This allows for a concise analysis of Deleuze’s understanding of ground and a comparison with that of Heidegger. In Chapter V, I detail the virtual register of systems of simulacra, which Deleuze understands in terms of dialectical Ideas. According to Deleuze, systems of simulacra are sites for the actualization of dialectical Ideas. Deleuze’s theory of events is a theory of the way difference differentiates itself and generates individuated simulacra. As I will show, Deleuze’s theory of Ideas is profoundly influenced by that of Lautman, while Lautman developed his theory of Ideas in a way drawing heavily upon Heidegger. Thus, in Chapter V, I will show an extensive, but covert, Heideggerian influence on Deleuze’s theory of Ideas and, consequently, on his ontology of events.
“Difference is monstrous.”\textsuperscript{537} Such is the history of thought’s predominant judgment, be it implicit or explicit. Difference is built into systems of legitimate categories while simultaneously exceeding them and drawing them into the illegitimate. Difference is experienced as a deviation from the norm or as the radically other, the wolves against which philosophical dogs must guard. Though a bit hyperbolic, Deleuze writes that difference has been historically seen as “accursed, …error, sin or the figure of evil for which there must be expiation.”\textsuperscript{538} Difference is expiated by subsuming it within identity and mediating it in representation “by relating it to the requirements of the concept in general.”\textsuperscript{539} The impression of difference as monstrous, together with its expiation, begins in a “propitious moment” or \textit{kairos} in Greek thought that Deleuze locates particularly in Plato and Aristotle.\textsuperscript{540} On the one hand, this moment marks the taming of difference within the framework of identity and representation. On the other, it inaugurates a history of philosophies contending with difference in interesting ways, ways on which Deleuze draws to develop a concept of pure difference or difference in itself. The expiation of difference correlates with the reduction of repetition to generality. When repetition is reduced to generality it takes the form of “difference without a concept.”\textsuperscript{541} I will expand upon this shortly, but the core idea is that in this reduction “repetition is attributed to elements which are really distinct but nevertheless share strictly the same concept.”\textsuperscript{542} Socrates and Plato are really distinct and numerically distinct beings, but they share the same concept: they are each \textit{rational animals}. In

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item \textsuperscript{537} \textit{DR} 44/29.
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\item \textsuperscript{540} \textit{DR} 45/29.
\item \textsuperscript{541} \textit{DR} 36/23.
\item \textsuperscript{542} \textit{DR} 26/15.
\end{enumerate}
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other words, there is a difference between them, but this difference has no concept. Socrates and Plato repeat each other.

In the following section, I focus on Deleuze’s engagement with Aristotle as a historically foundational figure in the tradition of thinkers who tame difference within frameworks of identity and representation. Ultimately, Deleuze traces the inclination to expiate difference in this way back to Plato. However, he also finds in Plato a simultaneous inclination toward an affirmative ontology of difference. In Section 4 of this chapter, I discuss Deleuze’s engagement with Plato at length, since the ambiguousness in the latter’s system enables a Deleuzian “overturning” of a certain standard Platonism through which an affirmative ontology of difference can be developed in terms of systems of simulacra. In *Différence et répétition*, Deleuze aims to countermand the history of error initiated by the Greek propitious moment. Along with Plato and Aristotle (and the scholastic appropriation of Aristotle), the central figures of this history on whom Deleuze comments are Leibniz and Hegel. Nietzsche and Heidegger should be included in this list, though under different capacities. As I will show in Section 3, Nietzsche’s eternal return contributes prominently to Deleuze’s affirmative concept of difference. And as I will continue to discuss throughout Chapters IV and V, Deleuze finds several aspects of Heidegger’s philosophy of difference to be consonant with his own, though he also indicates points of criticism showing where he takes their views to diverge.

Deleuze designates the Aristotelian mode of representation “organic representation,” since it is defined by the categorial system in Aristotle’s *Organon*. Organic representation is *finite* because it defines an object in terms of a general concept of its essence, i.e., a concept with a finite comprehension of the predicates belonging to the object. Supposedly inessential predicates that

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543 *DR* 83/59.
544 Deleuze’s main direct discussion of this is found in a lengthy footnote found on *DR* 89/64.
545 *DR* 44/29.
are nonetheless necessary for defining the object as an *individual* are unaccounted for in the concept. Such a finite representation is able to extend or range over several objects for which it is a definition, but is unable to define any individual object with infinite comprehension. I shall explain this character of Aristotelian organic representation in greater detail below. In the modern era, finite organic representation is replaced by what Deleuze calls “orgiastic representation.”

The two main thinkers of orgiastic representation are Leibniz and Hegel. Orgiastic representation is *infinite* representation, since it “discovers the infinite within itself.” More specifically, “Leibniz introduces the infinite into the finite …in the form of the infinitely small,” that is, in the form of the infinite series of properties and affections defining monads. For Leibniz, a concept sufficient for defining an individual object must thus have an infinite comprehension of the object’s predicates. Conversely, difference in Hegel’s system appears as the “infinitely large” difference of contradiction, i.e., of the counter-posed moments of the dialectic defining the whole of reality. Despite the profound shift from systems of organic to orgiastic representation, Deleuze argues that the latter also remain bound within the framework of identity and are thus unable to provide a sufficient ontology of difference. Though I will return to Leibniz for a moment below, explaining Deleuze’s account of orgiastic representation in much more detail than this would go beyond the scope of this dissertation. For my purposes, which are to clarify Deleuze’s motivation and terms with respect to the production of an affirmative concept of pure difference or difference in itself, it will be sufficient to examine organic representation in Aristotle’s system and the manner in which it tames difference within a framework of identity and representation. Along with clarifying the problem Deleuze finds in the

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546 *DR* 61/42, italics removed.
547 *DR* 61/42.
548 *DR* 65/45.
549 *DR* 64/44.
history of the philosophy of difference, this will also allow me to point out a few central
problems with the understanding of repetition in terms of generality or difference without
concept that will be important later. This is a necessary step in clarifying Deleuze’s concept of
event because it is within his positive account of difference that he uses the concept of event in
the way most technically developed in this text. Since for Deleuze difference differentiates via
events, this examination of organic representation sets the stage for clarifying his concept of
event later.

To be sure, “the project of the philosophy of difference,” for Deleuze, is “to rescue
difference from its maledictory state.” Yet, this does not mean he aims to eliminate identity or
representation from his ontology. Just as Heidegger’s evental ontology is not meant to eliminate
metaphysics, but, in one dimension, to offer resources able to account for the genesis of
metaphysics, Deleuze’s aims to account for the genesis of identity and representation. This is a
dimension of the radical critique essential to both thinkers’ methodologies. Recall that according
to Heidegger’s critique, the historical and conceptual framework of metaphysics is derivative in
relation to the more originary ontological features of beyng as event. Deleuze’s stance is similar:
for him, identity and representation are derivative of being as difference, time as repetition, and
their evental articulation. As Heidegger’s evental ontology supplies the genetic ground for
rethinking the domain of metaphysics in an appropriate way, Deleuze’s supplies that for
rethinking identity and representation. If identity has been given a position more primal than
difference in the history of thought, Deleuze inverts this such that difference is primary and
identity generated as derivative. Consequently, though identity is not eliminated in Deleuze’s
system, it is rendered an unstable effect of difference. Likewise, if representation has been the
frame in which difference is understood, Deleuze inverts this such that difference is primary and

550 DR 44/29.
representation generated as derivative. Representation is not eliminated in Deleuze’s system, but rendered a limited dimension of reality dependent upon operations of difference that exceed and ontologically precede it.

There are two principle registers in which Deleuze treats the expiation of difference. One is properly ontological, that is, it pertains to the ontological status of difference and identity themselves. The other is epistemological, pertaining to the subsumption of difference within the identity of the concept and the mediation of difference by representation. At first impression, the ontological register seems fairly straight forward. Deleuze’s position is that being is difference and identity is generated as a derivative effect of difference. We have been mistaken in assigning identity primacy over difference, either as a characteristic of being, of being’s most basic categories, or of the beings from which we extract universal types.

The basic sense of the epistemological register is more complex. In the expiation of difference, “difference is... reconciled with the concept.”\textsuperscript{551} But what does it mean to reconcile difference with the concept? Difference is defined as an element within the confines of the concept, while identity is an essential dimension or character of the concept itself. More specifically, Deleuze identifies four “requirements of the concept in general” or the “four principle aspects to ‘reason’ insofar as it is the medium of representation.”\textsuperscript{552} Deleuze’s initial critique of these four aspects focuses on Aristotle’s categorial system and its method of conceptual definition in terms of proximate genus and specific difference. However, Deleuze holds that they reappear in transformed manners in all later philosophies of representation, including those advanced by Leibniz, Kant, and Hegel. Since identity is a principle character of

\textsuperscript{551} DR 45/29.  
\textsuperscript{552} DR 45, 44/29.
the four requirements of the concept, defining difference within the framework of the concept renders difference secondary to identity. How, exactly, does this work in Aristotle?

The first requirement of the concept is “identity, in the form of the undetermined concept.”\textsuperscript{553} In Aristotle’s system, the undetermined concept is the proximate genus. It constitutes the substantial identity of which a specific difference is predicated. Since a genus isn’t something on its own, i.e., it is existentially indeterminate, it requires a specific difference be applied to it in order to gain determinate existence (the genus “animal” does not itself exist, only human and non-human animals). Thus, the genus is identity, in the form of the undetermined concept. The second requirement of the concept is “analogy, in the relation between determinable concepts.”\textsuperscript{554} Determinable concepts are genera. Genera, at the broadest level (categories), do not agree in a third term constituting their identity (i.e., there is no genus of the genera or categories). Such genera are equivocal. For Aristotle, their relations are that of \textit{pros hen} equivocation. In the scholastic interpretation of Aristotle, they are that of analogy. This is the sense on which Deleuze focuses. Hence, the relation between determinable concepts is thought as analogy. The third requirement of the concept is “opposition, in the relation between determinations within concepts.”\textsuperscript{555} Determination within a concept is predication of the genus, i.e., the application of a specific difference to it (the genus “animal” is determined by applying the specific difference “rational” to it, resulting in the predications “rational” and “non-rational” of “animal”). The specific difference differentiates predicates in which the genus is determined. Those determinations agree in the genus or third term, but are opposed in their predicate. Thus, the relation between determinations within concepts is opposition. The fourth requirement of the

\textsuperscript{553} DR 44/29.  
\textsuperscript{554} DR 45/29.  
\textsuperscript{555} DR 45/29.
concept is “resemblance, in the determined object of the concept itself.” The determined object of the concept is the individual being that belongs to the kind that the concept defines. Since the concept has a degree of generality, it is the concept for a range of objects (actually or potentially). Such objects are numerically distinct, but share the same concept. If we take this relation from the top down, with objects understood as instantiations of the concept, the individuating differences of the objects are thought in relation to their conceptual identity: Socrates and Plato differ in height, but since they are identical in concept, that difference is read as a deviation from what is in common. They are not individually the same, but there is a degree of resemblance between the two which is grounded in their common concept. If the relation of concept and object is thought in the opposite direction, from the bottom up, and the concept is taken as a universal derived from a set of individuals, empirical resemblance between the objects is the basis for the generality of the concept. Dan Smith puts this point as follows: “At the lower end, a plurality of different individuals can be placed under a single concept only on the condition that a sensible resemblance between the individuals can be perceived.” Either way, the determined objects of the concept fall on a spectrum of resemblance to one another.

Deleuze’s point is that Aristotle’s system tames or mediates difference by reconciling it with these requirements of the concept. The same goes for the systems proposed by other thinkers in the history of the regime of representation, even if each adjusts the nature of the four requirements in their own way. Any difference that falls outside these requirements is rendered conceptually illegitimate. However, since in these conditions difference is recognized only on the basis of the identity in the concept (and the correlated versions of that identity: analogy,

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556 DR 45/29.
557 Essays 38.
opposition, and resemblance), it is rendered derivative of identity. The consequence is that a concept of pure difference in itself is blocked by rendering difference as conceptual difference.

Each philosopher of difference Deleuze discusses reduces difference to conceptual difference in a distinct way. As noted earlier, for instance, Hegel’s dialectic of determinate negation gives a greater role to difference as opposition. Deleuze proposes that a test of “the Large and the Small” can be applied to clarify the specifics of each case.\textsuperscript{558} Though a reference to Plato (\textit{Republic} 523-524; \textit{Parmenides} 149-150), Deleuze has in mind large and small \textit{differences}: “the question arises… how far the difference can extend – how large? how small? – in order to remain within the limits of the concept.”\textsuperscript{559} The test allows the limits of any philosophical system to be shown with respect to its ability to tame difference within the bounds of conceptual difference. It helps to show where difference might escape those bounds or how the system comes short of supporting a concept of difference not subject to prior identity.\textsuperscript{560}

Examining Deleuze’s analysis of small and large difference in Aristotle will help clarify the type of ontological and epistemological insufficiencies exhibited by philosophical systems that perpetuate the regime of representation, even if in transformed manners.

Deleuze grants Aristotle’s system genuine force. Difference (as specific and generic difference) has a prominent role in organizing it and the system is able to articulate important aspects of reality. However, the system is unable to think the singular or the individual without reducing it to a particular instantiation of a generic identity. Aristotle’s system also requires an equivocity of genera or categories, which Deleuze argues makes it untenable as a framework for

\textsuperscript{558} \textit{DR} 45/29.
\textsuperscript{559} \textit{DR} 45/29.
\textsuperscript{560} In the case of Aristotle, for instance, the largest differences accountable for are those between equivocal genera, while the smallest are those of specific differences and their numerically distinct instantiations. At its “small” end, Aristotle’s system can account for the difference between rational animals and non-rational animals, as well as the numerical difference between instances of rational animals, but not the singular differences individuating, for example, Socrates from Plato. Here we find a difference that exceeds the limits of the Aristotelian concept.
producing an affirmative concept of difference in itself. As I will discuss, Deleuze argues instead for an ontological univocity.

As indicated above, in Aristotle’s metaphysics the conceptual definition of a thing is composed of its specific difference together with the proximate genus to which that difference is applied. “Human,” for example, is defined by the proximate genus “animal” marked by the specific difference “rational.” Above that, “animal” is defined by the proximate genus “living” marked by the specific difference “sensitive.” Aristotle offers a hierarchical system of progressively broader genera when moving “up” the system and finer genera when moving “down.” “Small” difference at the bottom is specific difference, together with the numerical difference that specific difference founds. “Large” difference is that between categories or genera themselves, i.e., generic difference. Respectively, the character of the difference belonging to specific difference is contrariety, whereas that of generic difference is contradiction.

Simply speaking, Aristotle’s specific difference accounts for the presence of contrariety between two things, predicates, or terms: two terms are contrary to one another (thus differing from one another) if each disagrees with the other in itself while agreeing with one another in a third (or middle) term. It is the middle term that allows a comparison between contrary terms to hold at all, while at the same time bearing the mark of their specific difference.

Specific difference is distinguished into two types. Deleuze is primarily concerned with the second. On the one hand, accidental difference (extra quidditatem) is merely the corporeal contrariety of things held in the middle term of matter; on the other hand, essential specific difference (differentia essentialis aut propriissima) is “the perfect and maximal difference” of
“contrariety in the genus.” Since contrariety in matter can offer a concept of difference only as accidental or “extrinsic,” Aristotle’s most essential concept(s) of difference must be sought elsewhere. Essential specific difference is more promising. After distinguishing these two, Deleuze reserves the term “specific difference” for it. With essential specific difference, “contraries… are modifications which affect a subject with regard to its genus. Genera are in effect divided by differences in essence which take the form of contraries.” The contraries “human” and “non-human” are held together in the genus “animal,” while distinguished by the specific difference of “rationality.”

There are two dimensions to the problem Deleuze sees with this part of Aristotle’s system. First, the contrariety of specific difference refers its terms to the identity of a middle term, thus reconciling their difference with that identity. Two terms may be different in a specific way, but this difference is grounded in the way they are the same – in their common proximate genus. Thus, the concept of specific difference is not a concept of difference as such at all. Rather, “the determination of the concept of difference is confused with the inscription of difference in the identity of an undetermined concept,” a genus (third term). Difference is grounded in a prior identity.

A correlated second dimension of the problem here arises because of the way conceptual determination by specific difference accounts for (or fails to account for) singular or individual things. What is Socrates? Socrates is a human, a rational animal. So are Plato, Aristotle, and Alexander. Within this system, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and Alexander are numerically distinct, but identical in concept. However, singular differences individuate these four and make them

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561 DR 46/30.
562 DR 46/30.
563 DR 46/30.
564 DR 48/32.
unique. The generality of the concept correlates with the reduction of what is singular or individual to a particular instantiation of a universal form. It effectuates a sanitization of singularity or individuating differences. Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and Alexander repeat the concept and are substitutable for one another. However, since this system cannot account for the differences individuating each, it is insufficient. This type of repetition of the same concept exemplifies what Deleuze refers to as derivative, uncovered, or bare repetition, in distinction from originary, clothed, or masked repetition which is liminal with respect to the structure of the concept.

It is worth returning for a moment to the passage cited at the beginning of this chapter in which Heidegger is concerned with precisely the same problem.

In the realm of the guiding question ([Leitfrage], the understanding of the essence is determined on the basis of beingness (οὐσία–κοινόν ["beingness–common"]), and the essentiality of the essence consists in the greatest possible generality of the essence. This means, conversely, that the particular [Einzelle] and manifold [Mannigfaltige], which fall under the concept of the essence and from which this concept is established, are arbitrary; indeed, what is essential is the arbitrariness of beings, which nevertheless is precisely what the belonging to the essence indicates.\(^{565}\)

The problem of being unable to account for singularity or individuating difference is a correlate of the defining question (τί τὸ ὄν) and orientation of metaphysics toward the Seiendheit or beingness of beings as beings (ὄν ἣ ὄν), rendered as οὐσία in Aristotle. Though for Aristotle οὐσία is not a genus, Heidegger, as seen earlier in Chapter II, argues that its character remains that of what is common among that which is. Since the beingness of beings is taken to define their essence, and is derived as a generality or as what is held in common, beings are arbitrary, that is, numerically distinct, conceptually substitutable, repetitions of a same essence. Within the framework of the Leitfrage, the concept of beings is irreducibly correlated with the arbitrariness

\(^{565}\) GA65 66/53.
of beings and the sanitization of the singular differences characterizing each. Essentiality, the nature of being, and the nature of beings must be rethought, as seen in Chapter II in terms of the question of the essence of truth, within the framework of the Grundfrage. This task is central in the development of Heidegger’s ontology into an evental ontology. With respect to this point, he writes:

On the other hand, where beyng is conceived as event, essentiality is determined out of the originality [Ursprünglichkeit] and uniqueness [Einzigkeit] of beyng itself. There the essence is not the general but is the essential occurrence precisely of what is unique in each case and of what constitutes the rank of the being.\textsuperscript{566}

The problem Heidegger and Deleuze both home in on here can be clarified by looking at the latter’s discussion of a “vulgarized Leibnizianism” early in the “Introduction” to \textit{Différence et répétition}.\textsuperscript{567} This shows the intrinsic relation between the problem of difference and that of repetition. Deleuze’s account of how vulgarized Leibnizianism mistakenly understands repetition in terms of generality allows him a foil against which to contrast his concept of originary or masked repetition. The reduction of repetition to generality is conceptually correlated with the reduction of difference to conceptual difference. Vulgarized Leibnizianism is organized by three principles which together “expound a theory of difference as conceptual difference, or develop the account of representation as mediation.”\textsuperscript{568} These three principles are at work in a less formal way in Section 8 of Leibniz’s “Discourse on Metaphysics.”\textsuperscript{569}

\begin{footnotesize}
\footnote{\textsuperscript{566} GA65 66/53.}
\footnote{\textsuperscript{567} DR 21/11. Deleuze calls this “vulgarized Leibnizianism” because it is not a faithful representation of Leibniz, but a sort of caricature focused on certain of his principles.}
\footnote{\textsuperscript{568} DR 21/12.}
\end{footnotesize}
First is “a principle of difference” according to which “every determination is conceptual in the last instance, or actually belongs to the comprehension of the concept.” As in the four requirements of the Aristotelian concept, determination here is the predication of a subject. The comprehension of a concept is the extent to which it accurately represents its object, that is, the exhaustiveness of its predicates in matching up with the predicates belonging to its object. Correlated to a concept’s comprehension is its extension, i.e., the range of objects for which it is a concept. The important move this principle of difference makes is to collapse the distinction between epistemological predication (predication of a concept mimicking its object) and ontological predication (the determination of the object itself in its predicates). Thus, all differences individuating the object are understood to be conceptual differences, i.e., determinations of the concept.

This leads to the reciprocal second and third principles: the principle of sufficient reason, according to which “there is always one concept per particular thing,” and the “principle of the identity of indiscernibles,” according to which “there is one and only one thing per concept.” For a conceptual determination to be adequate to its object, it must have infinite comprehension, that is, it must contain all the object’s predicates (in the right order). Since two things between which no difference can be discerned are in fact one and the same thing, such a concept applies to one and only one thing. Infinite comprehension correlates with an extension equal to one. In contrast, if a concept has a finite comprehension, i.e., if it does not contain all its object’s predicates, its extension increases (in principle indefinitely, even if not in fact). The concept is no longer adequate to its object, since there are determinations in the object that are not accounted for in the concept. Any concept with an extension greater than one constitutes a generality: it

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570 DR 21/12.
571 DR 21/12.
ranges over any object bearing the concept’s predicates. But it is inadequate to any of them. The objects ranged over can be distinguished numerically as particular instances of the concept, but not adequately, since the concept fails precisely with respect to their individuating differences.

Returning to Aristotle, the insufficiency of definition by proximate genus and specific difference for defining singular or individual things can now be stated more precisely. Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and Alexander are distinct beings. They are distinguished by the predicates determining each, respectively. For the concept of Socrates to be sufficient, it must have an infinite comprehension and, in turn, an extension equal to one. However, the concept “rational animal” has a finite comprehension and an indefinite extension. It ranges over Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and Alexander but can’t account for the singular or individual differences differentiating them. Instead, it renders the three only numerically distinct particulars, bare repetitions or repetitions of the same general concept.

Testing Aristotle’s system in this way at the level of “small” differences reveals that it subsumes such differences within the identity of the concept. Thus, it offers conceptual difference, but no concept of difference in itself. The test also shows that his system is inadequate, for there exist differences that exceed its conceptual limits; namely, the differences individuating Socrates from the others or constituting his singularity. How, though, does Aristotle’s system fare at the level of “large” differences?

If specific difference operates within genera, while the identity of each genus provides the foundation on which its contraries may be supported, “generic or categorial difference” names the very “difference between genera as ultimate determinable concepts (categories).” This is the kind of difference found at the “top” of Aristotle’s system. Generic difference is not established by reference to the identity of a shared third term (there is no genus of genera).

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572 DR 49/33 and 48/32, my italics.
Rather, an irreducible equivocity of maximal genera or categories exists. This, in turn, entails a fundamental equivocity of being. As Deleuze writes: for Aristotle, “because differences are,” “Being itself is not a genus.”\textsuperscript{573} “If being were a genus, its differences would be assimilable to specific differences, but then one could no longer say that they ‘are’, since a genus is not itself attributed to its differences.”\textsuperscript{574} Because generic differences really exist, while essentially existing between, not within, genera, being cannot be a genus. As Aristotle puts the point:

But it is not possible that either unity or being should be a genus of things; for the differentiae of any genus must each of them both have being and be one, but it is not possible for the genus to be predicated of the differentiae taken apart from the species (any more than for the species of the genus to be predicated of the proper differentiae of the genus); so that if unity or being is a genus, no differentia will either be one or have being.\textsuperscript{575}

The existence of generic difference tells us that there are different types of being: being is said in many ways or “the term ‘being’ is used in many senses.”\textsuperscript{576} These are not distinguished by the mere contrariety seen in specific difference, genera are contradictorily different: they exist with an irreducible difference between them which is not inscribed in a third, founding term.

Aristotle’s equivocity of being does not, however, constitute a liberation of difference from identity. While generic difference is a “larger difference” than specific difference, it nonetheless fails to supply the pure, affirmative concept of difference in itself Deleuze seeks.\textsuperscript{577} The equivocity of being implied by generic difference preserves a primacy of identity. Echoing Heidegger’s point above regarding the κοινόν, Deleuze argues that “an identical or common concept… still subsists” to which generic differences are subordinated, even though this does not

\textsuperscript{573} \textit{DR} 49/32.  
\textsuperscript{574} \textit{DR} 51/34.  
\textsuperscript{577} \textit{DR} 48/32.
take the form of a middle term. The problem is that though being is said in the many ways of equivocal genera, that equivocity is for Aristotle pros hen. Alternatively, for the scholastic Aristotelians it is analogical. Deleuze’s analysis consciously melds these together. However, briefly parsing them will help illuminate the argument.

In Aristotelian pros hen equivocity, the genera or categories are all “related to one central point, one definite kind of thing,” namely, “substance” (οὐσία). Being is said in many ways, but these ways are all said pros hen of substance. “An identical or common concept thus still subsists,” though “this concept of Being is not collective, like a genus in relation to its species, but only distributive and hierarchical: it has no content in itself, only a content in proportion to the formally different terms of which it is predicated,” i.e., the genera or categories. What this means for Deleuze is that though categories or genera are really, contradictorily different from one another, it remains the case that generic difference is systemically coherent only on the basis of the identity or unity of substance. Thus, it gets us no closer to a concept of pure difference in itself.

The scholastic interpretation of Aristotle’s equivocity of being manages no better. Rather than pros hen equivocity providing the priority of identity, this priority is established through the analogical relation of different creatures to God. In the hierarchy of being, an “internal” analogical relation among created beings holds, preserving God’s perfection in greater or lesser proportion. Throughout this analogical system, God’s identity and unity ontologically precede and found the existence of created beings. As with pros hen equivocity, the analogical version of Aristotelianism requires the equivocity found in generic difference in order to remain coherent:

578 DR 49/33.
579 See DR 50 footnote 1/33 endnote 5.
581 DR 49/33.
582 DR 49/33, italics removed.
“analogy, as we have seen, rests essentially upon a certain complicity between generic and specific differences (despite their difference in kind): being cannot be supposed a common genus without destroying the reason for which it was supposed thus; that is, the possibility of *being* for specific differences.” In order for being to be said of specific differences, being must not be a genus, that is, it must be equivocal.

In summary, Deleuze’s critique of Aristotelianism shows that this metaphysical system can account for difference only in terms of specific difference or generic difference. In the former case, that which differs is merely contrary, all the while grounded in the prior identity of a proximate genus; in the latter, an equivocity of being is established, which is underwritten by the prior identity of substance or of God. Neither suffices for an affirmative concept of pure difference, or difference in itself. Instead, Aristotle’s system exemplifies the historical expiation of difference in which difference is captured within the confines of the concept and rendered derivative of identity.

Smith nicely connects this back to Deleuze’s engagement with Heidegger by putting the point as follows: “What is wrong with Aristotle’s analogical vision of the world? Put simply, it provides an inadequate solution to the Heideggerian problematic of ontological difference.” Though ultimately Heidegger does not think the frame of the ontological difference goes far enough (a more originary articulation of difference is required for an evental conception of beyng), Aristotelian ontology falls short even of the terms of that frame. It fails to differentiate the being of beings from the beingness of beings. Likewise, for Deleuze the finite, organic representation found in Aristotle’s system cannot sufficiently think difference, and so it cannot offer a sufficient account of being.

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583 *DR* 56/38.
584 *Essays* 40. Smith incorrectly attributes the analogical vision of the world to Aristotle here when, as I have indicated above, this is an innovation of Thomism.
Late in *Différence et répétition*, Deleuze clarifies a distinction used throughout the text between two kinds of terms: on the one hand are the categories of representation and the notions grounded therein; on the other are “phantastical” notions.⁵⁸⁵ Despite the awkwardness of the latter term, it is used in a precise technical sense: phantastical notions describe aspects, processes, or relations of reality that are not subsumable within the regime of representation or its categorial systems. Using terminology that I will discuss later, these notions “apply to phantasms and simulacra,” or more specifically “describe actual series, or virtual Ideas, or indeed the groundlessness from which everything comes: intensity-linkage-resonance-forced movement; differential and singularity; complication-implication-explication; differentiation-individuation-differentiation; question-problem-solution, etc.”⁵⁸⁶ Deleuze uses these different sets of terms to describe the pre-representational differential processes that define individual simulacra and systems of simulacra. As I will show especially in Chapter V, events are distinctive moments in these processes. If for Deleuze being is difference that is differentiated by events, the pre-representational differential processes involved describe the “distribution” of being among beings, i.e., the genetic, differential ontological flow by which beings are constituted. More generally, though, Deleuze applies the term “distribution” to the partitioning of being in beings that any ontological system describes. In contrast to Deleuze’s phantastical or pre-representational account of the distribution of being, he understands categories to “belong to the world of representation, where they constitute forms of distribution according to which Being is repartitioned among beings

⁵⁸⁵ *DR* 364/285.
⁵⁸⁶ *DR* 364/285 and 364/284.
following the rules of sedentary proportionality.”\textsuperscript{587} In short, being is distributed according to sedimentary proportionality when it is understood to be subject to such “pre-existing categorical rules” that determine the proportion of being that each being or series of beings shall have (for instance, in the Thomistic analogy of being).\textsuperscript{588} These categorical rules presuppose a subjection of difference to identity. Deleuze’s phantastical notions, then, do not compose “a list of categories.”\textsuperscript{589} His use of these notions marks a fundamental contrast between his system and those of Aristotle (and scholastic Aristotelianism) and Kant, for instance. Namely, for Deleuze there are extra-propositional and sub-representative aspects of reality that must be taken epistemologically and ontologically seriously. In Chapter V, I will look at a particular set of these by analyzing Deleuze’s theory of problems or Ideas and the events they involve. In Deleuze’s reasoning, the fact that there are such aspects of reality that require phantastical notions (i.e., the fact that the regime of representation cannot provide a sufficient ontology) poses a fundamental problem for philosophy: “A whole problem of Being is brought into play by these differences between categories and the nomadic or phantastical notions, the problem of the manner in which being is distributed among beings: is it, in the last instance, by analogy [i.e., by equivocity] or univocality?”\textsuperscript{590} Equivocal ontologies claim that being is said or distributed among beings in many different senses, as exemplified by the different ways being is said in Aristotle’s equivocity of genera. Univocal ontologies, on the other hand, claim that being is said or distributed among beings in only one sense. Since, according to Deleuze, equivocal systems subject difference to identity and are unable to account for phantastical aspects of reality, he

\textsuperscript{587} DR 364/284.
\textsuperscript{588} DR 361/282.
\textsuperscript{589} DR 364/284.
\textsuperscript{590} DR 365/285.
holds that “Being is univocal.”591 I shall turn to Deleuze’s univocity of being now. In Deleuze’s account of univocity he outlines the basic ontological position that enables his overturning of Platonism and production of an ontology of systems of simulacra. As I have indicated, explaining the ontological status of systems of simulacra is necessary for explaining Deleuze’s theory of events, since the most fundamental differential processes through which simulacra are determined are precisely events.

Deleuze’s argument for univocity marks a largely covert engagement with Heidegger.592 If the domain of representation is conceptually grounded in identity, and the subsistence of identity is asserted in response to the question, “What are beings as beings?,” i.e., the framework which Heidegger argues reduces being to beingness or Seiendheit, then the distinction of phantastical notions from the regime of representation constitutes a Deleuzian version of Heidegger’s ontological difference between being and beings. For, it is precisely in the register of simulacra that the problematic of being is properly unlocked. Embedded in the problem of deciding between equivocity and univocity as Deleuze frames it is the problem framed by the ontological difference: the problem of being, insofar as being must be differentiated from Seiendheit. Smith connects that Heideggerian problem to Deleuze’s concern with univocity by posing the problem as follows: “What is the difference between Being and beings? Or more precisely, How is Being distributed among beings?”593 While Heidegger might not like this formulation since it makes being sound like a resource held in reserve to be divvied up, Smith is right to make the connection it expresses. For, the questions posed by Deleuze’s language of distribution are those of how ontological genesis operates and what its structure is. That is,

591 DR 52/35.
592 As Smith puts it, “univocity must be seen as one of the concepts Deleuze uses in order to state and resolve Heidegger’s ontological problematic in his own manner” (Essays 29).
593 Essays 29.
Deleuze’s question about the distribution of being asks: What is the nature of being, such that being enables beings to be? And, what are the ontological structures and processes via which this occurs? These questions are directly consonant with Heidegger’s (even though Heidegger’s evental ontology in Beiträge ultimately problematizes the question of such distribution if that question casts being on the basis of a relation to beings, i.e., remains within the framework of Seiendheit). To see how Deleuze’s question about distribution continues to be paralleled in Heidegger’s evental ontology, one must only remember the genetic character entailed in Heidegger’s account of beyng as event insofar as the event generates the various structures belonging to the logic of determination or to the Da expressed in the term “Da-sein.”

Heidegger’s ontological difference enables the science of being to be reestablished at what he considers the end of the history of metaphysics. Deleuze picks up the science of being, but suggests that Heidegger’s ontology ultimately falls short because it fails to put difference in the place of being itself. As Smith suggests, Deleuze’s dissatisfaction with Heidegger revolves around Heidegger’s failure “to push the problematic of ontological difference to its necessary conclusion,” that is, to think being as difference.594 Smith puts the point well again as follows: “although Heidegger revived the question of ontology and gave ‘renewed splendor to the univocity of Being,’ he did not effect the necessary conversion according to which ‘univocal Being belongs only to difference’ (that is, the term ‘Being’ has one and only one sense, which is ‘difference’).”595 Différence et répétition in a certain sense is Deleuze’s attempt to do just this, and arguing that being is univocal is a necessary step. It should be emphasized here that though Smith is right about Deleuze’s dissatisfaction with Heidegger’s philosophy of difference, Deleuze was wrong about Heidegger. This is no fault of Deleuze’s since he did not have access

594 Essays 29.
595 Essays 29. The passages Smith quotes here are found on DR 91 (footnote 1 beginning on 89)/66.
to *Beiträge* or the related private manuscripts. As I have argued, in those texts Heidegger develops a conception of difference that goes beyond that presented in the published works that were available to Deleuze. In *Beiträge*, Heidegger’s account of beyng as event operates precisely by the purely differential logic I explained in Chapters II and III. This places Heidegger closer to Deleuze than Deleuze recognized.

Deleuze’s arguments for the univocity of being set the theoretical frame in which he developed his affirmative conception of pure difference, or difference in itself. In his view, the univocity of being is a necessary condition for the viability of such a concept, since equivocity necessarily inscribes identity in being. His commitment to univocity sets his ontology in opposition to Aristotelian equivocity and its analogical scholastic interpretation. It also establishes a conceptual point in reference to which he casts a tradition (forming part of the minor history) in which he explicitly designates Heidegger his immediate predecessor: “from Parmenides to Heidegger it is the same voice of being which is taken up, in an echo which itself forms the whole deployment of the univocal. A single voice raises the clamour of being.”

Yet as mentioned, Deleuze does not make explicit the details of his engagement with Heidegger during his analysis of univocity. For Deleuze, Duns Scotus, Spinoza, and Nietzsche are the “three principal moments in the history of the philosophical elaboration of the univocity of being.” Though to me it seems correct to think of Heidegger’s ontology itself as one of univocity, I am unaware of anywhere in which he claimed this directly. It is worth pointing out that, given the second major moment in the history of univocity (Spinoza), Deleuze’s work on

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596 *DR* 52/35.
this topic establishes a linkage that is of central importance in late twentieth century philosophy: that of Heidegger and Spinoza, or of French post-rationalism (Cavaillé, Canguilhem, Bachelard, etc.) with the Heideggerian phenomenological and post phenomenological tradition.\(^{598}\)

If the metaphor used in univocity to characterize the structure of being is voice, what does this voice say? It says “the ontological proposition.”\(^{599}\) In contrast, particularly in the modern era, the ontological structure of representational systems is understood on the “model of judgment” or, synonymously, of “propositions of consciousness.” Propositions of consciousness are propositions grounded in the identity of the thinking subject, such that that identity is the guarantor of the identity of the subject of the proposition and thus of the stability of the proposition as a whole. In Deleuze’s words: “For Kant as for Descartes, it is the identity of the Self in the ‘I think’ which grounds the harmony of all the faculties and their agreement on the form of a supposed same object.”\(^{600}\) The subject of the proposition can either be the thinking subject itself, in which case predication is the determination of that subject in its predicates or attributes, or it can be something else, in which case the proposition represents the predicated subject, while the adequation of the proposition is grounded in the cognitive apparatus of the thinking subject. In that case, the proposition is a judgment made by the thinking subject. Within the Cartesian framework, for instance, Deleuze identifies “Cogito” as the “first proposition of consciousness” (first in the order of Descartes’ system).\(^{601}\) Here, the subject “I” is determined in the predicate “think.” Structurally, this replicates the case discussed above in which an Aristotelian category is determined by predicating it via the application of a specific difference.

\(^{598}\) Knox Peden’s book, *Spinoza Contra Phenomenology*, provides an excellent analysis of this relation. As Smith puts this point: “*Difference and Repetition* links the project of a pure ontology, as developed by Spinoza, with the problematic of difference, as formulated by Heidegger, and in the process goes beyond both Spinoza and Heidegger” (*Essays* 37).

\(^{599}\) *DR* 35/53.

\(^{600}\) *DR* 174/133.

\(^{601}\) *DR* 202/155.
This finds its extreme form with Leibniz, where the concept of an individual is one with infinite comprehension and extension equal to one, while the individual’s infinite series of predicates are arrayed in the right order and articulate the changes the individual undergoes through time. Correlated with this is the Leibnizian aspiration to infinite representation. Within the Kantian framework, determination is the determination of the manifold in the outer and inner forms of sensibility – space and time – together with the application of the categories in formulating a judgment. The equation of the judgment and proposition can be easily seen in the two types of judgment that Kant distinguished: analytic judgments, in which the predicate is contained in the essence of the subject, and synthetic judgments, in which it is not. With Kant, propositions of consciousness are the determinations or judgments rendered by one’s cognitive apparatus, the coherence and functionality of which is grounded in the transcendental unity of apperception. In each of these cases, the figure of the proposition models determinations of the thinking subject or representations of the world, such that they are grounded in the identity of that subject. This condemns propositions of consciousness to the insufficiencies involved in systems asserting the ultimate priority of identity over difference. In contrast, the model of the ontological proposition that Deleuze uses to characterize distribution within his univocal system does not presuppose such an identity.

Within his univocal ontology, Deleuze undermines the stability of the well-constituted, identical subject, displacing the subject in favor of systems of difference that take ontological priority over it. This simultaneously undermines the viability of the model of judgment or of propositions of consciousness for articulating 1) the basic structure of reality and 2) the limits of critical epistemology. Most of Deleuze’s arguments developing this shift are presented later in the text than his main discussion of univocity. However, univocity is crucial in offering a basic
ontological structure supporting this shift and avoiding the insufficiencies of the model of judgment. Rather than discarding the model of the proposition in total, Deleuze appropriates and recasts it such that it offers a register for articulating the structure of univocity, which he then elaborated in various ways. Broadly speaking, this model is not grounded in the identity of the subject, it requires no metaphysically transcendent features of reality, no absolute chasm of real or substantial difference between equivocal categories of reality that must be bridged in order for any relation between them to be possible, and, in turn, no “Cartesian predicament” or extrinsic relation between thought and it’s object. For Deleuze, à la Heidegger, doing ontology does not require representing being in adequate judgments, but articulating being via thought’s intrinsic relation to being (though this relation must be distinguished from that supposed in what Deleuze calls “good sense” and “common sense”). Needless to say, and in contrast to Logique du sens, Deleuze’s intention here is not to work out a theory of language. It is to use the metaphor of the proposition to highlight key structural features entailed in the univocity of being. The ontological proposition does not represent being, but articulates being and its constitutive structure with respect to individual beings or worlds of beings. In Heideggerian terms, the ontological proposition figures the structure of the event’s self-determination or intensification and constitution of worlds of beings through the appropriation and expropriation of originary difference and the different aspects of truth, ground, and time-space. Alternatively, the parallel of the ontological proposition in early Heidegger is Dasein’s projection of a world or the temporal structure of being as accessed through the existential analysis of Dasein and manifest in the disclosure of worlds of beings.

Before reconstructing the basic moments of the ontological proposition and Deleuze’s theory of univocity, four points important for understanding why Deleuze takes univocity to be
so crucial should be highlighted. First, univocity entails an immanence of being and beings. Second, univocity offers a model of distribution and hierarchization different from that of analogy. Third, univocity allows individuating differences more originary than specific difference to be distinguished and dealt with systematically. Fourth, according to Deleuze, univocity is consistent with or perhaps even requires a conception of being as difference, in contrast to equivocity, which requires the priority of identity. These together help establish a framework for thinking pure difference in itself and the genetic process by which difference constitutes the kind of world of quasi-stable beings we are used to. As part of this differential process, masked or clothed repetition figures temporality and the constitution of distortion within the univocal ontological framework.

Deleuze sees the proposition, as employed in his univocal ontology, to be composed of three main dimensions: 1) “the sense, or what is expressed in the proposition,” 2) “the designated (what expresses itself in the proposition),” and 3) “the expressors or designators, which are numerical modes – that is to say, differential factors characterizing the elements endowed with sense and designation.” Linking the structure of the proposition directly to the problematic of ontology, Deleuze calls the expressors or designators involved being’s “intrinsic modes or individuating factors.” Intrinsic modes or individuating factors are Deleuzian parallels to Heideggerian beings and the ontological structures constituting those beings. Deleuze is particularly interested in cases where the designated is the same for more than one proposition, while the sense and designators or expressors are different. This is because he is concerned with the way univocal being can be distributed in radically different ways, i.e., is manifested or expressed in radically different beings. Take the propositions, “The morning star is beautiful”

602 DR 52/35.
603 DR 55/37.
and “The evening star is beautiful.” In both instances, the designated is Venus. However, the sense expressed in each proposition is different, as are the expressors or designators endowing that sense. Here, “what is important is that we can conceive of several formally distinct senses which none the less refer to being as if to a single designated entity, ontologically one.”

Deleuze identifies two fundamental theses maintained by the univocal account of being. Keeping track of the second in particular through the following discussion will help show the importance of univocity in framing his ontology of events. The first thesis is that, as with categorial equivocity “there are indeed forms of being, but contrary to what is suggested by the categories, these forms involve no division within being or plurality of ontological senses.” This thesis is straightforward, though seeing how exactly the distinction of forms of being in univocity is defined will require Scotus and Spinoza’s technical language. The thesis simply marks the fundamental difference between univocal and equivocal ontologies: in equivocal ontologies, being is divided in a plurality of different forms, each of which constitutes a different sense of being; in univocal ontologies, there might be different forms of being, but being has one sense for all of them. The second thesis is that “that of which being is said is repartitioned according to essentially mobile individuating differences which necessarily endow ‘each one’ with a plurality of modal significations.” Whatever the nature of different forms of being might be, they are not partitioned by extrinsic predication, but by immanent individuating differences. These immanent individuating differences do not establish general types of beings (e.g., rational animals vs. non-rational animals), but instead determine the existence of individual beings or modes (e.g., Socrates). As I will show through his engagement with Platonism,

604 It should be emphasized that the proposition does not represent being, it figures the structure of the distribution of differential being as it is determined in worlds of beings.
605 DR 387/303.
606 DR 387/303.
Deleuze ultimately casts beings or modes as simulacra. Events are precisely the immanent individuating differences that determine the existence of individual beings, modes, or simulacra. These differences or events are mobile in the sense that when new events are introduced into their system, the extant ones are reconfigured, along with the beings they individuate. Deleuze’s engagement with Scotus, Spinoza, and Nietzsche on univocity traces an evolution of these theses. I shall turn to this now.

3.1: Deleuze’s Engagement with Scotus and Spinoza on Univocity

Deleuze’s main use of the metaphor of the ontological proposition in the context of univocity appears in his engagement with Spinoza. There, the ontological proposition is used to describe the distribution of being (as substance or God or nature – Deus sive Natura) in attributes and modes (beings other than God). I shall return to this in a moment. In his discussion of Spinoza, Deleuze uses a set of technical distinctions developed by Scotus. It will be helpful to summarize these briefly before turning to Spinoza. Together, Scotus and Spinoza offer Deleuze a set of conceptual resources for modeling the nature of immanent individuating differences, i.e., how individual beings, modes, or simulacra are determined in a univocal ontology without relying on an equivocal categorial system. This is necessary since equivocal systems entail a subjection of difference to identity and are insufficient for accounting for individual beings. Yet, Deleuze does not think Scotus or Spinoza provide a satisfactory univocity. Scotus’ system renders being neutral (rather than productive or genetic) and Spinoza’s seems to maintain a separation between being and beings that Deleuze finds problematic. Deleuze’s subsequent engagement with Nietzsche’s eternal return as a figure for univocity provides a way to move beyond Scotus and
Spinoza by eliminating these problems. In turn, it helps Deleuze establish an account of the
determination of individuals on the basis of genetic operations of difference and repetition
(operations which are evental in nature).

In scholastic thought, a mainstay of Christianized Aristotelianism was its ability to
maintain a difference in kind between God’s being and that of creatures. Being is said in many
ways, and though both creatures and God are, the being of creatures is proportionately less
perfect than that of God. Being is said of creatures in a different way than of God. Scotus
challenged this by arguing that being is univocal. Scotus’ univocity placed him on a
philosophical tightrope: on the one hand, it allowed him to deny both pros hen equivocity and
the scholastic analogy of being; on the other, it brought him dangerously close to pantheism (a
position he opposed) since it maintained that being is said of creatures in the same way as of
God. To navigate this, Scotus “neutralized being itself in an abstract concept,” that is, he
understood univocal being “as neutral, neuter, indifferent to the distinction between the finite and
the infinite, the singular and the universal, the created and the uncreated.”607 Neutralizing being
meant that though God and creatures have being in the same sense, this fact does not diminish
the absolute superiority or perfection belonging to God. For Deleuze, neutralizing being was not
Scotus’ high point. Rather, within a univocal system his key accomplishment was defining “two
types of distinction which relate that indifferent, neutral being to difference,” that is, relate it to
that the differentiation of which in reality is accounted for within his system: formal distinction
and modal distinction.608

Aristotelian genera are forms that are really distinct, i.e., they are forms of different kinds
of reality. Their equivocity means that their real distinction is also a numerical distinction, that is,

607 DR 57/39.
608 DR 57/39.
each genus is ontologically unitary and can be counted as one among several other genera. In contrast, for Scotus formal distinction is real, but since being is univocal formal distinction is not a numerical distinction. Here, Deleuze’s first fundamental thesis of univocity – that different forms of being involve no division within being or plurality of ontological senses – is rendered in Scotist terms.

*Formal distinction* is, in effect, a real distinction, since is it grounded in being or in the object; but it is not necessarily a numerical distinction because it is established between essences or senses, between ‘formal reasons’ which may allow the persistence of the unity of the subject to which they are attributed. In this manner, not only is the univocity of being (in relation to God and to creatures) extended in the univocity of its ‘attributes’, but, given his infinity, God can possess his formally distinct univocal attributes without losing anything of his unity.⁶⁰⁹

In contrast, with respect to the second fundamental thesis of univocity, modal distinctions or differences individuating modes are distinctions constituted by variations of intensity immanent to God’s being or his formally different attributes. Modal distinction is modulation of being or an attribute according to its own immanent character. Since a univocal ontology precludes the modification of something by extrinsic attribution, modification must occur solely by ontologically intrinsic differences, that is, by differential tensions immanent to being or to an attribute. In other words, modal distinction occurs by intensive difference. Since for Scotus intensive difference always entails reference to a maximum of intensity (a maximum of heat, of perfection, or of color, for example), modal distinction entails not only the intensive distinction between modes, but also that between modes and the absolute maximum, God.

Spinoza’s ontology of substance/God/nature, attributes, and modes appropriates the Scotist formal and modal distinctions without neutralize being. Instead, being becomes affirmative, i.e., genetic, productive, or, in the language of the proposition, *expressive*: “with

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⁶⁰⁹ *DR* 57-58/39.
Spinoza, univocal being ceases to be neutralized and becomes expressive, it becomes a truly expressive and affirmative proposition.610 Here, “univocal being becomes identical with unique, universal, and infinite substance” and substance is formally distinguished in infinitely many attributes, though we have access to only two (thought and extension).611 Retaining the first fundamental thesis of univocity, attributes are really or qualitatively distinct while real distinction is formal and not numerical. Numerical distinction is found only among modes or beings, each of which populates every attribute. Causality flows from substance to modes and also between modes, with every effect expressed in every attribute, but never from one attribute to another.

How can we make better sense, though, of what it means to shift to an affirmative conception of univocal being? Deleuze’s passages in Différence et répétition on Spinoza’s univocity explain this primarily in two correlative terminologies: as already indicated, that of expression (which binds univocity again to the model of the ontological proposition) and that of power. The couplet of power and affirmation also link Spinoza directly to the Nietzschean world of will to power and fröhliche Wissenschaft. Spinoza’s univocity of being is affirmative because substance is expressive, productive (of modes or beings), and in itself bears no structural principle of negation (in contrast, for example, to Hegel’s dialectic of determinate negation). Spinoza’s ontology is one of power because substance can be understood as a pure power to exist and to cause or produce, while the world of modes produced is one of conative drive (“the actual

610 DR 59/40. For a more extensive discussion of Spinoza’s role in Deleuze’s univocity, see Essays 30-37. Unfortunately, Smith does not treat Nietzsche’s role in any detail here. It is worth noting that Deleuze composed two monographs on Spinoza, the larger of which (Spinoza and Expressionism) was published the same year as Différence et répétition. Though Spinoza and Expressionism was published in 1968, François Dosse asserts that “it was practically finished in the late 1950s” (François Dosse, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari: Intersecting Lives, trans. Deborah Glassman [New York: Columbia, 2010] 118). The point is repeated on page 143. Dan Smith notes this in his essay, “The Doctrine of Univocity: Deleuze’s Ontology of Immanence,” and also that “Deleuze almost certainly developed the notion of univocity while researching” Spinoza and Expressionism (Essays 28 endnote 4).

611 DR 58/40.
essence of [a] … thing itself” is “the conatus with which [it] … endeavors to persist in its own being”). “Expression” and the other terms of the ontological proposition provide a way for understanding the structure and relations of this system. On the one hand, “the attributes behave like real qualitatively different senses which relate to substance as if to a single and same designated.” Just as “the morning star” and “the evening star” express different senses, but designate one and the same object, the attributes are formally distinct senses of univocal being (substance), which they designate. On the other hand, “substance in turn behaves like an ontologically unique sense in relation to the modes which express it, and inhabit it like individuating factors or intrinsic and intense degrees.”

As with Scotist univocity, this model precludes the determination or individuation of modes by means of the attribution of ontologically extrinsic predicates. Once again, the question becomes: How can the determination of modes be accounted for? The answer comes again in terms of intensive difference and forms a Spinozist version of the second fundamental thesis of univocity. Namely, insofar as Spinoza’s world of modes is one of conative drive, while substance is pure power to act and exist, intensive difference is difference between intensive degrees of such power. Modes or beings are determined by differential relations of power, or, as Smith puts it, “the power or intensity of a being is its relation to Being.” The differential points distinguishing between intensive degrees of power prefigure the events that determine the individual beings or simulacra in Deleuze’s ontology.

Despite these advances in Spinoza’s version of univocity, Deleuze identifies a shortcoming: “there still remains a difference between substance and the modes: Spinoza’s

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612 E3P7. Substance is self-caused, “the immanent… cause of all things” (modes), and free (it “exists solely form the necessity of its own nature,” not constrained [coactus] (E1D1, E1P18, and E1D7).
613 DR 58/40, my italics.
614 DR 58-59/40, my italics.
615 Essays 40.
substance appears independent of the modes, while the modes are dependent on substance, but as though on something other than themselves." It is true that being is said of substance and of modes in the same way, and yet substance has being in se, while modes have being in alio. This marks the difference between the two Spinozist registers of reality: Natura naturans and Natura naturata. Though Deleuze is a bit vague about why exactly this difference is a problem, the idea seems to be that substance maintains a character of identity, even if this identity takes the form of indivisibility or unity. Substance is formally, but not numerically, differentiated in the attributes (the attributes relate to substance as if to a single and same designated). And at the level of modes, difference appears as intensive and numerical difference, while substance’s alterity and priority with respect to modes means that the intensive differences that individuate modes are thought as derivative of identity.

The fix Deleuze suggests is an elimination of this difference between substance and modes: in Spinoza’s language, “substance must itself be said of the modes and only of the modes.” Eliminating this difference is possible, Deleuze argues, only via a “categorical reversal” accomplished in Nietzsche’s eternal return. Stated rather simplistically, this categorical reversal will be one “according to which being is said of becoming, identity of that which is different, the one of the multiple, etc.” Key here is the repositioning of difference and repetition as the ontological bases for the production of identity and similarity, rather than difference and repetition being ontologically secondary to identity and similarity. To accomplish

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616 DR 59/40.
617 E1P13 and E1P14Cor1.
618 DR 59/40.
619 DR 59/40.
620 DR 59/40.
this categorical reversal, Deleuze argues that we must “realize univocity in the form of repetition
in the eternal return.” This is quite complex.

3.2: Deleuze’s Use of Nietzsche’s Eternal Return as a Figure of Univocity

Deleuze adopts Nietzsche’s eternal return and employs it primarily in two related senses. First, it
is the univocal ontological movement by which difference generates repetition and repetition
generates difference, or, more precisely, the genetic flow of being or becoming insofar as
difference and repetition together constitute that flow. This conception of univocity establishes
the conceptual reversal called for at the end of his discussion of Spinoza. In a second sense,
“eternal return” is one of the names Deleuze gives to his third synthesis of time – the pure and
empty form of time (future) that enables the other two syntheses to occur. Deleuze’s preliminary
definition of the event is given precisely in terms of this third synthesis. Thus, in the eternal
return’s second sense, it is a figure for the evental structure of time. In Section 3.2 of this
chapter, I shall explain the first of these senses. In Section 3.3, I shall turn to a brief
reconstruction of Deleuze’s three syntheses of time, which provide more conceptual detail for the
genetic movement of univocal being. More importantly, this leads to an explanation of the
second sense of the eternal return and a preliminary definition of Deleuze’s concept of event.

In its first sense, the eternal return has both an ontological and methodological role for
Deleuze, and the latter is grounded in the former. Ontologically, the eternal return is a figure for
articulating the relation between being as difference and the genetic and temporal characters of
repetition. Methodologically, it supplies thought with a means of “practical selection among

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621 DR 388/304.
differences according to their capacity to produce.”  

622 The confluence of these can be expressed well in terms of Deleuze’s use of the phrase, “make the difference” (faire la différence).  

623 As I will show, at the ontological level the eternal return makes the difference because in it differences are generated. At the methodological level, it makes the difference in the sense that 1) it allows for conceptual distinctions to be made between ontologically originary, affirmative, or pure forms of difference and forms derived from identity or principles of negativity and 2) by that very act, difference in the originary ontological sense is generated. In other words, as I shall show, the eternal return supplies a test to be used by accounts of the ontological problematic produced in thought or text – a test for separating out pure difference from expiated difference, for discerning pure difference as intrinsic to the constitution of the account itself, thus for attaining an articulation of the differential structure of being, and for generating difference in the ontological sense. Thus, the selection carried out in the eternal return is not simply methodological but also a basic element of the ontological operation of eternal return.  

624 For Deleuze, as I will show, realizing univocity in the form of repetition in the eternal return contributes substantially to the categorical reversal of difference and identity, repetition and generality. It thereby collapses the Spinozist registers of substance and modes into a single register of churning, differentially individuated modes, which Deleuze will come to designate as simulacra. As I have indicated, simulacra themselves do have two registers, which Deleuze describes in terms of the virtual and actual or dialectical Ideas/problems and solutions. But these registers no longer carry Spinoza’s sense of being in se versus being in alio. Detailing the virtual

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622 DR 60/41.  
623 DR 43/28.  
624 It is worth noting that although Deleuze is clearly not doing ontology on the basis of an analysis of human existence, as Heidegger did in Sein und Zeit, he is concerned in several instances with the relation of thought to being via the being of thought. The confluence of the methodological and ontological roles of the eternal return (in its first sense) is a Deleuzian parallel to the confluence of thinking and being articulated by Heidegger in terms of Dasein.
register of dialectical Ideas/problems and the role of events in it will be my primary goal in Chapter V. To accomplish Deleuze’s categorical reversal, the univocity of being must not only be thought in terms of eternal return, the ontology of the eternal return must pass through Platonism. More specifically, the test of the eternal return must be applied to the Platonic dialectic, distinguishing the elements of the dialectic complicit to the expiation of difference from the affirmative differential elements or phantastical elements lurking in their ground (fond), the “Heraclitan world” that Deleuze believes “still growls in Platonism.” This results in a Deleuzian overturning of Platonism, which is not a negation or dismissal of Platonism, but a radical transformation of it. This transformation entails undermining the coordinates of the “grounding test” (l’épreuve du fondement) that the Platonic dialectic is designed to implement – the test to distinguish proper claimants or participants in an Idea from false claimants or simulacra – and the production of an ontology of simulacra constituted by the processes involved in difference and repetition. I turn to this in Section 4 of this chapter.

How, though, does Deleuze’s conception of the eternal return in its first sense lead to a categorical reversal of identity and difference, generality and repetition? In early Nietzsche scholarship, it was a common view that the eternal return is a return of the identical: given a universe with a finite and determinate set of components (for instance, atoms) and an infinite span of time, it is inevitable that the combination or arrangement of components making up our world today will be replicated in the distant future again and again, even if only after myriad other arrangements have come and gone. In this scenario, the eternal return is a return of the

625 DR 83/59.
626 DR 88/63.
627 A version of this interpretation can be found, for example, in Walter Kaufmann’s introduction to The Gay Science, where he discusses the eternal return as “the notion that everything recurs eternally in identical fashion” (“Translator’s Introduction,” in Friedrich Nietzsche, The Gay Science, trans. Walter Kaufmann [New York: Vintage Books, 1974], 18).
same world, and that return of the same is guaranteed by the identity through time of the
components of the universe. However, as Deleuze rightly points out, Nietzsche’s world is not
one reducible to identities of any kind. Instead, eternal return “presupposes a world (that of the
will to power) in which all previous identities have been abolished and dissolved.”628 Will to
power always drives beyond itself, transforming itself or differing from itself. There is no
identity conserved in principle in these transformations. Consequently, “eternal return cannot
mean the return of the Identical.”629 In Deleuze’s ontological interpretation, in eternal return
“returning is being, but only the being of becoming.”630 That is, being is inscribed with no
principle of identity, being is transformation or differing: being is the being of becoming. Thus,
there is no same or identical to return, other than transformation or differing itself: “the eternal
return does not bring back ‘the same’, but returning constitutes the only Same of that which
becomes.”631 This transformation or differentiation and that one can be said to be the same only
insofar as both are transformations or differentiations. And this transformation or differentiation
repeats only insofar as with it differentiation occurs again. Thus, the concept of the eternal return
entails a priority of difference over identity and a movement of repetition that is built into that
difference. The concept of the eternal return is the categorical reversal that Deleuze sought. The
returning of difference is the production of the only identity possible, but this identity is no more
than a sheen on difference.

Returning is the becoming-identical of becoming itself. Returning is thus the only identity, but
identity as a secondary power; the identity of difference, the identical which belongs to the
different, or turns around the different. Such an identity, produced by difference, is determined as
‘repetition.’632

628 DR 59/41.
629 DR 59/41.
630 DR 59/41.
631 DR 59/41.
632 DR 59/41.
This provides us with a preliminary definition of Deleuze’s concept of repetition within his univocal ontology: repetition is the return of difference, or difference becoming-identical insofar as difference differentiates again. In this originary sense, repetition is not a repetition of any thing that persists with identity through time, for there are no metaphysically stable identities: being something means being something that transforms or differs. Neither is repetition generality, since being is not a substance or subject guaranteeing the identity of categorical types that might be instantiated in individuals. The only thing that can be repeated at this level of Deleuze’s ontology is transformation or differentiation itself, which is precisely never a substantial identity. The only way that identity can be spoken of sensibly here is as describing the fact that it is difference that is repeated in the process of becoming. Additionally, this arrangement provides a preliminary sense of how Deleuze’s theory of repetition is a theory of time. Even though his theory of time is extremely complex, a basic logic of time is present even in this definition of repetition: repetition is the productive transformation enacted by difference, but this entails a sequence of ontological genesis, i.e., a certain sequence of time. Clearly, this is not a duration through which an identity persists, but the unfolding or movement of differentiation. In the Introduction to *Différence et répétition*, Deleuze draws on Nietzsche and Kierkegaard’s respective conceptions of theatre to characterize this movement. I bring this up because Deleuze’s emphasis there is on distinguishing a type of movement that is not mediated by the framework of representation and identity. Deleuze’s movement of differentiation is not subject to the framework of representation. Neither is it locomotion. Following Nietzsche and Kierkegaard, Deleuze is concerned primarily with the movement of reality itself, that is, the movement of becoming or of the ongoing sequence of ontological genesis. Repetition – masked or clothed repetition – is this movement: “theatre is real movement,” “this movement, the
essence and the interiority of movement, is not opposition [à la Hegel], not mediation, but repetition.  "633 This movement is one in which “repetition is woven from one distinctive point to another."634 In other words, it is the immanent flow of reality as it transforms. I will continue to come back to these themes as they come up in Deleuze’s work.

When Deleuze engages Nietzsche in relation to univocity, the language of the ontological proposition drops out. Yet the same ontological operation figured by the ontological proposition is found in the eternal return. Deleuze used the notion of the ontological proposition in the context of Scotus and Spinoza to describe univocal being in its constitutive structure with respect to individual beings or worlds of beings. Included in the ontological proposition are the genetic movements of being. In the context of Nietzsche, these movements are figured by the eternal return, and particularly by the test or selection enacted by the eternal return. Like an extreme form of the principle of sufficient reason, the selection performed in the eternal return is between what can and cannot be, or rather between what can and cannot prolong becoming. In this selection:

It is not the Whole, the Same or the prior identity which returns. Nor is it the small or the large, either as parts of the whole or as elements of the same. Only the extreme forms [of difference] return – those which, large or small, are deployed within the limit and extend to the limit of their power, transforming themselves and changing one into another. Only the extreme, the excessive, returns; that which passes into something else and becomes identical. 635

At the ontological level, what passes the test of the eternal return is what is able to be or to become, to differ and transform beyond what came before. The test is of whether something can persist in its being. But since being is difference, persisting in being does not mean remaining identical or the same. The test, then, is of whether something can produce a

633 DR 18/10, italics removed.
634 DR 19/10.
635 DR 60/41.
transformation, go beyond itself, create something new, or continue a differential series. That which is able to pass exceeds identity and with it the shackles of conceptual difference.

As an aspect of the eternal return’s genetic selection of what exists, affirmative forms of being as difference are distilled from forms determined by the negative. Deleuze finds Hegel’s dialectic of determinate negation to exemplify forms of difference that are determined by the negative. In such systems, “negation is the motor and driving force [puissance]” of the modulations of being. According to Deleuze, in Hegel’s system “difference implies the negative, and allows itself to lead to contradiction, only to the extent that its subordination to the identical is maintained.”

Though Deleuze does not mention it directly, interpretations of Heidegger’s middle and late ontology that maintain his account of being to be a-lēthic should be included here. In such interpretations, λήθη (concealment, withdrawal, negativity) is taken to be a structurally irreducible aspect of being. As I argued in Chapter II, however, this is a mistaken reading of Heidegger, or at least of Heidegger’s middle period. In Beiträge, Heidegger’s account of the a-lēthic structures is underwritten by a logic of difference defining beyng or the event. The structural negativity involved in λήθη is generated by the differentiation of originary difference from itself, and is thus consequent upon that difference. For this reason, I hold that Heidegger’s evental ontology in fact passes the test of the eternal return as Deleuze conceives it.

In systems driven by a negative principle in being, affirmation has to be a secondary force. That is, affirmation is generated only on the basis of primary ontological negation. Deleuze uses Zarathustra’s Ass to illustrate this. The Ass is the slave, the bearer of reactive values. He is able to say yes, “but for him to affirm is to bear, to assume or to shoulder a

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636 DR 75/53.
637 DR 2/xix.
The Ass affirms, but its affirmation is always a retroactive affirmation of what is already negative in principle. In contrast, Deleuze uses Dionysus-Zarathustra to illustrate systems in which affirmation is primary and negation produced only secondary. Dionysus-Zarathustra’s affirmation is that of creation, he creates new values. Here, the negative can follow only in response to creative affirmation:

It is no longer the negative which produces a phantom of affirmation like an ersatz, but rather a No which results from affirmation … The negative is an epiphenomenon. Negation, like the ripples in a pond, is the effect of an affirmation which is too strong or too different.639

In Deleuze’s reading of Nietzsche, the test enacted by the eternal return, selecting which forms of being or difference shall be, entails selecting between forms that are in principle subject to identity or determined by negation and ones in which affirmation – as a genetic or creative power – is primary, with negation and identity following only secondarily. More specifically, this distinguishes between ontological forms of difference that are primarily negative and ones that are primarily affirmative or creative. Following Nietzsche, Deleuze calls what is affirmative or creative “superior,” in contrast to what is “average.” “Eternal return alone effects the true selection, because it eliminates the average forms and uncovers ‘the superior form of everything that is.’ … Eternal return ‘makes’ the difference [‘fait la différence] because it creates the superior form.”640 The genetic operation of the eternal return does entail a function of negativity, but only in the sense of determining what forms of being or difference shall be. That which is structurally negative – average forms – are unable to prolong a series of differences; they eventually drop off because they are unable to continue to be or to become something new. Here, the negation of the negative describes the limits or the contours of reality, helping to delineate

638 DR 75/53.
639 DR 76/54.
640 DR 77/54-55.
what can persist in being from what cannot. In Deleuze’s words: “Eternal return employs negation like a Nachfolge and invents a new formula for the negation of the negation: everything which can be denied is and must be denied. … All that is negative and all that denies, all those average affirmations which bear the negative, all those pale and unwelcome ‘Yeses’ which come from ‘Nos’, everything which cannot pass the test of eternal return – all these must be denied.”

3.3: Eternal Return, Time, Ground, Event

As noted, Deleuze’s two main uses of the concept of event in Différence et répétition are found first in the context of the third synthesis of time and second in his theory of dialectical Ideas and their actualization. Explaining the second of these is my focus in Chapter V. But as I have argued, doing that requires first reconstructing Deleuze’s account of the ontological status of systems of simulacra, i.e., of systems in which different relates to different through difference itself. My work so far in Chapter IV builds toward that and toward Deleuze’s first, preliminary definition of the event in the third synthesis of time. These two goals of Chapter IV are tightly related, since the simulacral account of beings relies on ontological univocity, while one register for defining the univocal flow of being is that of the genetic sequence of temporal syntheses. Thus far in this chapter I have taken a set of necessary steps toward accomplishing these goals. I first showed the central problems motivating Deleuze in Différence et répétition: the subjection of difference to identity, the reduction of repetition to generality, and the regime of representation. To explain why Deleuze holds these to be problems, I focused on his analysis of them within the context of Aristotelian equivocity. I then turned to Deleuze’s first outline of a solution to these problems, namely, proposing a univocal system. Deleuze engages Scotus,

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641 DR 77/55.
Spinoza, and Nietzsche to draw resources for developing the general framework for his univocal ontology (e.g., the ideas that there is only one sense of being, that being is distributed according to immanent individuating differences, and that being is affirmative or productive). Deleuze’s conception of Nietzsche’s eternal return in its first sense was particularly important because it provided a way for thinking the ontological priority of difference and repetition over identity and generality, and for establishing a basic account of the affirmative, genetic flow of difference and repetition within the framework of univocity. It also supplied a simultaneously methodological and ontological test by which superior or originary forms of difference are distinguished from ones derived from identity or principles of negation. However, in the context of his discussion of univocity, Deleuze does not offer much more clarity about the structure of the genetic flow figured by the eternal return than I have discussed above.

Deleuze’s notoriously complex theory of time supplies a register in which to give greater conceptual clarity to this structure and also a preliminary definition of his concept of event. I shall turn to a reconstruction of certain elements of this theory in this section. As expressed in terms of time, the order of ontological genesis deals in particular with the genesis of phantastical or pre-representational components of the representational subject. My focus, however, will be on the structure of the three syntheses of time and their relation to Deleuze’s concept of event. As indicated, within the context of the third synthesis of time Deleuze briefly comes back to the figure of the eternal return, using it in a second sense. Looking ahead, in the third synthesis he defines time as “a formal and empty order [ordre formel vide],” “a totality [ensemble] and a series,” while “the idea of a totality of time must be understood as” a caesura. This caesura, in

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642 DR 120/89.
turn, “must be determined in the image of an action, of a unique and tremendous event, which is adequate to time as a whole.” I shall turn to this in what follows.

Before proceeding any further, it is important to take notice of Deleuze’s terminology of ground, since it plays an important role in his theory of time, his engagement with Platonism, and his account of virtual or dialectical Ideas and the events they involve. It also connects his ontology to Heidegger’s at a direct conceptual level. Deleuze’s terminology of ground is made up of a number of different cognates of the French word “fond.” “Fond” and perhaps its most important cognate, “fondement,” are both regularly used to translate into French the German “Grund.” And both are regularly translated into English as “ground.” In addition to “fond” and “fondement,” of particular importance are “fondation” (“foundation”), the “sans-fond” (“groundless”), “effondement” (“ungrounding”), and the verb “fonder” (“to ground”). For Deleuze, “to ground [fonder] is to determine,” but this determination has different senses according to which modality of ground is operative.

The two main modalities of ground are fond and fondement. Effondement and the sans-fond are associated with fond, while fondation is associated with fondement. The basic sense of fondement is that of a mediating third term (genus) or substantial ground, which “serves as the underpinning for the forms of representation.”

Deleuze distinguishes three main versions of fondement. In the first version, “the ground is the Same or the Identical.” It is exemplified by Platonism’s theory of Ideas: this ground “enjoys supreme identity, that which is supposed to belong to the Ideas or to the auto kath’ hauto. What

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643 DR 120/89, trans. modified.
644 The translations here are those provided by Paul Patton. For further discussion of these terms, see Patton, “Translator’s Preface,” in DR xiii and Louise Burchill, “Translator’s Preface,” in Alain Badiou, Deleuze: The Clamor of Being, trans. Louise Burchill (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), xviii-xix.
645 DR 349/272.
647 DR 349/272.
it is, and what it possesses, it is and it possesses primarily, in the utmost.”

What this ground grounds are icons, beings that claim to possess what it possesses, but only secondarily. The determination enabled by this fondement is, on the one hand, that of distinguishing genuine claimants or icons from false ones and, on the other, the ontological determination of the essential nature of those genuine claimants. The second sense of fondement pertains to the goal of infinite or orgiastic representation. Namely, this fondement is the sufficient reason for some thing: it is a sufficient reason with an infinite comprehension and extension equal to one. The determination effectuated here is the infinite determination of the thing in its predicates, which are subordinated “to the identical and the other requirements of representation.”

The third sense of fondement pertains specifically to Deleuze’s second synthesis of time, that of the pure or immemorial past. As I shall discuss, “to ground [fonder], in this third sense, is to represent the present – in other words, to make the present arrive and pass within representation (finite or infinite). The ground [fondement] then appears as an immemorial Memory or pure past, a past which itself was never present but which causes the present to pass, and in relation to which all the other presents coexist in a circle.”

As I shall discuss, the determination effectuated here is the condensation of the pure past into the time of duration or the present. For Deleuze, fondation, which is closely related to fondement, is a foundation. In particular, this fondation is defined in terms of the first synthesis of time, that of the living present or duration.

In contrast, the basic sense of fond is of a genetic or productive, non-mediated differential operation that is ontologically prior to any fondement or fondation. Fond provides the sufficient reason or explanation for the individual existence of simulacral beings, but not on the basis of any representational framework. Explaining the constitution of such a fond will require concepts

648 DR 349/272.
649 DR 350/273.
650 DR 351/273-274.
that I will not detail until Chapter V. In short, though, it is a multiplicity – or, more precisely, the
dimension of indeterminate difference that that modulates reciprocal differential relations and
singularities composing a multiplicity. As I will show later, in this sense the fond is the structure
of the event. Since fond is prior to any fondation, it is not grounded, but groundless (sans-fond).
Effondement is what occurs with the introduction of fond in the guise of a differential element or
event into the structure of an extent fondation, insofar as this disrupts that fondation,
reconfigures it, and shatters the illusion that it was ontologically substantial or absolute.
Interestingly, this means that the ontological status of fondation itself is ambiguous: “the ground
[fondement] is slightly bent: on the one hand, it leans toward what it grounds, towards the forms
of representation; on the other hand, it turns and plunges into a groundlessness [sans-fond]
 beyond the ground [fondement] which resists all forms and cannot be represented.” Fond as
sans-fond is the Deleuzian version of Heidegger’s Ab-grund. Deleuze hesitates to describe this as
an “abyss” though, since he attributes the terminology of abyss to regimes of orgiastic
representation: “representation, especially when it becomes infinite, is imbued with a sentiment
of groundlessness [sans fond]. Because it has become infinite in order to include difference
within itself, however, it represents groundlessness [sans fond] as a completely undifferentiated
abyss, a universal lack of difference, an indifferent black nothingness.” Deleuze is wrong on
this count, at least with respect to Heidegger. As I showed in Chapters II and III Heidegger’s
conception of Ab-grund is precisely differential, it is an excess of difference not a lack, and it is
the heart of beyng as event, not nothingness. This shows that Heidegger’s conception of ground
is very close to Deleuze’s – more so than Deleuze recognized. The following analyses of time,

651 DR 352/274-275, italics removed.
652 DR 354/276.
Deleuze’s engagement with Platonism, and (in Chapter V) his theory of dialectical Ideas and the events they involve will provide specific contexts in which he uses these concepts of ground.

Deleuze presents the three syntheses of time in a sequence of logical entailment. In a way similar to Heidegger’s methodological movement along a diagenic axis, Deleuze progresses by showing that the first synthesis (time as a living present) requires the more profound second synthesis (time as an immemorial past), which itself requires the yet more profound third (future as a caesura and empty form of time). A paradox in the first synthesis logically leads to the second, and the incompleteness of the second logically leads to the third. Yet also like Heidegger, this methodological progression is the inverse of the progression of ontological genesis, i.e., of the ontological flow of univocal difference and repetition (for Deleuze): the first synthesis is enabled by the second, and both the second and first together are enabled by the third. In fact, Deleuze assigns distinct terms of “ground” to each synthesis. The first synthesis is “the foundation [fondation] of time,” the second is the “ground [fondement] of time,” and the third is a “groundlessness [sans-fond]” or “ungrounding [effondement]” of time. 653

Deleuze’s first synthesis of time explains the internal logic of duration or the “living present,” which operates at the level of actuality. 654 In contrast to the early Heidegger’s account of ecstatic time, one of Deleuze’s central claims regarding the living present is that it does not have to go outside itself to pass. The living present is a present that passes, while the past and future belong to it, i.e., do not constitute temporal dimensions outside the present. Deleuze explains the duration of the living present largely in terms of Hume’s account of the formation of habit and the principles of association involved therein. As I shall show, of particular importance for Deleuze here is the fact that the time of the living present is constituted by repetition and

653 DR 108 and 123/79 and 91, italics removed.
654 DR 97/71.
difference, where repetition is understood as the repetition of perfectly independent, discontinuous, instantaneous sensible elements and cases and difference is understood as the difference drawn from such repetition. This difference is drawn insofar as repetition produces a general expectation, i.e., a futural orientation.

Deleuze builds his account of time by beginning with the Humean radical empiricist account of the contraction of a habit. The Humean model is attractive for Deleuze because it presupposes no identity in subject or object and no transcendental cognitive faculties beyond an imagination. Here, the imagination is defined simply as “a contractile power”: in the encounter with sequential sensible elements, the imagination is “like a sensitive plate, it retains one [sensible] case when the other appears.” That is, the imagination serves as a purely sensitive foundation bearing the traces of sensible elements and contracting habits in the form of associations. Take the independent sensible elements A and B, for example. When B follows A, the imagination contracts an association of the elements (like one contracts a cold), and in that association contracts the elements into the case AB (in the sense of drawing them together in an association). With each instance in which B follows A (AB, AB, AB), the association of the two elements is strengthened. As a consequence of this association, each new time A appears, B is expected to follow (AB, AB, AB, A…). More specifically, “when A appears, we expect B with a force corresponding to the qualitative impression of all the contracted ABs.” This expectation is a habit: we contract the habit of expecting B to follow if A appears.

For Deleuze, the contraction of a habit in this manner is the synthesis of time as duration or the lived present. “Time is constituted only in the originary synthesis which operates on the repetition of instants. This synthesis contracts the successive independent instants into one

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655 *DR* 96/70. A sensible *case* is a set of associated sensible elements, like AB. A case itself can function as an element, as in the repetition AB, AB, AB.

656 *DR* 97/70.
another, thereby constituting the lived, or living, present.”657 The past of the living present is formed by the retention of contracted cases in the imagination. This past is not a fading chain of things and events that had their moment as present and have now passed away. And it is not the past as accessed by a faculty of memory that calls a thing or event into the present again. The past of the living present is the retained trace of sensible elements and cases that exists as a dimension of the present itself. Similarly the future of the living present is neither a field of possibility nor the set of moments that have not yet become present. It is the expectation that what comes next will be like what came before. That expectation is constituted precisely through the repetition and contraction of sensible elements and cases. Thus, the past and future are both “dimensions of the present itself in so far as it is a contraction of instants”: “the past in so far as the preceding instants are retained in the contraction; the future because its expectation is anticipated in this same contraction.”658 This past can therefore be referred to as the “present past” and the future as the “present future.”

The constitution of the present past and present future establishes a temporal asymmetry that describes the repetition of difference and the production of new difference through repetition at this level of Deleuze’s ontology of time. The movement of that production is the passing of the living present. On the one hand, the retention belonging to contraction is a retention of particular sensible elements and cases. The repetition of sensible particulars is a repetition subsumed within no generality. It is a repetition of difference, that is, of different elements that are in no way instances of a general concept. Instead, generality is produced by that repetition. For on the other hand, the expectation constituting the present future is generated precisely by drawing a general “living rule for the future” from the particulars repeated: B followed A, B

657 DR 97/70.
658 DR 97/70-71.
followed A, B followed A, thus B generally follows A and I expect that next time A occurs, B will follow.\footnote{DR 97/71.} In this way the synthesis or contraction of the living present “goes from past to future in the present, thus from the particular to the general, thereby imparting direction to the arrow of time.”\footnote{DR 97/71.} In the living present, contracting an expectation in the form of a generality is the production of something new and different, namely, a generality. That generality did not exist already in the sensible particulars. It is a new difference that has been produced, i.e., “a difference that the mind \textit{draws from} repetition.”\footnote{DR 96/70.} The flow of ontological genesis here is therefore a flow from difference and repetition to generality and the endowment of a sheen of identity on that difference (I expect B to follow A because I take each A and B to be identical in their own kind).

The synthesis of the living present produces generality in the form of expectation, but it also serves as the foundation (\textit{fondation}) enabling higher level, active cognitive faculties like memory and understanding. I will not go into detail about the production of these faculties, but briefly point out two related reasons that this is important: the synthesis or contraction of time as the living present is generative of faculties that are 1) active, therefore the synthesis is passive and 2) that are involved in representation, therefore the synthesis is pre-representative. Deleuze refers to the synthesis of the living present as a “passive synthesis” of time since it is not the result of any activity on the part of the mind, serving instead as the foundation for the constitution of active cognitive faculties: the passive synthesis of time “is not carried out by the mind, but occurs \textit{in} the mind which contemplates, prior to all memory and all reflection.”\footnote{DR 97/71.} The faculty of memory, by which one actively and reflectively reconstitutes or represents past events

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in the mind, is possible only “on the basis of the qualitative impression[s] in the imagination” that are pre-reflective, non-representational, and retained in contraction. Likewise, the predictive activity carried out by the understanding is possible only on the basis of the generalities synthesized in the imagination. This activity is one by which the understanding “weights the expectation in the imagination in proportion to the number of distinct similar cases observed and recalled” and constitutes a future that “ceases to be the immediate future of anticipation in order to become the reflexive future of prediction.” Deleuze refers to the active, reflective, representational temporality established in memory and understanding as “active syntheses.” “The active syntheses of memory and understanding are superimposed upon and supported by the passive synthesis of the imagination.”

The internal logic of the first synthesis of time constitutes the duration of the present and, at the ontological level, one manner in which univocal being is developed in determinate structures. Yet Deleuze identifies a paradox in that logic, the consequence of which is that the first synthesis is insufficient for providing an account of time. This paradox drives the account of time to a second synthesis or “pure past” that is the ground (fundament) for the first. The paradox held in the first synthesis is the following: the living present constitutes time “while passing in the time constituted.” In other words, the contraction by which duration is originated is itself intratemporal. “Time does not escape the present, but the present does not stop moving by leaps and bounds which encroach upon one another.” The lived present passes, but doesn’t go outside of itself to do so. The movement of that passing could never occur if there were not

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663 DR 98/71.  
664 DR 98/71.  
665 DR 98/71.  
666 DR 108/79.  
667 DR 108/79.
another time in which it can occur. This second time is that of the pure past or memory, which is articulated in the second synthesis.

The form of the pure past or memory must be distinguished from the active memory described in the first synthesis as a power of representing past things or events in the present. The second synthesis is again passive and the memory and past at stake in it are an immemorial memory and a past that never is present and never was present. While the duration of habit constitutes time at the level of actuality, the pure past is a past the reality of which is virtual. Deleuze’s account of this is modeled on Bergson’s cone of memory. If habit or contraction in the first synthesis “causes the present to pass,” memory or the pure past is “that to which the present and habit belong,” i.e., the time in which the present present passes.⁶⁶⁸ Deleuze describes this relation in terms of the distinction between fondation and fondement, though the metaphors he uses to clarify the distinction in this context are helpful only to a degree. “The first synthesis, that of habit, is truly the foundation [fondation] of time.”⁶⁶⁹ How are we to understand the nature of fondation here? “The foundation concerns the soil: it shows how something is established upon the soil, how it occupies and possesses it.”⁶⁷⁰ In contrast, memory is “the ground [fondement] of time.”⁶⁷¹ If the fondation pertains to the soil, “the ground [fondement] comes rather from the sky, it goes from the summit to the foundations [fondations], and measures the possessor and the soil against one another according to a title of ownership [propriété].”⁶⁷² I take these definitions to mean that habit is the “soil” occupied and possessed by duration or the living present, which is established by the contractions constituting habit. Memory or the pure past, then, measures the entirety of the living present from its most derived aspects (summit) to its most originary ones.

⁶⁶⁸ DR 108/79.
⁶⁶⁹ DR 108/79.
⁶⁷⁰ DR 108/79.
⁶⁷¹ DR 108/79.
⁶⁷² DR 108/79.
(foundations) by constituting the transcendental condition for the distinction of these aspects at all. The first synthesis belongs to the second insofar as the second is the fondement enabling the first to occur. “Memory is the fundamental synthesis of time which constitutes the being of the past (that which causes the present to pass).”

Showing the basic logic of the passive synthesis of memory or the pure past can best be done by beginning with active or representational memory. When the active memory accesses a past event (i.e., “former present”), it recollects or reproduces that former present in the present present. This operation implies an a priori or pure past dimension that in each case is in excess over the representational recollection itself. How so? The former presents that are recollected themselves included a dimension of representational recollection when they were present presents. Though Deleuze maintains that this is the case for any recollection, it can be seen especially well in cases in which I recollect a previous recollection: in the present present I recollect a former present that occurred this morning, where that former present was itself one in which I recollected last night’s dinner. When active memory recollects former presents, those former presents themselves include dimensions of recollection and this implies a compounding logical expansion of the past dimension. For when last night’s dinner was a present present, it included recollections that informed it. This means that when I now recollect this morning’s thoughts about dinner last night, I recollect as a part of them the recollections involved in dinner. And the past presents recalled during dinner themselves involved recollection. Thus, my simple recollection of this morning’s thoughts is not so simple: it implies a compounding network of recollections expanding logically from the point of the present present. This expanse of memory implied in each recollection is Deleuze’s version of Bergson’s cone of memory. Moreover, this

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673 DR 109/80.
674 DR 109/80.
expanse is ultimately in excess over active or representational recollection. I actively recollect
now my thoughts this morning and, in turn, dinner last night. I even represent the recollections
involved in dinner. But at some point as this logic expands, the recollections involved in past
presents are beyond my capacity for representation: even though the recollections involved in
recollections of recollections of recollections, etc., are implicit, they are not explicit in my
representation. This dimension of the past that is in excess over active representational memory
is indeed a memory, but not one that is ever remembered: it is an immemorial memory or pure
past that operates as a storage bank for all past presents. And it exceeds the ability of active
memory to represent the past at all. This immemorial memory or pure past is the dimension of
time in which the living present of the first synthesis is grounded.

However, if time were composed only of the living present and the pure past, a serious
problem would arise: time would be locked into a circular repetition of the same events. Recall
that in the living present of duration, future as expectation and past as the retention of contracted
sensible elements are precisely moments of the present present, not a past or future that is
beyond the present (they are the present past and present future). When a present present passes,
it passes not into retention, but into the pure past described in the second synthesis. If there were
only these two syntheses, this would be the end of the story of time: time would merely be the
buildup of the pure past from passing presents. Memory, from the perspective of the present
present, would recollect past presents, but there would be no future endowing the sequence of
presents with novelty or fecundity. In other words, the content that memory would recollect of
the past presents would be nothing more than that of previous recollections of past presents,
together with their contracted habits. The repetition of the past in the present through active
memory would be a circular repetition of the same. Deleuze allegorizes this in terms of Plato’s
myth of metempsychosis – the story of the soul’s migration after death to the realm of Ideas, the soul’s sight of those Ideas, its migration to a new birth in which it forgets the Ideas, and the process of recollection of the Ideas during its new life. Here the eternal Ideas take the role of the same that is repeated. And the lives lived, together with the recollections enacted in them, take the role of living present and its active memory. In this model, there is no future (other than present future) and time is locked into a circular repetition of the same.

This is clearly not the case, however, so there must be a third time that breaks the circle – a third synthesis that constitutes the future. If the second synthesis operates as a ground (fondement) for the first, but thereby locks those two syntheses into a circular time, the third synthesis is a sans-fond which fractures the circle and effectuates an effondement or ungrounding of it. In Deleuze’s account, this third synthesis is structured as a caesura: a fracture, disruption, or disjoint that enables the overall order of time. In its preliminary definition here in terms of time, the event is precisely the caesural structure of this third synthesis. The caesura of time “must be determined in the image of an action, of a unique and tremendous event, which is adequate to time as a whole.”675 More precisely, as caesural the event or third synthesis has three main moments: it is a “series,” a “totality [ensemble],” a “formal and empty order [ordre formel vide]” of time.676

First, the series enabled by the event is the future. Instead of time being locked into a circular logic, the caesura of time unfolds that circle into a serial or ordinal progression. As a caesura, the event distributes the first and second syntheses of time (i.e., distinguishes them as different orders of time), and fractures their circular logic. Thus, the event “creates the possibility

675 DR 120/89, trans. modified.
676 DR 120/89.
of a temporal series” rather than merely a circular temporal repetition of the same. In other words, it opens up for time a future that is not a repetition of the same, but a flow of ontological creativity or genesis. In Deleuze’s second sense of the eternal return, it figures this futural series: “eternal return, in its esoteric truth, concerns – and can concern – only the third time of the series. …that is why it is properly called a belief of the future, a belief in the future” or “the future as such.” The series or future is precisely the univocal genetic flow of difference and repetition figured earlier by the eternal return and its selective test. But here, the eternal return is understood as part of the structure of the event which enables it. Second, the event as caesura is a totality or *ensemble* in the sense that in it are gathered the pure past, living present, and future that it distributes. The event is originary of these and constitutes them insofar as it constitutes their difference. But as constitutive of the pure past, living present, and future, these three are ontologically bound together in the event’s differentiation. Third, the event as caesura is the formal and empty order of time or the pure form of time insofar as it is the form in which time can be at all. In its caesural structure, the event distributes past, present, and future. Without this distribution, time would be locked into a circular logic and no serial progression would occur. Yet the event is prior to the temporal processes that it enables, and so is not properly in time itself. Rather, it constitutes the form in which time occurs. In other words, the time of the event is not “subordinated to movement” or change within time, instead being “the most radical form of change.” That is, the event is the form of change, but that “form of change does not change.” The event in this preliminary definition is the form in which anything that occurs in time can occur. In Chapter V, I will turn to an analysis of Deleuze’s more detailed account of the

677 *DR* 120/89.
678 *DR* 122/90.
679 *DR* 120/89.
680 *DR* 120/89.
evental operations in which things occur, which is given in terms of the differential structure of
dialectical Ideas, problems, or multiplicities and their actualization in systems of simulacra. One
thing remains to be established first in this chapter: a greater clarification of the ontological
status of simulacra. In Différence et répétition, Deleuze develops his concept of simulacra by
way of an engagement with a certain Platonism. This engagement is framed by the selective test
operated by the eternal return as a figure of the univocal genetic flow of difference and
repetition.

4: The Platonic Dialectic and Deleuze’s Affirmative Concept of Simulacra

The basic logic of the three syntheses of time provides a preliminary definition of the event in
Deleuze’s ontology. It also offers a greater conceptual structure to the genetic sequence of
ontological univocity than that provided in terms of Deleuze’s engagement with Scotus, Spinoza,
and the first sense of Nietzsche’s eternal return alone. Deleuze’s account of ontological
univocity, particularly with respect to the two senses of the eternal return, advances his project in
significant ways. But to establish the basic form of an ontology of difference and repetition
liberated from the shackles of identity and similarity, that univocity must pass through the
Platonic dialectic. The Platonic dialectic introduced into philosophy a mechanism of resemblance
between icons or well-grounded claimants and Ideas, while this required that Ideas function as
identities grounding the system. Casting beings as icons (despite the degree of resemblance they
carry) in this manner initiated the history of the subjection of difference to identity, reduction of
repetition to generality, and the framework of representation: “the history of the long error is the
history of representation, the history of the icons.” 681 In effect, Deleuze applies the test of the eternal return (in the first sense) to the Platonic dialectic to liberate the superior elements of difference entailed within the dialectic from the elements that are complicit to the expiation of difference, even though he never describes his engagement with Plato this way. This brings about a Deleuzian overturning of Platonism and generates an affirmative theory of simulacra. As I have mentioned, Deleuze’s theory of simulacra provides the basic ontological framework within which events operate in the more developed account he gives of them in his theory of dialectical Ideas and their actualization (upon which I focus in Chapter V).

In the context of the interpretation of Platonism that Deleuze gives, icons or well-grounded claimants are temporal, sensible participants in an eternal, intelligible Idea. Well-grounded claimants are “authorized by their internal resemblance to the ideal model, authenticated by their close participation in the foundation.” 682 An act, for instance, is just because it is a proper claimant of Justice itself, it genuinely participates in the Idea of Justice. More and less authentic claimants can be distinguished according to their degree of participation in or distance from the Idea. Simulacra are not simply claimants that participate very little in the Idea, they are counterfeits. They do not participate in the Idea at all, yet present themselves as if they were a proper claimant. Simulacra are “built on dissimilarity and imply[] an essential perversion or deviation from the Idea.” 683 Fool’s gold is not a low quality of gold, it is not gold at all. Yet it appears as if it were. Deleuze will adopt the Platonic concept of simulacra, but ultimately recast it in terms of his differential ontology. As I have noted, for Deleuze simulacra or systems of simulacra are systems in which different relates to different by way of difference. The mechanisms of difference involved in simulacra are given precisely in terms of the

681 DR 385/301.
682 Essays 11.
683 Essays 11.
differential components of dialectical Ideas and their actualization. However, the basic ontological status of simulacra is established by Deleuze’s engagement with Platonism. Deleuze’s appropriation of the Platonic notion of simulacra is important not merely because it offers an account of things that do not fall within the Idea-claimant conceptual structure, but because it overturns that very conceptual structure: “the simulacra is not just a copy, but that which overturns all copies by also overturning the models.”684 This results in an account of the nature of beings as simulacra and of the genetic processes involved in being as genetic of nothing other than worlds of simulacra. The ontological status of simulacra, then, can be defined as that belonging to beings the constitution of which is not derived from any principles of identity, generality, or representation.

In Deleuze’s reading, the primary goal of Platonic dialectic is to select between rivals who claim to be the genuine possessors of some quality, for instance, between a number of people each of whom claims to be the true lover. In brief, to accomplish this the dialectic posits an Idea and casts the rivals as icons claiming participation in the idea. This allows a grounding test (l’épreuve du fondement) to be performed in which authentic claimants or participants are distinguished from false claimants or simulacra. Yet this test leads Platonism to the expiation of difference that Deleuze finds so problematic: the “platonic wish to exorcise simulacra is what entails the subjection of difference. For the model can be defined only by a positing of identity as the essence of the Same [auto kath’ hauto], and the copy by an affection of internal resemblance, the quality of the Similar.”685 However, upon closer analysis of “four figures of the Platonic dialectic” that Deleuze identifies, he locates a rupture in the dialectic that allows the identity of Ideas that functions as a ground (fondement) to be dissolved and a positive ontological status to

684 DR 3/xx.
685 DR 340-341/265.
be given to simulacra. Even though in large part these four figures contribute to the expiation of difference and repetition, by examining them Deleuze locates within the Platonic dialectic elements that pass the test of the eternal return. The figures are “the selection of difference, the installation of a mythic circle, the establishment of a foundation [fondation], and the position of a question-problem complex.” I reconstruct each in what follows.

The first figure of the Platonic dialectic – the selection of difference – describes the way that the dialectic proceeds by a method of diairesis or division. For instance, in the Sophist the preliminary hunt for the authentic angler proceeds by dividing the expert from the non-expert, dividing expertise or art into the art of production and the art of acquisition, dividing acquisition into mutually willing exchange and taking possession, dividing taking possession into combat and hunting, and so on until the authentic angler is isolated. Though Plato’s tree of division resembles the progression of Aristotle’s system from “top” to “bottom” (i.e., the progressive division of each genus or middle term into contraries by a specific difference), there is an important distinction. Plato’s divisions are not grounded in a genus or middle term. For this reason, as Deleuze points out, Aristotle finds Plato’s form of division unsatisfactory: “the [Platonic] dialectic of difference has its own method – division – but this operates without mediation, without middle term or reason; it acts in the immediate and is inspired by the Ideas rather than by the requirements of a concept in general.” The problem, according to Aristotle, is that without a middle term there is no reason to identify something as belonging to one species rather than another. Assigning something a place on one side of a Platonic division seems

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686 DR 91/66.
687 DR 91/66.
689 DR 83/59.
logically arbitrary (if “we divide art into arts of production and arts of acquisition,” “why is fishing among the arts of acquisition?”).\(^{690}\)

Deleuze, however, finds this character of Platonic dialectic to be advantageous. In contrast to Aristotle’s system, Platonic division is not yet subject to the prior identity of a genus. This is a problem, Deleuze argues, only if we presume that Platonic dialectic has the same goal as Aristotelian: dividing genera or determining species and classifying or identifying that which belongs to them. However, this is incorrect. Platonic “division is not the inverse of ‘generalization,’” it is not “a method of determining species, but one of selection.”\(^{691}\) As indicated, Platonic division operates in the service of “selection among rivals, the testing of claimants.”\(^{692}\) Stated alternatively, it is a method of “authenticating” or distinguishing which of a set of rivals are authentically just, beautiful, wise, etc.\(^{693}\) Most fundamentally this selection is meant to distinguish the authentic claimant from the imposter, i.e., from the simulacrum of the authentic claimant. The sophist claims to be wise, but is he?

If Aristotle’s middle terms offer a probative force grounding the identification of something as a member of one species rather than another, what fulfills the probative function in the Platonic dialectic such that it can distinguish authentic from false claimant? The answer brings us to the second figure of the Platonic dialectic: the instillation of a mythic circle. In the dialectic, a myth is introduced that plays the probative role. For example, in the search for the authentic shepherd of men, the *Statesman*

\[\ldots\text{invokes the image of an ancient God who ruled the world and men: strictly speaking, only this God deserves the name of shepherd-King of mankind. None of the claimants is his equal, but there is a certain 'care' of the human community which devolves to the statesman *par excellence*, since he is closest to the model of the archaic shepherd-God. The claimants find themselves measured}\]

\(^{690}\) DR 83/59.

\(^{691}\) DR 84/59.

\(^{692}\) DR 84/60.

\(^{693}\) DR 84-85/60.
according to an order of elective participation (according to the ontological measure afforded by the myth). 694

In the *Phaedrus*, the myth introduced is that of “eternally recurring metempsychosis” in which one’s soul sees the Ideas, thus enabling knowledge of them by way of anamnesis during life. 695 During the cycles of metempsychosis, moreover, one’s lot in life is determined. Here, not only is the probative force required to distinguish authentic claimants from simulacra supplied by the Ideas, one’s status or lot with respect to participation in some Idea is determined.

The invocation of myth is the establishment of a foundation (*fondation*) or ground (*fondement*) – the third figure of Platonic dialectic. 696 In order for the method of division to have probative force, it demands something to serve as a ground mediating the divisions made. Such a ground “is constituted by the myth as a principle of a test or selection which imparts meaning to the method of division by fixing the degrees of an elective participation.” 697 Here, we find the Platonic distinction between grounding and grounded terms to be inscribed with criteria of resemblance. The icon, which is grounded, participates in the ground to the degree that it resembles the ground (internally, not sensibly). But the ground possesses the quality in question absolutely. “To participate means to have part in, to have after, to have in second place. What possesses in first place is the ground [*fondement*] itself.” 698 “The function of the ground [*fondement*] is then to allow participation, to give in second place.” 699 The most authentic claimant participates in the ground in second place, while less authentic claimants participate in third, fourth, fifth place, and so on. A claimant can be considered grounded insofar as it

694 DR 85/60-61. This myth is found in Plato’s *Statesman*, in *The Collected Works of Plato* 269a-274e.
696 In his discussion of Platonism, Deleuze uses *fondation* and *fondement* more or less interchangeably.
697 DR 86/62.
698 DR 87/62.
699 DR 87/62.
participates in the ground. In contrast, simulacra are claimants that do not participate in the ground and are therefore groundless. The Platonic grounding test enables simulacra to be “denounced as groundless [sans fondement].” Without the mediation of the myth, the division Deleuze finds most important in Plato cannot be sustained – the division between icons and simulacra. In fact, Deleuze holds that “Plato distinguishes, and even opposes, models and copies only in order to obtain a selective criterion with which to separate copies and simulacra, the former founded upon the relation to the model while the latter are disqualified because they fail both the test of the copy and the requirements of the model.”

The fourth and final figure of the Platonic dialectic is the position of a question-problem complex within it. The dialectic invokes a myth to establish a ground, but “in archaic myth, there is always a task to be performed, a riddle to be solved.” In other words, built into the mythic structure is something unresolved that violates the stability of myth’s function as a ground. And this problematic element is bound up with the question motivating the dialectic (which rival is genuine and which simulacra?). For instance, in the *Apology*, “the oracle is questioned, but the oracle’s response is itself a problem.” Socrates recounts his friend Chaerephon’s visit to the oracle at Delphi, where Chaerephon asked the oracle if there is anyone wiser than Socrates. The oracle famously answers that there is not. This confounds Socrates, since he was “only too conscious that” he had “no claim to wisdom, great or small.” How, then, could he be wisest when many others claimed in fact to have wisdom? Socrates is compelled to test himself against the other rivals in order to prove the oracle wrong. In other words, the problem or enigma presented by the oracle drives Socrates’ life of philosophy, as well as the dialectical

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700 DR 87/62.
701 DR 340/265.
702 Essays 19.
703 DR 88/63.
methodology, through which he “answers” to the problem. Likewise in the Meno, the slave is prompted to recollection by a geometrical problem. In this sense, Deleuze writes, “Plato defined the dialectic as proceeding by ‘problems’, by means of which one attains the pure grounding principle [principe qui fonde] – that is, the principle which measures the problems as such and distributes the corresponding solutions.”  

But at the same time, the mythic element of the dialectic disrupts that very ground.

On the basis of Deleuze’s analysis of these four figures of the Platonic dialectic, two tightly related phantastical elements of the dialectic can be identified that provide the test of the eternal return a foothold. First, the question-problem complex, as an essentially problematic dimension of the dialectic, is irreducible to the framework of identity sustained in the relation between Idea and icon. The question-problem complex has being in a way that is not reducible to identity, but generative of it: it is part of the dialectic’s mythic dimension installed in order to establish identity in the form of the Idea. In Deleuze’s reading, Plato’s theory of being is the theory of Ideas. In that case, the question-problem complex might be designated non-being.

Adopting Plato’s language of non-being from the Sophist, Deleuze points out that in the Platonic dialectic being cannot be simply the Idea’s dimension of identity/ground (fondement), for “being is also non-being, but non-being is not the being of the negative; rather it is the being of the problematic, the being of the problem and question.” To avoid confusing non-being with the being of the negative, Deleuze suggests that it “should rather be written (non)-being or, better still, ?-being.” Furthermore, since the question-problem complex is internal to and originary of the Idea (as ground/identity), being or the Idea should not be understood primarily in terms of ground or identity. Instead, the concept of Idea should be flipped on its head and redefined: as

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705 DR 88/63. The example of the slave is found in Plato’s Meno, in The Collected Works of Plato 82b-85b.
706 DR 89/64.
707 DR 89/64.
such, Deleuze writes, “Being (what Plato calls the Idea) ‘corresponds’ to the essence of the problem or the question itself.” With this, the Idea as the being of the problem gains the central sense that Deleuze will carry over into his ontology of “dialectical Ideas” or “problems” and “solutions” in Chapter IV of *Différence et répétition*. Key here is Deleuze’s claim that since the Idea as the being of the problematic or as (non)-being is not captured within the framework of identity, it is difference: *heteron*.709

The second element of the Platonic dialectic that provides a foothold for the test of the eternal return, and thus for the overturning of Platonism, is the simulacrum itself. The dialectic is implemented in order to distinguish icons from simulacra and to disqualify the very being of simulacra. Stated differently, the dialectic is generated in response to the *problem* posed by the existence of simulacra. The genius (or idiocy) of the dialectic is to try to solve this problem by introducing a metaphysics that rejects the problem as illegitimate and systematically exorcises it. However, the being of the dialectic itself is possible only on the basis of the problematic being of simulacra. Therefore, the dialectic implicitly, and despite its best efforts, entails an affirmation of the being of simulacra. Furthermore, since the being of simulacra is categorically *not* understood on the ground of identity established in the Idea, the ontology of simulacra is an ontology of beings that are consequent upon no prior identity. As Smith writes, “if the resemblance of the iconic copy is built upon the model of the identity of an ideal sameness, the disparity of the simulacrum is based upon another model, a model of *difference*, from which the dissimilitude or ‘internalized difference’ of the simulacrum derives its power.”710 “Simulacra are those systems

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708 *DR* 89/64.  
709 *DR* 89/64.  
710 *Essays* 17.
in which different relates to different by means of difference itself. What is essential is that we find in these systems no *prior identity, no internal resemblance.*”

The Platonic dialectic includes both 1) elements involved in the expiation of difference (the installation of myth as grounding identity, the interpretation of beings as icons, and the relations of resemblance between icons and the ground) and 2) phantastical elements that violate that expiation and operate outside its bounds (the being of the question-problem complex/(non)-being and simulacra). While the former elements have historically been taken to define Platonism, the latter elements disrupt that definition. If on the basis of this distinction the dialectic is run through the test of the eternal return, the result is an affirmation of these phantastical elements. This affirmation is precisely what Deleuze demands in order to give univocal ontology concepts of difference and repetition that are liberated from identity and generality/resemblance. The affirmation of the being of simulacra and of the question-problem complex means that the ground-icon-resemblance complex does not constitute Platonism’s proper ontology. This affirmation uproots and overturns the traditional version of Platonism, and does so, moreover, on the basis of elements of the Platonic dialectic itself. Thus, as Deleuze suggests, the fact “that this overturning should conserve many Platonic characteristics is not only inevitable but desirable.”

If affirming the being of simulacra and the question-problem complex undermines the identity of the ideal ground, it also destroys the identity of the icons. For the identity of icons is derived from their being well-grounded in the ideal ground. This is the meaning of the event of the death of God alluded to by Nietzsche in Section 343 of *Die fröhliche Wissenschaft,* something that Nietzsche expected would take a long time to comprehend, but would also be

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711 *DR* 383/299, italics removed.
712 *DR* 82/59.
“the meaning of our cheerfulness.”\textsuperscript{713} It is also the meaning of Deleuze’s statement in the 1968 Preface to \textit{Différence et répétition}: “The modern world is one of simulacra. Man did not survive God, nor did the identity of the subject survive that of substance. All identities are only simulated, produced as an optical ‘effect’ by the more profound game of difference and repetition.”\textsuperscript{714} For Deleuze, it is only with the simultaneous ungrounding (\textit{effondement}) of the ideal ground and the icon that difference can be “thought in itself, neither represented nor mediated.”\textsuperscript{715} In a world of simulacra, difference is primary and identity generated only secondarily as the return or repetition of difference. “Eternal return means that each thing exists only returning, copy of an infinity of copies which allows neither original nor origin to subsist.”\textsuperscript{716}

\textbf{Conclusion}

In Part One of this dissertation (Chapters I-III), I reconstructed Heidegger’s account of beyng as event. There, the logic of the event is a logic of pure difference. The event is the differentiation of difference from itself, such that a logic of determinacy or of the Da of Da-sein is originated. The main registers of the logic of determinacy that I treated were truth, ground, and time-space. Working out the differential logic of the event underwriting Heidegger’s ontology in \textit{Beiträge} is important because it transforms the way we understand that ontology. But it is also important because it shows that beginning in the 1930s Heidegger was philosophically much closer to Deleuze than is recognized in available scholarship.

\textsuperscript{714} \textit{DR} 1/xix.
\textsuperscript{715} \textit{DR} 91/66.
\textsuperscript{716} \textit{DR} 92/67.
Part Two of this dissertation is composed of Chapters IV and V. Here in Chapter IV, I began by outlining some of the major concerns of Deleuze’s ontology in *Différence et répétition* and the place of his concept of event in it. I also highlighted certain important confluences of Heidegger and Deleuze’s projects. Of particular importance are their shared concern with difference at the most fundamental levels of ontology, their challenges to the Platonic and Aristotelian traditions of metaphysics, their commitment to the radical critique of representation, the way each undermines the subject-centered horizon for philosophy set in place by Kant, and, above all, their shared claim that being is evental in nature. In *Différence et répétition* Deleuze offers two main accounts of the event: the first and preliminary account is given in terms of the third synthesis of time, which I outlined above and the second, more substantial, account is given in terms of the differential structure of dialectical Ideas, problems, or multiplicities and their actualization in systems of simulacra (my focus in Chapter V). In order to set the context necessary for defining Deleuze’s concept of event, I began in Section 2 of this chapter by providing an analysis of the central problems motivating Deleuze’s project in *Différence et répétition*: the subjection of difference to identity, the reduction of repetition to generality, and the perpetuation of representation. There, I focused on the way these problems are manifested in Aristotle’s equivocal categorial system. In Section 3, I showed how Deleuze argues for a univocal ontology and how this supports concepts of difference and repetition that are liberated from identity and generality/resemblance. To accomplish this, Deleuze draws on Scotus, Spinoza, and Nietzsche. Of particular importance is figuring univocal being in terms of the eternal return. The test or selection enacted by the eternal return has both methodological and ontological functions for Deleuze. Methodologically, it offers a way of distinguishing forms of difference reduced to conceptual difference from forms of difference contributing to the
production of a concept of difference in itself. Ontologically, the test of the eternal return
describes the genetic unfolding of difference and repetition, together with the way “average”
forms of difference or difference understood on the basis of negativity cease to be insofar as they
cease to create, transform, or differ. In order to provide greater conceptual clarity to the structure
of Deleuze’s univocity, I then reconstructed the basic logic of his three syntheses of time. Most
importantly, this allowed the preliminary definition of the event in his ontology to be given. The
event is the caesural pure and empty form of time, which enables the processes involved in the
pure past, living present, and future. The event is the form of ontological determinability, i.e., the
form in which anything that occurs in time occurs. Deleuze’s account of dialectical Ideas will
allow a more precise account of the event and ontological processes by which events determine
the structure of reality.

The univocity of being as difference understood in terms of the eternal return and the
syntheses of time advances Deleuze’s project. But univocity must pass through the Platonic
dialectic. Section 4 of this chapter reconstructed Deleuze’s analysis of the Platonic dialectic,
showed how the dialectic is subjected to the test of the eternal return, and showed how this
provides Deleuze with a concept of beings as simulacra. The application of the test of the eternal
return in this context distinguishes phantastical elements of the dialectic (question-problem
complexes and simulacra) from elements complicit to the propitious moment (ideal ground,
icons, resemblance). By affirming the being of question-problem complexes and simulacra, the
traditional version of Platonism is overturned and the basic contours of an affirmative ontology
of simulacra is produced. Showing how this works is crucial for setting up my analysis of
Deleuze’s ontology of events in Chapter V. For Deleuze, simulacra have both “virtual” and
“actual” dimensions: “It is as though everything has two odd, dissymmetrical and dissimilar
‘halves’, the two halves of the Symbol, each dividing itself in two: an ideal half submerged in the virtual and constituted on the one hand by differential relations and on the other by corresponding singularities; an actual half constituted on the one hand by the qualities actualizing those relations and on the other by the parts actualizing those singularities.”

Deleuze understands the structure of the virtual in terms of dialectical Ideas or problems, and the actual in terms of solutions to those problems. Within this framework, systems of simulacra are “sites for the actualization of Ideas.” Deleuze’s more precise ontology of events must be understood within this framework. Explaining Deleuze’s ontology of events within his theory of dialectical Ideas and their actualization in systems of simulacra is what I will turn to next.

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717 DR 358/279-280.
718 DR 356/278.
Chapter V

*Difference and Event in Deleuze’s Theory of Dialectical Ideas*

**Chapter Overview**

In Chapter IV, I reconstruced central parts of Deleuze’s treatment of the problems motivating *Différence et répétition*: the subordination of difference to identity, the reduction of repetition to generality, and the perpetuation of the regime of representation. This is necessary in order to make sense of the ontology Deleuze proposes and the nature of events in that ontology. In that chapter, I then turned to Deleuze’s account of ontological univocity (with special focus on the figure of the eternal return), time, and his overturning of Platonism. In the context of his theory of time, Deleuze offers a preliminary account of the event in terms of the third synthesis. There, the event is caesural structure of the third synthesis or the pure and empty form of time. In other words, the event is the form in which anything that can occur in time can occur. The different steps I took in Chapter IV culminate in showing that the basic framework of Deleuze’s ontology is one of a chaossmos of roiling simulacra. As I will show in this chapter, simulacra have two ontological registers: one virtual and one actual. At the virtual level, simulacra are composed of dialectical Ideas or problems. At the actual level, those Ideas or problems are incarnated in fields of solution. An ideal order of events and an actual order of events correspond to these registers. In this chapter, I focus on explicating Deleuze’s ontology of ideal events, though I also provide a schematic overview of the nature of actual events insofar as they are related to ideal events. The nature of ideal events must be defined within the context of Deleuze’s theory of dialectical Ideas or problems and their actual solutions. Deleuze appropriates much of this theory from the early
twentieth century French mathematician and philosopher, Albert Lautman. Lautman, in turn, developed his theory of dialectical Ideas/problems and solutions by way of an engagement with Heidegger’s early work. To explain Deleuze’s theory of Ideas and of ideal events, I begin by recapitulating certain elements of Heidegger’s productive logic of Grundelgung that are of direct relevance for Lautman. I then turn to an extensive analysis of Lautman and Lautman’s use of Heidegger. Within that context I clarify a set of Deleuze’s key claims that define his theory of Ideas. Though Deleuze adopts the overall structure of Lautman’s theory, he recasts the internal composition of dialectical Ideas in terms of “multiplicity.” In the final section of this chapter, I draw on my previous analyses in order to reconstruct Deleuze’s theory of ideal events in terms of dialectical Ideas or multiplicities.

1: Introduction

The concept of event cuts straight to the heart of the ontology Deleuze presents in Différence et répétition. In Chapter IV, I showed how Deleuze’s univocal ontology of difference and repetition led him to an overturning of Platonism, and how through that overturning he produces the basic contours of an ontology of systems of simulacra. In contrast to systems that maintain a priority of identity over difference, that reduce repetition to generality, that perpetuate the regime of representation, and that conceive beings as icons or claimants measured by their internal resemblance or participation in an ideal ground (fondation), systems of simulacra are systems conceived on the basis of being as difference, i.e., “systems in which different relates to different through difference itself.”\footnote{DR 355/277.} As a consequence of the univocity of being, the determinations individuating simulacra do not arise by ontologically extrinsic predication (as in Aristotle’s
application of a specific difference to a genus), but by intrinsic, intensive differences: “such systems [of simulacra] are intensive; they rest ultimately upon the nature of intensive quantities, which precisely communicate through their differences.”720 Systems of simulacra have two ontological registers: a virtual register of dialectical Ideas/problems and an actual register of solutions. More precisely, simulacra are sites for the actualization of Ideas. Ideas are inherently problematical and their intensive structures are determined in key ways by series of ideal events. The actual structures of simulacra incarnate, though do not resemble, those of virtual problems or Ideas. At the level of the actual, a second series of events structure simulacra, defining cases of solution to virtual problems. As Deleuze puts it, there is “a double series of events which develop on two planes, echoing without resembling each other: real events on the level of the engendered solutions, and ideal events embedded in the conditions of the problem, like the acts – or, rather, the dreams – of the gods who double our history.”721

Using some of Deleuze’s technical language that I will define later in this chapter, his ontology defines the constitution of virtual problems or Ideas in terms of “multiplicity.” A multiplicity is composed of three things: problematic or differential elements, differential relations, and pre-individual singularities. Deleuze calls the differential determination of these elements, relations, and singularities “differentiation.” Two types of ideal events or events of differentiation can be distinguished within the virtual register: first are differential elements, the introduction of which into an extant Idea or multiplicity radically reconfigures its differential relations and singularities, i.e., generates a new Idea or multiplicity; second are pre-individual singularities or changes undergone by such singularities. Singularities are fully determinate coordinates or distinctive points defining how ordinary or regular series can be drawn out from

720 DR 355/277.
721 DR 244/189. It is important to point out that what Deleuze calls “real events” here are in fact actual events. For Deleuze, both the virtual and actual are real, so virtual or ideal events are no less real than actual events.
them. The series of ordinary points following from a singularity can either converge with or diverge from the series of ordinary points defined by other singularities. A singularity is an ideal event because it is *distinctive*, not regular – it does not follow the rule defining an ordinary series. If an ordinary series is tracked to a singularity, that singularity constitutes a change in the rule for how ordinary points shall be extended from it. The constitution of or change in a singularity is an event changing the structure of series of ordinary points within a multiplicity.

As indicated, systems of simulacra are sites for the actualization of virtual Ideas or multiplicities, i.e., for the determination of answers to the problem composed by the Idea. There is no relation of resemblance between the actual and virtual. In actualization, the relations and singularities of an Idea are “dramatized,” “incarnated,” “individuated” or “solved” by spatio-temporal dynamisms and the qualities, extensities, species, and parts to which those dynamisms give rise. Deleuze calls the differencial determination of Ideas in spatio-temporal dynamisms, qualities, extensities, species, and parts “differenciation.” Like, ideal events, two varieties of actual events or events of differenciation can be distinguished: first are the radical reconfigurations of a solution field that are produced when an ideal event reconfigures the virtual Idea or problem that defines the range of potential actual solutions and that is incarnated in the solution field; second are similar reconfigurations of a solution that are produced when changes occur in the actual milieu in which the solution is immersed, forcing differenciation to occur in a new manner.

I have two primary goals and one secondary goal in this chapter. First, I aim to explicate Deleuze’s ontology of *ideal* events, particularly in terms of his theory of dialectical Ideas/problems and the actualization of these Ideas in systems of simulacra.\(^722\) Second, I aim to

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\(^{722}\) Deleuze’s main discussion of this is found in Chapter IV of *Différence et répétition*. It is worth pointing out that Deleuze defines the “virtual” and “actual” within the context of his presentation of his theory of Ideas.
reconstruct a particular Heideggerian influence in Deleuze’s theory of Ideas, which is important for making sense of that theory and his ontology of events. This will enable me to develop a number of points of comparison between the two philosophers, both broadly and at the fundamental level of their ontologies of the event. My secondary goal in this chapter will be to clarify Deleuze’s understanding of actual events. A full account of actual events would entail detailed analysis of Deleuze’s conception of spatio-temporal dynamisms and the production of qualities, extensities, species, and parts. The particulars of these concepts have little to do with the influence of Heideggerianism on Deleuze’s theory of events, and so explaining them falls outside the main scope of this dissertation. I will save that for a future project. My treatment of Deleuze’s theory of actual events will be limited to their broader structure as defined in relation to the actualization of Ideas and ideal events.

Deleuze’s theory of Ideas/problems draws features from Plato, Kant, and classical calculus. But he unifies these features by adapting them to a theory of Ideas/problems developed by the early twentieth century mathematician and philosopher Albert Lautman (1908-1944). Lautman’s primary concern on this count was to explain the nature of the problems mathematics engages – which he also called “dialectical Ideas” – and the solutions or mathematical theories endeavoring to understand them.723 Though Lautman did not apply his theory to fields other than mathematics, he claimed that dialectical Ideas or problems and their corresponding solutions constituted the necessary metaphysical structure for all areas of research and, in fact, for ontological genesis writ large. Deleuze appropriates the Lautmanian theory of Ideas/problems nearly wholesale and develops it with the aim of bringing it to exactly that fruition. In other words, the Lautmanian theory is adapted to supply the overall structure of Deleuze’s ontology.

723 “New Research” 199.
Consequently, to make sense of Deleuze’s account of events, it is necessary to specify their nature and roles within his Lautmanian theory of Ideas/problems. Strikingly, Lautman drew heavily on Heidegger when developing his theory. Despite how rarely Deleuze cites Heidegger, attention to the way Lautman operates as a mediator between the two shows that certain elements of Heidegger’s ontology indirectly shape Deleuze’s and form a point of historical reference important for making sense of it. Lautman forms a crucial, though neglected, link between Heidegger and Deleuze on both historical and systematic levels.

Deleuze’s references to Lautman are drawn primarily from three essays: “Essay sur les notions de structure et d’existence en mathématiques” (1938), “Nouvelles recherches sur la structure dialectique des mathématiques” (1939), and the second chapter of “Symétrie et dissymétrie en mathématiques et en physique” (1946), which is titled “Le problème du temps.”

“Nouvelles recherches,” which I will refer to as “New Research,” contains Lautman’s most substantial engagement with Heidegger. Between 1956-57 Deleuze taught a hypokhâgne course called “Qu’est-ce que fonder?” (“What is Grounding?”) at the Lycée Louis le Grand. As Knox Peden indicates, the “source text” for the course was “Henry Corbin’s translation and presentation of Heidegger in the collection titled Qu’est-ce que la métaphysique?,” which includes Heidegger’s treatise “Vom Wesen des Grundes” and sections of Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik. This same volume, and especially its translation of Heidegger’s “Vom Wesen

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724 All are found in Albert Lautman, Les mathématiques, les idées et le reel physique (Paris: J. Vrin, 2006); English: Mathematics, Ideas, and the Physical Real, trans. Simon B. Duffy (London: Continuum, 2011), abbreviated as MIPR.


726 Peden, Spinoza Contra Phenomenology 245 and 200. The Corbin volume referenced is: Martin Heidegger, Qu’est-ce que la metaphysic?, trans. Henry Corbin (Gallimard: Paris, 1938). This volume also included Corbin’s translations of Was ist Metaphysik?, extracts from Sein und Zeit (§§ 46-53 and 72-76), extracts from Kant und das
was the single source of Heidegger’s work referenced by Lautman in “New Research.” It can therefore be concluded that when Deleuze appropriated elements of Lautman’s theory of problems/Ideas from “New Research,” he knew exactly the Heideggerian debts present in it. This is remarkable given the prominence of Lautman in *Différence et répétition* and the scarcity of Deleuze’s overt references to Heidegger when treating Lautman.

To accomplish my primary and secondary goals in this chapter, I reconstruct central elements of the conceptual lineage between Heidegger, Lautman, and Deleuze by following the thread of the nature of problems/Ideas in each ontology, which weaves the three together. This lineage shows an important connection in how these three thinkers understood the nature of the problems philosophy engages and the concepts it implements to address them. First, I outline in a general way the type of problems at stake in these ontologies and some of Deleuze’s terms for explaining them. Deleuze adopts many of these terms from Lautman, and these terms are essential for defining Deleuze’s ontology of events. Then, I very briefly recapitulate the central elements of Heidegger’s productive logic, which I discussed in Chapter I. This logic supplies the structure of the methodology by which Heidegger addresses the problematic of being and by which his ontology evolves throughout his career. I then turn to a detailed explanation of several of the core claims in Deleuze’s theory of problems/Ideas by way of an extensive reconstruction of their senses in Lautman’s theory. I include substantial discussion of Lautman’s use of Heidegger to explain key parts of his theory of problems/Ideas. It is mainly within this context that I clarify Deleuze’s understanding of actual events. After this, I return focus more exclusively to Deleuze, clarifying his theory of problems/Ideas and defining his conception of ideal events in a way informed by the conceptual lineage running back through Lautman and Heidegger.

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*Problem der Metaphysik* (§ C. *Die Metaphysik des Daseins als Fundamentalontologie*), and *Hölderlin und das Wesen der Dichtung*.  
727 See Chapter I, Section 1.
To begin, it will be helpful to distinguish between two types of problem, for the ones Heidegger, Lautman, and Deleuze are most concerned with are of a distinctive nature. On the one hand there are problems like: What is the sum of 2 and 2? How do we build a quantum computer? How might sustainable peace be achieved in the Middle East? These are the kind of problems that are in principle solvable, even if the solution is difficult to achieve, might never be achieved due to circumstance, or is currently unknown. If a solution is reached, the problem is no longer a problem, it is resolved and disappears. On the other hand there are problems for which there is no solution, or more precisely, for which any solution given does not resolve the problem. Instead, a problematic element exceeds or is displaced beyond the solution generated. For both Heidegger and the Deleuze of *Logique du sens*, such problems take the form of productive paradoxes, which in different ways manifest a genetic logic belonging to being. An example of such a problem is what Deleuze calls the “paradox of regress, or of infinite proliferation,” which he finds to be of special theoretical interest.⁷²⁸ As I pointed out in Chapter I, this also characterizes the operation of Heidegger’s methodology.⁷²⁹

The basic idea of this problem can be seen in the familiar thought experiment that I described in Chapter I. Imagine I have been tasked with composing a catalogue of every fact about everything that exists. I begin by listing facts about the things I see around me (“The glass is on the table.” “The table is made of wood.” And so on…). Eventually, though, if my list is to be complete, it has to include all the facts about the list itself (for example, “The list has *N* entries.”). And this leads to an infinite proliferation. When I add a fact about the list to the list,

⁷²⁸ *LS* 41/28.
⁷²⁹ See Chapter I, Section 1.
I’ve changed it, producing new facts that must in turn be listed. So, I list them. But each time I add another entry, I change the list again, generating new facts, and so on to infinity.

Two things can be distinguished here. On the one hand is a properly problematic element: the logic by which an excess is generated over the list. On the other is the series of solutions to this problematic element: the entries on the list.

This example can serve as a rough draft structural map of the key terms involved in Heidegger’s problematic of being and Lautman and Deleuze’s theories of problems or dialectical Ideas. Of course, the situation is more complex for each for reasons that I will address in the remainder of this chapter. For Heidegger, a problematic dimension of being takes the position of what exceeds the entries on the list together with the genetic logic by which the infinite series of entries are produced, while the terms in which his ontology is worked out take the position of the entries themselves. For Lautman, dialectical Ideas or problems take the position of what exceeds, while mathematical theories that engage them take the position of the entries. For Deleuze, questions, problems, or dialectical Ideas take the position of what exceeds, while answers, solutions, or actualizations take the position of the series of entries on the list. In Logique du sens, Deleuze indicates the irreducibility of problems or questions to solutions or answers as follows:

Just as solutions do not suppress problems, but on the contrary discover in them the subsisting conditions without which they would have no sense, answers do not at all suppress, nor do they saturate, the question, which persists in all its answers. There is therefore an aspect in which problems remain without a solution, and the question without an answer. It is in this sense that problem and question designate ideational objectivities and have their own being.730

In my analysis of Lautman (and Lautman’s use of Heidegger), I will clarify five of the defining claims of Deleuze’s theory of problems/Ideas: 1) that problems/Ideas are different in

730 LS 72/56.
kind from solutions and do not disappear with solutions, 2) that problems/Ideas are “dialectical,”
3) that problems/Ideas are transcendent in relation to solutions, 4) that problems/Ideas are simultaneously immanent in those solutions, and 5) that the relation between problems/Ideas and solutions is genetic, i.e., that solutions are generated on the basis of the determinant conditions of a problem/Idea. In the following condensed passage, Deleuze makes these five points and uses a number of important related terms that I will discuss. I provide this passage in full for later use as a point of reference.

A problem does not exist, apart from its solutions. Far from disappearing in this overlay, however, it insists and persists in these solutions. A problem is determined at the same time as it is solved, but its determination is not the same as its solution: the two elements differ in kind, the determination amounting to the genesis of the concomitant solution. (In this manner the distribution of singularities belongs entirely to the conditions of the problem, while their specification already refers to solutions constructed under these conditions.) The problem is at once both transcendent and immanent in relation to its solutions. Transcendent, because it consists in a system of ideal liaisons or differential relations between genetic elements. Immanent, because these liaisons or relations are incarnated in the actual relations which do not resemble them and are defined by the field of solution. Nowhere better than in the admirable work of Albert Lautman has it been shown how problems are first Platonic Ideas or ideal liaisons between dialectical notions, relative to ‘eventual situations of the existent’; but also how they are realized within the real relations constitutive of the desired solution within a mathematical, physical or other field. In this sense, according to Lautman, that science always participates in a dialectic which points beyond it – in other words, in a meta-mathematical and extra-propositional power – even though the liaisons of this dialectic are incarnated only in effective scientific propositions and theories. Problems are always dialectical.731

As I have indicated, Deleuze distinguishes between two registers of events: ideal events (at the level of the virtual) and actual events, both of which are ontologically real. My focus is on his theory of ideal events, though explaining this requires explaining the basic relation of ideal events to actual events and to the register of actuality in systems of simulacra more broadly. Clarifying the five points listed above is necessary for making sense of Deleuze’s theory of ideal events because 1) ideal events are events occurring in the composition of virtual Ideas, 2) ideal events are simultaneously transcendent and immanent in relation to actual events, 3) ideal events

731 DR 212-213/163-164.
constitute certain of the conditions of problems/ideas, while those conditions are actualized in solutions, and 4) the logic of ideal events is a logic of ontological genesis, both in respect to the determination of virtual Ideas and in respect to the determination of fields of solution at the level of the actual.

2.1: Recapitulation of Heidegger’s Productive Logic of Grundlegung

As I have discussed at length, Heidegger’s central problem was that of clarifying the nature of being. Granted, he does not characterize being as a problem. Yet, the logic of being in his ontology is problematic in a particular sense. I have tried to demonstrate this in both methodological and ontological registers – and, in fact, in their nexus. To apply Deleuze’s term, for Heidegger being operates as a “problematic element”: it is disclosed in an intelligible way within the terms of his ontology, while simultaneously exceeding those terms and driving an immanent evolution of that ontology. More precisely, the reflexive logic involved in the problematic of being entails that Heidegger’s ontology – and the concepts by which he articulates it – is not static, but evolves in a complex way. The efficacy of these concepts to articulate the problematic of being in increasingly well-grounded ways entails, in a precise manner, that they violate established conceptual regimes or semantic and syntactic orders. It is worth briefly indicating that a parallel to Deleuze’s actual events can be discerned immediately in Heidegger’s methodological evolution. Established conceptual regimes or semantic and syntactic orders exist at the level of Deleuze’s actuality. The violation and reconfiguration of those orders occurs as a Deleuzian actual event.
Recall the structure of Heidegger’s productive logic, which I discussed in Chapter I.\textsuperscript{732} There, I framed this structure within Heidegger’s distinction between two modes of science: “positive” science and what I have called “radical” science. In his account, every science has a subject matter (\textit{Sachgebiet}): either some domain of beings, in which case the science is an ontic science, or the being of beings, in which case it is fundamental ontology.\textsuperscript{733} I have designated a domain as delimited by a science a “problematic field.” Each science generates a set of \textit{Grundbegriffe} (basic/ground concepts), which articulate the \textit{Grundverfassung} (basic/ground constitution) of its subject matter, i.e. of its problematic field. If \textit{Grundbegriffe} serve as the most fundamental articulation of a subject matter, they also operate as a ground for more derivative concepts and operations within a science. Positive science is scientific research and its practical application carried out when a science’s \textit{Grundbegriffe} take on an axiomatic role, go unchallenged, and become more or less transparent to its practitioners. In positive science, research is conducted within the problematic field and logic delineated by a set of \textit{Grundbegriffe}, which are not themselves in question. Positive science, in other words, operates on a syngenetic axis. In contrast, in \textit{radical} science the \textit{Grundverfassung} of its subject matter is problematized, forcing a reevaluation of its \textit{Grundbegriffe} and an operation of \textit{Grundlegung} (ground-laying). Here, a science’s \textit{Grundbegriffe} are explicitly problematized, losing their axiomatic status, and thus the logic they ground no longer serves as the measure of legitimate (i.e., regular) positive operations. This disruption can be taken as an example of an actual event in the Deleuzian sense. Such an event demands a revision of the science’s \textit{Grundbegriffe}, such as to give a more appropriate (\textit{eigentliche}) account of its subject matter’s \textit{Grundverfassung}. In turn, this fundamentally reconfigures the positive scientific field built upon it. The radical scientific

\textsuperscript{732} See Chapter I, Section 1.
\textsuperscript{733} \textit{SZ} 9/29.
movement of *Grundlegung* enacts a productive logic, cutting into more originary ground and venturing new *Grundbegriffe* to articulate it. Importantly, the movement by which *Grundlegung* surpasses extant *Grundbegriffe* toward the originary ground of the subject matter at hand is an example of the movement Heidegger calls “transcendence,” which is crucial for Lautman. I return to this shortly.

While any science can be spurred from a positive to a radical mode, in Heidegger’s account no ontic science alone can provide a sufficient account of the *Grundverfassung* of its subject matter. The reason is that such an account requires an appropriate understanding of the *being* of the beings composing that subject matter, and this is the task of fundamental ontology. In this way, since the subject matter of fundamental ontology is being, or the being of beings, which is in part the ground enabling beings to be, fundamental ontology by definition problematizes the *Grundbegriffe* of all ontic sciences and calls them into a radical mode. In other words, in relation to the ontic sciences, fundamental ontology is *essentially* a radical science.

Fundamental ontology can easily be botched, as when rendered metaphysical, for instance. To avoid this, the scope and methodology of fundamental ontology must be properly established. As I have argued, in *Sein und Zeit* since Dasein constitutes the condition of possibility for any ontology (bearing an intrinsic relation of thought and being), and the being it has distinctive access to is its own, the necessary arena for fundamental ontology is that of its own existence. In other words, Heidegger’s fundamental ontology must be carried out as the existential analysis of Dasein.

The reflexivity involved here leads to a productive paradox of regress and the abyssal logic belonging to the problematic of being in Heideggerian ontology. Since the existence into which Dasein inquires is partially constituted by the operation of questioning, each moment of
carrying out that operation modulates Dasein’s existence. This drives dimensions of that existence beyond the understanding of it rendered. In the problematic of being, framed as the existential analysis of Dasein, the subject matter inquired into is partially disclosed, but simultaneously withdraws from the account given of it. Heidegger figures this dimension of his problematic in terms of “Ab-grund” or “abyssal ground,” and fundamental ontology moves along a trajectory into this Ab-grund.

The abyssal logic belonging to the problematic of being does not preclude the project of ontology. On the contrary, it makes fundamental ontology an ongoing project whereby increasingly better-grounded accounts of being are rendered. More precisely, Heidegger navigates this abyssal logic and works out a series of accounts of Dasein’s existence in terms of more and more originary accounts of the structures constituting that existence by way of the productive logic of Grundlegung. It should also be noted here that while the existential analysis inquires into the being of Dasein, Dasein is a being, that is, its existence includes both ontological and ontic registers. The ontological structures disclosed serve as the ground enabling the more derivative ontic aspects to be. When, in fundamental ontology, Dasein implements the productive logic of Grundlegung to articulate the abyssal logic belonging to the problematic of being, the movement of transcendence described above in terms of radical science is married with Dasein’s existence. In Sein und Zeit, Heidegger describes the dynamics of Dasein’s existence in terms of transcendence in a number of registers (in terms of the logic of being-in-the world or that of temporality, for instance). But Dasein’s fundamental ontological transcendence constitutes a particularly important register in Lautman’s analysis of Heidegger. Here, Dasein tracks the abyssal dimension of its being, develops Grundbegriffe to articulate it, and recasts extant accounts of its being on that basis, that is, recasts the full problematic field of fundamental
ontology. This is an ongoing radical scientific movement by which Heideggerian ontology evolves.

2.2: Lautman’s Theory of Dialectical Ideas/Problems

Recently there has been a revival of philosophical interest in the work of Albert Lautman. This can be traced in large part to two related causes: first, a trend of research on the role of mathematics in Deleuze’s ontology (Lautman was a key influence on Deleuze with regard to this) and, second, a renewed interest in French philosophy of science and the associated mid-twentieth century formalisms developed in Marxist and psychoanalytic theory. All of the latter draw a theoretical lineage through the work of Jean Cavaillès, for whom Lautman was a significant interlocutor. Like Cavaillès, it should be noted, Lautman was captured and executed by the Nazis in 1944 (he had been captured earlier as a member of the French military, escaped a German prisoner-of-war camp, become extensively involved in the Resistance, and was then recaptured).

While Lautman was an important point of reference in Deleuze’s engagement with mathematics proper, it was Lautman’s metamathematics (his metaphysics or ontology of mathematics) that had the most far-reaching impact on Deleuze. Lautman’s metamathematics, though, adopts features of Heidegger’s early ontology to develop a theory of dialectical Ideas or problems and their relation to mathematical theories, which constitute solutions to those problems. This theory forms the central element of Lautman’s work adopted by Deleuze.

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735 See, for instance, Knox Peden, Spinoza Contra Phenomenology: French Rationalism from Cavaillès to Deleuze (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2014), passim.
736 For biographical information on Albert Lautman, see Jacques Lautman, “Introduction,” in MIPR.
However, in the portions of *Différence et répétition* discussing Lautman, Deleuze does not flag the Heideggerian import. Consequently, this line of Heideggerian influence in Deleuze’s ontology has been largely unrecognized and unexplored in scholarship.

Lautman’s primary engagement with Heidegger is found in “New Research.” The text he focuses on there is Henry Corbin’s 1938 French translation of Heidegger’s 1928 treatise “Vom Wesen des Grundes,” though he mentions *Sein und Zeit* once in passing. As I have mentioned, this translation appeared in the collection of Heidegger’s texts edited by Corbin and published as *Qu’est-ce que la métaphysique?* Lautman’s Heidegger is entirely the early Heidegger, and there are no indications he was aware of the transformations taking place during the *Kehre* that became evident beginning in 1930. Of particular conceptual importance to him are Heidegger’s ontological difference between being and beings, the corresponding distinction between ontological and ontic truth, Heidegger’s distinctive notion of transcendence, and the simultaneously methodological and ontological operation of grounding.

In the following, I reconstruct the central elements of Lautman’s metamathematical theory that define the context in which he makes use of Heidegger. Then, I provide analysis of his engagement with Heidegger, focusing specifically on the way Lautman adopts features of Heideggerian ontology to explain the relation of mathematical theory to dialectical Ideas, the operation whereby mathematical theory is generated in this relation, and what it means for Lautman to claim that dialectical Ideas are simultaneously transcendent and immanent to mathematics. In this sequence, I map onto Lautman and Heidegger the aspects of Deleuze’s ontology of Ideas and events that I aim to explain.
2.2.1: Lautman’s Distinction between Mathematical Theories and Dialectical Ideas and Notions

In Lautman’s metaphysics of mathematics, two domains or registers of reality must be distinguished: “Mathematics” and the “Dialectic.” Deleuze’s distinction between the actual and virtual registers of reality or of systems of simulacra replicates this Lautmanian distinction. Lautman’s distinction, together with certain other historical points of reference, also provides the primary sense of Deleuze’s description of problems/Ideas as “dialectical.”

For Lautman, “Mathematics” designates the various “effective mathematical theories” (e.g., set theory, arithmetic, the analytic theory of numbers, and differential calculus) and the application of such theories in practice (e.g., applying set theoretical definitions in translating one mathematical proposition into another). This sense of the term parallels Heidegger’s account of positive science, since such mathematics operates on the basis of fundamental axioms or definitions that it does not problematize. In a more essential sense, however, “mathematics” designates the way mathematical theories articulate the fundamental problems that organize those theories, gain insight into those problems, and become recast on the basis of that insight. This sense parallels Heidegger’s account of radical science.

The dialectic is a register of reality distinct from mathematics. To clarify Lautman’s understanding of the dialectic, it is necessary first to see why he believes mathematics must necessarily be supplemented by metamathematics (i.e., the metaphysics of mathematics), as part of a full ontology or system of metaphysics. In Lautman’s words, a “rapprochement of

737 “New Research” 197.
738 “New Research” 197. According to Zalamea, “With the term ‘effective mathematics’, Lautman tackles the theories, structures and constructions conceived in the very activity of the mathematician. The term refers to the structure of mathematical knowledge, and what is effective refers to the concrete action of the mathematician to gradually build the mathematical edifice, that such action is constructivist or existential” (Fernando Zalamea, “Albert Lautman and the Creative Dialectic of Modern Mathematics” in MIPR xxiv).
739 In a sense less important for my analysis, Lautman sometimes also uses “mathematics” to designate the field of mathematical theories taken together at any given moment in the history of its development.
metaphysics and mathematics is not contingent but necessary." He is particularly concerned with Hilbert’s metamathematics and, as I discuss below, the appropriation of Heidegger’s ontology for metamathematical purposes. According to Lautman’s interpretation of Hilbert, metamathematics is necessary because any properly formalized mathematical theory “is itself incapable of providing proof of its internal coherence.” Thus, “it must be overlaid with a metamathematics that takes the formalized mathematics as an object and studies it from the dual point of view of consistency and completion” (i.e., studies a formalized mathematical system with respect to the way its axioms might attempt to prove that the system is internally consistent and able to account for all arithmetical operations). However, consistency and completion in this case are only “ideal[s] toward which this research is oriented.” That is, being structurally problematic in relation to mathematical theory, they can never be fully demonstrated within the theory itself. As Duffy emphasizes, Lautman’s point here “is an implicit reference to Gödel’s second incompleteness theorem which demonstrates that any consistent formal system cannot demonstrate its completeness by way of its own axioms.” Lautman’s metamathematical point is that while the ideals of consistency and completion might govern the construction of a formalized theory, they are not formally demonstrable in terms of that theory itself. Lautman

740 “New Research” 197.
742 Lautman, “Structure and Existence” 89-90. To expand upon this, Lautman writes: “The duality of planes that Hilbert thus established between the formalized mathematics and the metamathematical study of this formalism has as a consequence that the notions of consistency and completion govern a formalism from the interior of which they are not figured as notions defined in this formalism” (Lautman, “Structure and Existence” 90). In contrast, “the formalism of the [Vienna Circle] logicians” “considered the study of mathematical reality to consist in solely the demonstration of the consistency of the axioms which define it” (Duffy, Deleuze and the History of Mathematics 119). Gödel famously proved that no formal system can prove its own completeness and consistency.
743 Lautman, “Structure and Existence” 90
744 Duffy, Deleuze and the History of Mathematics 12. Smith, in his discussion of axiomatics and problematics, includes Cohen and puts the point as follows: “Gödel and Cohen, …in their famous theorems, would eventually expose the internal limits of axiomatisation (incompleteness, undecidability), demonstrating that there is a variety of mathematical forms in ‘infinite excess’ over our ability to formalize them consistently” [Daniel W. Smith, “Axiomatics and problematics as two modes of formalization: Deleuze’s epistemology of mathematics,” in Virtual Mathematics: the logic of difference, ed. Simon Duffy (Manchester: Clinamen Press 2006) 154].
takes these ideals, or rather the problem of how to construct a consistent and complete theory, to be an example of the kind of fundamental problems that organize mathematical theories in general. In his view there are numerous others, and they can change or be supplanted over time. Metamathematics studies mathematical theories themselves and their ability to contend with the fundamental problems organizing them (e.g., it might ask: How can we construct “a cube having double the volume of a given cube”? Or: Can set theory provide a consistent and complete mathematical language?).

In this picture, the field of mathematical theories is dynamic, fragmented but evolving in a perpetual effort to address the fundamental problems or abstract ideas active at a given moment in its history. Occasionally, these fragments together allow previously unseen connections to be drawn between seemingly disparate fundamental problems or theoretical constructions: “Partial results, comparisons stopped midway, attempts that still resemble groupings, are organized under the unity of the same theme, and in their movement allow a connection to be seen which takes shape between certain abstract ideas, that we propose to call dialectical.”

An important point follows from the fact that metamathematics is a necessary addition to mathematics: any mathematical theory bears an inherent structural reference to aspects of reality that exceed what is articulable in its terms. In Lautman’s words, “in the development of mathematics, [such] a reality is affirmed that mathematical philosophy has as its function to recognize and to describe.” For Lautman, this is more than just an interesting fact about the

745 Smith, “Axiomatics and problematics” 148.
747 Lautman, Essai sur l’unité des mathématiques et devers écrits (Paris: Union general d’éditions, 1977), 23. As quoted in Simon Duffy, “Albert Lautman,” in Deleuze’s Philosophical Lineage, eds. Graham Jones and Jon Roffe (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 19. One of the goals Lautman sees for his philosophy of mathematics is to synthesize aspects of “the structural conception” of mathematics represented by Hilbert and “the dynamic conception” represented by Brunschvicg. As he writes, “The structural conception and the dynamic conception of mathematics seem at first to be opposed: one tends in effect to consider a mathematical theory as a completed whole, independent of time; the other, on the contrary, does not separate it from the temporal stages of its
necessary incompleteness of mathematical theory. The fundamental problems that mathematical theory endeavors to articulate are located in the field of that excessive reality. And even within the conceptual framework of metamathematics, these problems are not fully determined, or even necessarily well-defined or well-understood. Rather, they are structures of reality that are epistemologically and ontologically problematic in themselves. This reality is what Lautman calls the “dialectic.” While Deleuze’s concept of the dialectic also draws on Kant and – like Lautman – on Plato, the direct import of Lautman’s conception is seen when Deleuze writes: “by ‘dialectic’ we do not mean any kind of circulation of opposing representations which would make them coincide in the identity of a concept, but the problem element in so far as this may be distinguished from the properly mathematical element of solutions.”

Deleuze’s conception of the nature of the dialectic draws directly on Lautman’s and is a concept for this essentially problematical dimension of reality in distinction from dimensions of reality that operate as solutions to the dialectic.

In the following passage, Lautman uses the terminology of the dialectic to restate the point mentioned above that fragmented lines of mathematical theory are often at work articulating different aspects of an inexplicit problematic structure.

While it is necessary that mathematics exists, as examples in which the ideal structure of the dialectic can be realized, it is not necessary that the examples which correspond to a particular dialectical structure are of a particular kind. What most often happens on the contrary is that the organizing power of a same structure is asserted in different theories; they then present the affinities of specific mathematical structures that reflect this common dialectical structure in which they participate.

elaboration. For the former, the theories are like entities qualitatively distinct from one another, whereas the latter sees in each an infinite power of expansion beyond its limits and connection with the others, by which the unity of the intellect is asserted. In the pages that follow, we would however like to try to develop a conception of mathematical reality which combines the fixity of logical notions and the movement with which the theories live” (Lautman, “Structure and Existence” 90).

748 DR 231/178.
749 “New Research” 207.
In other words, despite delimiting a problematic dialectical structure in the specialized terms of one theory or another, fragmentary in relation to one another, the logic of that dialectical structure organizes such theories, which manifest structural affinities even if those affinities are not apparent or well-understood. Occasionally, on this basis, a connection might be made between the theories, and part of the problematic structure might become explicated in mathematical terms. In this sense, “the proper movement of a mathematical theory lays out the schema of connections that support certain abstract ideas that are dominating with respect to mathematics.”

A good example that Smith highlights is found in the early days of classical calculus:

[Before Leibniz and Newton] the differential calculus addressed the problematic of tangents (how to determine the tangent lines to a given curve), while the integral calculus addressed the problematic of quadrature (how to determine the area within a given curve. The greatness of Leibniz and Newton was to have recognized the intimate connection between these two problematics (the problem of finding areas is the inverse of determining tangents to curves), and to have developed a symbolism to link them together and resolve them.

In a way similar to the discontinuous state of differential and integral calculus before Newton and Leibniz, for Deleuze what is constituted as solutions at the level of the actual is characterized by discontinuity, namely discontinuity between things that are actualized – simulacral beings. This discontinuity is found in Lautman precisely in terms of the fragmentary status of mathematical theories. For Deleuze, the configuration in actuality of discontinuous simulacral beings is determined on the one hand by dialectical Ideas or problems and on the other by individuating differences within an actual field of solution, i.e., by actual events. When a transformation occurs in the configuration of the field of actuality, an actual event has occurred. The example cited above illustrates this wonderfully: prior to Newton and Leibniz,

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751 Smith, “Axiomatics and problematics” 152.
differential calculus and integral calculus operated as solution fields for different aspects of a
dialectical Idea or problem that defined the discontinuous fields of their actual operation. With
the Newton/Leibniz event, a new coordinate within the field of the actual was produced (the rule
that the problem of finding areas is the inverse of determining tangents to curves) and this
reconfigured that field. An actual event occurred. I return to these ideas in greater detail in
Section 3 of this chapter.

Explaining the nature of the dialectic is difficult, but is a central aim of Lautman’s
metamathematical work. As should be evident, the dialectic is not a methodology but a register
of reality (though its ontological status does have direct implications for scientific methodology).
The dialectic exceeds the reach of mathematical theory, being “abstract and superior to
mathematics.” It is ideal, though metaphysically real. In fact, the dialectic is “the real” of
mathematics, or, as Fernando Zalamea puts it, “the mathematical real.” It is populated by two
kinds of things – “dialectical notions” and “dialectical Ideas” – which constitute its structure.

Dialectical notions are pairs of counter-posed, correlative terms of the broadest nature,
which constitute fundamental – though perhaps changing – tensions structuring the dialectical
register. Some examples Lautman offers are: “whole and part, situational properties and intrinsic
properties, basic domains and entities defined on those domains, formal systems and their
realizations.” To these can be added “Finite versus Infinite,” “Discrete versus Continuous,”
“Local versus Global,” “Algebra versus Analysis,” “Commutative versus Non commutative,
e tc.” Lautman’s view rejects the historical tendency to take such oppositions as absolute

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752 “New Research” 199.
753 Lautman, “Structure and Existence” 89 and Fernando Zalamea, “Albert Lautman and the Creative Dialectic of
Modern Mathematics” in MIPR xxiii.
754 “New Research” 204, emphasis removed, and 199.
755 “New Research” 204.
antinomies. As Jean Dieudonné emphasizes, this mistake renders dialectical notions “superficial appearances masking much more profound relationships.”\textsuperscript{757} He adds that “since 1940” “it has… been well recognized that these supposed oppositions are actually poles of tension within a same structure, and that it is from these tensions that the most remarkable progress follows.”\textsuperscript{758} As poles of tension, these notions prefigure the pre-individual singularities that compose part of Deleuze’s virtual Ideas.

For Lautman, dialectical notions constitute part of the structure of the mathematical real, but the mathematical real is the metaphysical or ontological real as accessed in terms of mathematics and metamathematics. Dialectical notions are not merely elements or terms of mathematical or even metamathematical theory, they form constitutive structures of reality, specifically of the dialectical register of reality.

In distinction from dialectical notions, Lautman’s dialectical Ideas can be characterized preliminarily in two ways. On the one hand, in respect to the relation of Ideas to notions, “Ideas envisage possible relations between dialectical notions.”\textsuperscript{759} That is, they are fields of possible structural schemas traversing the gulf between dialectical notions or rendering the poles of notions consistent (in the long passage cited earlier from \textit{Différence et répétition}, Deleuze calls these relations ideal “liaisons”: “The problem is … transcendent, because it consists in a system of ideal liaisons or differential relations between genetic elements. Immanent, because these liaisons or relations are incarnated in the actual relations which do not resemble them and are defined by the field of solution”).\textsuperscript{760} As Zalamea puts it, “an idea [is] a partial resolution of this

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{757} Dieudonné, “Preface to the 1977 Edition” in \textit{MIPR} xli.} \\
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{758} Dieudonné, “Preface to the 1977 Edition” in \textit{MIPR} xli.} \\
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{759} “New Research” 204.} \\
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{760} \textit{DR} 212/163.}
polarity [between notions].” For example, with respect to the notion of the continuous versus the discrete, modern mathematics has articulated the Idea of “the continuous as the completion of the discrete (Cantorian right).”

On the other hand, in respect to the relation of Ideas to mathematical theories, Ideas are “problems” that function as “the structural schemas according to which the effective theories are organized.” Explaining this will be one of my central tasks in the following paragraphs. Likewise, in Deleuze’s account problems are ideal liaisons or relations immanent to actual relations in which they are incarnated. Lautman’s account here in which one domain of reality organizes or governs another is suggestive of a Platonism. Indeed, for Lautman the term “dialectical Idea” draws a reference to Plato’s theory of Ideas and a Platonism characterizing his philosophy of mathematics, which is important for making sense of the relation of Ideas to mathematical theories. I return to this in a moment. For now, it is important to emphasize that Lautman takes care to distinguish his concept of Idea from that found in the standard version of Platonism: “We do not understand by Ideas the models whose mathematical entities would merely be copies.” In other words, mathematical theories are not mimetic or representational in respect to Ideas. Rather, theories are organized by them. How this organization is effectuated is one of the central problems Lautman tries to solve using Heideggerian ontology.

For Lautman, Ideas exceed, surpass, or transcend the field articulable by extant mathematical theories while simultaneously structuring those very theories. Ideas do not disappear with solutions generated in response to them. Rather, “dialectical Ideas are purely

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763 “New Research” 205 and 199.
764 “New Research” 199.
problematic.”\textsuperscript{765} In Heidegger’s terminology, they form the subject matter that the \textit{Grundbegriffe} of mathematical theory work to articulate. Distinct mathematical theories – or indeed the field of mathematical theories at any moment in its history – constitute solutions to these problems. Yet, because of their purely problematic character, dialectical Ideas exceed the theories or solutions generated in relation to them. Stated differently, mathematical theory articulates dialectical Ideas, which constitute the reality mathematics thinks. But dialectical Ideas are not reducible to mathematics: “the dialectic is not part of mathematics.”\textsuperscript{766}

Since mathematics bears a necessary relation to a reality that exceeds its own and that is constitutive of it, mathematics cannot provide a sufficient ontology in its own terms. This shows the need for a metamathematics that theorizes not only about the sufficiency of theories to contend with the problems organizing them, but about the nature of the dialectic itself. In Lautman’s analysis, Heidegger’s ontology is both consistent with his philosophy of mathematics and it provides this metamathematical systematic supplement. Heidegger offers Lautman resources to define the ontological status of the dialectic and to articulate the relation of mathematical theory to the dialectic.

Deleuze understands this relation to be one in which “the ideal connections constitutive of the problematic (dialectical) Idea are incarnated in the real relations which are constituted by mathematical theories and carried over into problems in the form of solutions.”\textsuperscript{767} Likewise, Lautman’s position is that “the intrinsic reality of mathematics… reside[s] in its participation in the Ideas of this dialectic which governs them,” and that “in mathematics” the “ideal relations” of this dialectic are “realized in concrete ways.”\textsuperscript{768} In other words, mathematics gains its

\textsuperscript{765} Alunni, “Continental Genealogies” 70.
\textsuperscript{766} “New Research” 204.
\textsuperscript{767} \textit{DR} 232/179.
\textsuperscript{768} “New Research” 199.
purchase on reality via its engagement with the dialectic and its Ideas or problems. Lautman makes the point again as follows: “the reality inherent to mathematical theories comes to them from their participation in an ideal reality that is dominating with respect to mathematics, but that is only knowable through it.” As with any theory that posits a distinction between two or more domains of reality, the fundamental problem it must address is of how the domains can interact (cf. Epicurean atomism and the clinamen, the mind/body problem, Spinoza’s rejection of Cartesian claim that there exist multiple substances, etc.). As Lautman puts it, “a philosophy of the sciences that isn’t entirely concerned with the study of this solidarity between domains of reality and methods of investigation would be singularly devoid of interest.”

In a broad frame, Lautman’s theory holds that though there is an ontological necessity for the irreducibility of the dialectic to mathematics and for their difference, there is also an ontological continuity by which the latter is structurally informed by the former. To explain this, he understands the distinction between mathematics and the dialectic on the basis of Heidegger’s ontological difference between beings and being. More specifically, he argues that the relation of mathematics to the dialectic replicates the relation of the ontic (that which pertains to beings as beings) and ontological (that which pertains to the being of beings). Knox Peden has put this point nicely as follows: “For Lautman mathematical concepts stood in relation to the dialectical Ideas that were their conditions in a way not unlike the merely ontic entities of Heidegger’s formulation in their relation to the ontological processes constitutive of them. Lautman attempted to translate Heidegger’s framework for understanding the ontological question as anterior to the ontic answer into a mathematical account of the dialectical problem’s ontological primacy over

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its conceptual solution.”\cite{771} Since Deleuze’s ontology of problems/dialectical Ideas and solutions in *Différence et répétition* adopts Lautman’s, this fact demonstrates a clear line of Heideggerian influence on its structure.\cite{772}

The central term Lautman uses to characterize the relation of the dialectic to mathematics is “domination,” which Duffy translates as “governing” or occasionally as “dominating.”\cite{773} Lautman employs various aspects of Heidegger’s ontic-ontological relation to explain its nature and “how the understanding of the Ideas of this Dialectic is necessarily extended in the genesis of effective mathematical theories.”\cite{774} A particularly important element of the latter is “describing the genesis of mathematics from the Dialectic.”\cite{775} This entails explaining a participation of mathematical theory in the dialectic and a way mathematics realizes or incarnates ideal relations in concrete ways. Key here is Lautman’s position that dialectical Ideas are simultaneously transcendent and immanent to mathematics. Deleuze adopts this central element of Lautman’s theory, both in terms of problems and events. As Deleuze puts these points, “the problem is at once both transcendent and immanent in relation to its solutions” and “the ideal series [of events] enjoys the double property of transcendence and immanence in relation to the real [or actual series of events].”\cite{776} I will now reconstruct Lautman’s use of Heidegger in arguing for these points.

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\cite{771} Peden, *Spinoza Contra Phenomenology* 28.

\cite{772} Though I will not elaborate the topic of history, Lautman’s use of Heidegger also endows his theory with a temporality akin to that of Heideggerian fundamental-ontological transcendence. As with Heidegger, this grounds an essential historicality, which for Lautman characterizes mathematics in its engagement with the dialectic. In this sense, Peden is absolutely right to add that “Lautman sought to translate [Heidegger’s] notion of the ontological difference between being and beings into a rubric for making sense of mathematics as a historically grounded mode of thought” (Peden, *Spinoza Contra Phenomenology* 28). Here, Peden poses Lautman’s position in juxtaposition with Cavaillès’s, which maintained “rationality’s immanence in mathematics.”

\cite{773} “New Research” 199.

\cite{774} “New Research” 197.

\cite{775} “New Research” 206.

\cite{776} *DR* 212/163 and 244/189.

363
2.2.2: Lautman’s Transcendental Conception of the Governing Relation

Lautman argues for a “transcendental conception of the relation of governing... between the dialectic and mathematics,” which entails that dialectical Ideas are simultaneously transcendent and immanent in relation to mathematics. He uses the terms “transcendental,” “transcendent,” and “immanent” in specifically Heideggerian senses. Earlier, I indicated a key sense of “transcendence” in terms of the fundamental-ontological movement of Heidegger’s productive logic of Grundlegung. I expand upon this and specify the senses of “immanence” and the “transcendental” in what follows. It will be helpful to situate this by returning Lautman’s mathematical Platonism.

First, as should be evident, Heideggerian fundamental-ontological transcendence must be distinguished from what I will call “metaphysical transcendence.” A philosophical system posits metaphysical transcendence if it posits the existence of domains of reality that are really or substantially distinct from our own, as in the standard interpretation of Platonic metaphysics (the intelligible forms or Ideas are metaphysically transcendent in relation to the domain of the sensible icons). Lautman’s philosophy does not advocate any metaphysical transcendence.

Yet, his position that mathematics engages and is governed by a metaphysically real dialectic partially constituted by transcendent Ideas does entail a version of mathematical Platonism. In Lautman’s argument, however, this is presented as reconcilable with Heideggerianism, and for Deleuze it is consistent with his overturned Platonism. The standard form of mathematical Platonism is a commitment to the idea that “there are abstract mathematical objects whose existence is independent of us and our language, thought, and practices,” objects like “numbers and sets,” and that “mathematical truths are therefore

discovered, not invented.” In Lautman’s definition, this kind of standard mathematical Platonism is found in “any philosophy for which the existence of a mathematical entity is taken as assured, even though this entity could not be built in a finite number of steps.”

Mathematical Platonism is opposed to mathematical nominalism: the position that such objects and truths do not exist independently of us or our cultures but are generated by them.

Lautman rejects both nominalism and the standard form of mathematical Platonism, which he considers to offer only “a superficial knowledge of Platonism.” Instead he adopts the interpretation of those he calls the “modern Plato commentators” who insist “that Ideas are not immobile and irreducible essences of an intelligible world, but that they are related to each other according to the schemas of a superior dialectic that presides over their arrival.” In Lautman’s Platonism, the claim is not that mathematical objects like numbers or sets exist independently of mathematicians and their cultures, but that the dialectic and its problems or Ideas (i.e., the non-mathematical objects of mathematical theory) are metaphysically real and ontologically prior to the mathematical theories articulating them. Though this constitutes a realism about the dialectic, it is not a standard philosophical Platonism, i.e., Lautman’s ontology is not one of metaphysical transcendence. In his words, the type of “cut between the dialectic and mathematics” that is found in metaphysical transcendence “cannot in effect be envisaged.”

Strikingly, this resembles the character of Heidegger’s post-Kehre thought that I have referred to as his “ontological realism.” If what might be called “ontic realism” is a realism about

781 Lautman, “Structure and Existence” 190. The commentators he names are Léon Robin, Julius Stenzel, and Oskar Becker.
782 “New Research” 199. Lautman’s philosophy of mathematics also rejects hylomorphism: the relation between mathematics and dialectical Ideas is not “the contingent interposition of a Matter heterogeneous to the Ideas” (“New Research” 199-200).
beings (i.e., the claim that beings exist independently of human existence), “ontological realism” is realism about ontological structures. As I argued in Chapters II and III, in Heidegger’s post-
*Kehre* work he maintains such a position, arguing that there are ontological structures more originary than human existence (e.g., ἀλήθεια and λήθη in “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit” or Zeit-Raum in *Beiträge*). These structures ground or enable the existence of human beings and worlds of beings, and they are not dependent upon human existence. Similarly, Lautman’s mathematical Platonism, as a realism about the dialectic, maintains that dialectical Ideas are ontologically prior to mathematical theories and enable such theories to exist. In contrast to standard mathematical Platonism, in Lautman’s theory of the governing relation of dialectical Ideas to mathematics, we find a “mode of emanation from one to the other, a kind of procession that connects them closely.”783 This is, moreover, consistent with Deleuze’s overturned Platonism in which dialectical Ideas take the position of the enigmatic or problematic element found in the mythic dimension of the Platonic dialectic and the being of simulacra, while mathematics takes the position of the actualization of the dialectical Idea in systems of simulacra.

To help explain this governing relation, Lautman adopts the structure or dynamic of Heideggerian fundamental-ontological transcendence. In particular, he has in mind the version Heidegger presents in “Vom Wesen des Grundes.” There, as elsewhere for Heidegger, “transcendence means surpassing [Überstieg]” and the correlated term “transcendent” (or “transcending”) refers to “that which accomplishes such surpassing and dwells in this surpassing.”784 For instance, the structure of Dasein’s existence is transcendent since it continuously surpasses itself, but is itself precisely in this surpassing. For Heidegger, the “transcendental” refers to that which constitutively belongs to the structure of transcendence.

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783 “New Research” 199.
784 *WG* 137/107.
Though the term maintains a link with its Kantian heritage, that which is transcendental here is not merely the condition for the possibility of experience or knowledge. Rather, since Heidegger’s position is that transcendence is the ground enabling the ontic register of beings to be (including the ontic register of Dasein), the transcendental is that which belongs to transcendence insofar as transcendence constitutes an ontological ground. Heidegger writes: “this term [“transcendental”] names all that belongs essentially to transcendence and bears its intrinsic possibility thanks to such transcendence.”

Lautman restates Heidegger’s notion of transcendence as follows: “When it is of the essential nature of a thing to go beyond itself in order to go towards an entity exterior to it, without which this thing would no longer be conceived as existing, this going beyond of the subject towards the entity, this is transcendence.” Lautman specifically has in mind 1) the transcendence of Dasein towards the world and 2) the transcendence of ontological disclosure, i.e., the transcendence of Dasein in its ontic register toward the ontological structures constituting its being, via the “rational activity of founding [fondement] (Begründung).” In his own work, this figures the transcendence of mathematical theories toward the dialectic or dialectical Ideas.

It is interesting to note that in Pierre Lefebvre’s transcript notes of Deleuze’s 1956-57 hypokhâgne course at the Lycée Louis le Grand, Deleuze recounts just these points as follows:

For Heidegger, the world is the structure of human existence. Then the notion of world can no longer be separated from the human being’s way of being. This [way] is transcendence or exceeding [dépassement, surpassing]. The word “transcendent’ no longer signifies a being exterior or superior to the world, but an act. Human existence exists as transcendent. Heidegger

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785 WG 139/109.
786 “New Research” 205.
787 “New Research” 241/202. To my knowledge Lautman does not distinguish between fondement or fondation and fond, as Deleuze does. For Heidegger the “problem [Problem] of ground” and that of transcendence are intimately related (WG 126/100). In “Vom Wesen des Grundes,” Heidegger designates transcendence as “the distinctive domain [Bezirks] within which we may treat of the essence of ground,” while, reciprocally, “transcendence itself is first determined moreoriginarily and more comprehensively via the problem of ground” (WG 126/99).
distinguishes that which we exceed and that to which we exceed. Transcendence is the essence of subjectivity and he replaces even this word with transcendence.\textsuperscript{788}

Throughout Heidegger’s corpus the movement of transcendence is articulated in a variety of registers. The most familiar is found in the existential analysis of Dasein in \textit{Sein und Zeit}. There, “transcendence” designates the structural dynamic of Dasein as described, for example, in terms of thrown projection or temporality. In terms of thrown projection, Dasein exists as thrown into a world, the conditions of which surpass its control (e.g., historical, material, and socio-economic conditions, but also particulars like the classmates one has when growing up or the bicycle with a faulty chain one is given that leads to a skinned knee). These conditions bear a direct constitutive relation to Dasein’s individual existence (e.g., the characteristics of one’s body and the way it is inscribed with the fashions of the day). Together, these conditions partially constitute Dasein’s facticity, one structural dimension of its existence. On the basis of its unique facticity, Dasein interprets and understands its existence, the world, and the projects it finds important. And in terms of this understanding, Dasein projects possibilities for itself or routes of action it might take to accomplish its tasks in the world. The field of possibilities Dasein projects constitute another structural dimension of its existence. “Transcendence” designates the continuous movement by which Dasein surpasses its facticity through the field of possibilities projected in the world. This, of course, does not mean facticity is left behind, but rather that Dasein, as factual thrown-projection, exists as this movement of transcendence (Dasein “accomplishes” and “dwells in” this surpassing). Transcendence involves a reflexive logic that drives this movement, as I described earlier. By stepping into a possibility, Dasein surpasses its current factical state, which in turn alters its facticity: what was once a possibility in Dasein’s futural field becomes sedimented into its facticity. This forces a modulation of Dasein’s

\textsuperscript{788} Deleuze, \textit{What is Grounding?} 37.
interpretation and understanding of itself and the world, and in turn a modulation of the field of possibilities it projects. This ongoing dynamic ceases only with death. Dasein is transcendent because it exists in a way continually displacing itself beyond itself, into possibilities that surpass the previous state of its existence.\footnote{Restated in terms of Dasein’s temporality, transcendence is the movement whereby Dasein, from out of its “having-been (gewesend)” dimension, projects a “futural (zukünftig)” field into which it continually moves (SZ 385/437, italics removed). That is, “transcendence” names the structural dynamics of Dasein’s temporality.} Needless to say, for Heidegger, transcendence is not a matter of the autonomous volition of a subject; there is no time in which Dasein exists that it is not transcendent. Dasein’s existence is transcendence. Of particular importance for making sense of Lautman’s use of transcendence is the form of this movement that I have discussed extensively in which Dasein directs itself scientifically toward investigating its own existence (the methodological arena in early Heidegger for clarifying the being of beings). This engenders the movement of transcendence found in Heidegger’s productive logic, by which Grundlegung surpasses established Grundbegriffe toward the originary ground of their subject matter, casting increasingly well-grounded articulations of that subject matter.

At the most basic level, Lautman’s transcendental conception of the governing relation means that all the elements of this relation are integrated into an ongoing movement or dynamic of transcendence. This entails that 1) dialectical Ideas and notions surpass mathematical theory (they are transcendent) without being metaphysically transcendent to it, since mathematics bears an inherent structural and constitutive reference to (i.e., participation in) the dialectic; 2) in the radical movement where the life of mathematical theory is found, mathematics surpasses itself toward the dialectic, without which it would not be; and 3) in this movement mathematics articulates new aspects of the dialectic, on the basis of which the particulars of mathematical theory are recast.
For Lautman, the transcendental account of the governing relation between the dialectic and mathematics allows for the simultaneous preservation of their difference without resorting to metaphysical transcendence and of their intimacy without identification. In the structure of Dasein’s transcendence, Dasein “could not be conceived otherwise than as oriented toward the world,” or for that matter, otherwise than as oriented toward being. Lautman thus finds in Heidegger a model of “transcendence as an act of bringing together [Dasein and world; Dasein and being], and not… a state of separation,” in the sense of metaphysical transcendence. Yet just as Heidegger insists on the ontological difference between being and beings, Lautman insists on the difference between the dialectic and mathematics.

The transcendental account of the governing relation also enables Lautman to specify “the type of anteriority of the Dialectic with respect to Mathematics.” As should be clear, it is not the type of anteriority of axioms in relation to the propositions derived from them (nor is that the nature of the genesis involved). Rather, it is “an ‘ontological’ priority,” which Lautman formulates alternatively as “that of ‘concern’ [souci] or the ‘question’ with respect to the response.” The French “souci” is used by Corbin to translate Heidegger’s use of the German “Sorge,” which is regularly rendered “care” in English. Care, of course, is a key concept in Heidegger’s existential analysis of Dasein in *Sein und Zeit*. At the end of the first Division of that text, “care” designates Dasein’s being, as the ontological ground in which is found the unity of all the aspects of being-in-the-world previously elaborated in the text (those found in the worldhood of the world, being-with, being-in, etc.). As an example of ontological priority, care is ontologically prior to the more derivative structures it grounds. Moreover, we are able to

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790 “New Research” 205.
792 “New Research” 203.
793 “New Research” 204.
articulate the care structure by means of the fundamental-ontological transcendence enacted in
the productive logic of Grundlegung, oriented toward the being of Dasein in the existential analytic. This is described in the following passage, which I cited in Chapter I:

The totality of the structural whole [Die Ganzheit des Strukturganzen] is not to be reached by building it up out of elements…. The being of Dasein, upon which the structural whole as such is ontologically supported, becomes accessible to us when we look all the way through this whole to a single primordially unitary [ursprünglich einheitliches] phenomenon which is already in this whole in such a way that it provides the ontological foundation for each structural item in its structural possibility [so daß es jedes Strukturmoment in seiner strukturalen Möglichkeit ontologisch fundiert].794

Within this conceptual framework, Heidegger’s account of care is generated precisely as a response or solution to the question of being (Seinsfrage), formulated within the parameters of the existential analysis of Dasein.

2.2.3: Genesis and Immanence

One of Deleuze’s central concerns in his theory of Ideas is explaining an ontological genesis that he refers to as “static genesis.”795 “This genesis takes place in time not between one actual term, however small, and another actual term, but between the virtual and its actualization – in other words, it goes from the structure to its incarnation, from the conditions of a problem to the cases of solution, from the differential elements and their ideal connections to actual terms and diverse real relations which constitute at each moment the actuality of time.”796 For Lautman, the transcendental conception of the governing relation between the dialectic and mathematics enables him to clarify just such a genetic operation whereby the specifics of mathematical

794 SZ 181/226.
795 DR 238/183, italics removed.
796 DR 237-238/183.
theories are generated by dialectical Ideas. That is, it allows him to explain how mathematics 
realizes or incarnates ideal relations in concrete ways, particularly such that “an enrichment of 
knowledge” can be effectuated. Here, new mathematical theoretical articulations of dialectical 
Ideas are generated in which those theories gain a more originary and well-grounded grasp of the 
structure of the dialectic and its Ideas. The transcendental conception of the governing relation 
shows how:

...an effort of understanding adequate to the dialectical Ideas, by the very fact that it applies to 
knowing the internal connections of this dialectic, is creative of systems of more concrete notions 
in which these connections are asserted. The genesis is then no longer conceived as the material 
creation of the concrete from the Idea, but as the advent of notions relative to the concrete within 
the analysis of the Idea.

To explain the process of genesis, Lautman employs a distinction made by Heidegger in 
“Vom Wesen des Grundes” between ontic and ontological truth, together with the structure of 
transcendence that articulates their relation. Ontic truth must not be confused with propositional 
truth about beings. It is non-representational. Rather, what Heidegger means by “ontic truth” is 
the manifestness or unconcealment of beings as beings. In Lautman’s words, “the truth of what 
extists [l’existant] is ontic, and relative to the effective situations of concrete existence. The 
distinguishing feature of the being [l’existant] is to manifest itself, to be revealed.” Ontic truth 
is the terrain of beings constituting a phenomenal world at any given time. Ontological truth, on

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797 “New Research” 205. Similarly, Heidegger’s existential analytic of Dasein gives an account of the process of 
transcendence, but he is especially interested in the way transcendence operates in the disclosure of the being of 
Dasein and the greater authenticity that results.

798 “New Research” 200. It is unclear why Lautman suggests that an effort of understanding might be adequate 
to the dialectical Ideas here. First of all, dialectical Ideas are not represented by mathematical theories, and so no 
adequation of one to the other in the traditional meaning of this term makes sense. Second, if adequation were taken 
not in a representational sense but as an exhaustive articulation of a subject matter, it would remain impossible, 
since in Lautman’s account dialectical Ideas are essentially problematic – always exceeding or transcending the 
articulation of them by mathematical theories. It would seem that in the (impossible) case of adequation, the 
dialectic would collapse into mathematics. That scenario, however, would be inconsistent with Lautman’s 
metamathematics. Instead, the genetic operation and its “knowing” of the internal connections of dialectical Ideas is 
an ongoing, open-ended process in which dimensions of the dialectic perpetually exceed, by structural necessity, the 
mathematical theories that articulate it (as is entailed by the logic of Heideggerian transcendence).

the other hand, pertains to the register of the being of beings. It designates not the manifestness of beings, but the disclosure of that which enables the manifestness of beings. More precisely, ontological truth is the disclosure of ontological structures grounding ontic truth. Though these two registers must be distinguished, Heidegger is careful to point out their essential correlation: “Ontic and ontological truth each concern, in different ways, beings in their being, and being of beings. They belong essentially together on the grounds of their relation to the distinction between being and beings (ontological difference).”

To clarify the relation of ontic to ontological truth, particularly insofar as the latter renders the former possible, Lautman adapts another fundamental element of Heidegger’s ontology: the pre-ontological understanding of being. Including a quotation from Heidegger, Lautman writes: this manifestation or “revelation [ontic truth] is only possible ‘guided and clarified by an understanding of the being (the constitution of being: what something is and how it is) of beings.’” It is worth noting that “the constitution of being” is used here to translate “Seinsverfassung.” Corbin, though, renders this as “la structure de son être,” a formulation Lautman repeats in his French text. Consequently, it is easy to see how Lautman connects this with his account of dialectical Ideas as structural schemas. In turn, Deleuze sometimes defines Ideas as structures: “A structure or an Idea is a ‘complex theme’, an internal multiplicity – in other words, a system of multiple, non-localizable connections between differential elements which is incarnated in real relations and actual terms.” Deleuze’s structure or Idea takes the place of Heidegger’s Seinsverfassung, his real relations and actual terms take the place of ontic

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800 WG 134/105.
801 “New Research” 200. Lautman’s French quotation of Heidegger is found in the Corbin translation, Qu’est-ce que la metaphysic? 56. Duffy uses a modified version of Malick’s translation of “Vom Wesen des Grundes” for this. The standard form of the text can be found in WG 131/103. I replace Malick’s use of “entity” with “being” throughout.
802 DR 237/183.
truth, and the genetic process of incarnation takes the place of the disclosure of ontological truth and its manifestation in beings. Most important in the Lautman passage just cited is his appropriation of the Heideggerian idea that ontic truth is possible only on the ground of the pre-ontological understanding of being constituted in Dasein’s existence, as the condition for the possibility of any ontology. Stated differently, for Heidegger “unveiledness [Enthülltheit] of being first makes possible the manifestness [Offenbarkeit] of beings.”803 Lautman, of course, transforms this Heideggerian idea, since he is concerned not with the existential analysis of Dasein but with mathematics and metamathematics.

As I have discussed at length, Heidegger calls the structure of Dasein’s originary openness to its own being and to a world its “Erschlossenheit” or “disclosedness.” Dasein’s pre-ontological understanding, as an undeveloped disclosedness with respect to being, grounds the possibility of thematizing and developing a science of being (fundamental ontology). By pursuing this, Dasein discloses originary ontological structures. In Lautman’s reading, ontological truth then is “‘disclosure’ understood ‘as the truth about being.’”804 Since for Heidegger the necessary methodological horizon for doing ontology is the existential analysis of Dasein, ontological truth is disclosed, i.e., being is clarified, by inquiring into the being of Dasein. The ontological processes and structures disclosed are those constituting Dasein’s existence, and, in turn, grounding phenomenal worlds of beings.

An example will help to clarify this. At the level of ontic truth, I might follow Aristotle’s question about beings as beings (ὅν ᾗ ὄν), and ask “What am I as a being?”805 As a function of

803 WG 131/103, italics removed.
804 “New Research” 200. In this passage, Lautman is citing Heidegger, WG 131/103-104.
805 Heidegger discusses Aristotle’s question at length in various texts. In several of them, including Beiträge, the orientation this question provides for philosophy is an essential factor governing the problematic history of metaphysics. Though Heidegger’s early work of doing fundamental ontology via the existential analysis of Dasein seems to be shaped by this, the self-critique undergone beginning in the 1930s aims to establish an ontological ground independent of it.
my particular factical conditions (which include the pop-theoretical frameworks dominant at this
moment in history), I interpret my existence in various ways: I am a medium sized biological
organism; my brain is a meat computer; I am an American; I pay my taxes. These are all aspects
of me that pertain to my being a being, and are designated within the logic of positive science.
The matrix of such interpretations defines the projects I find worth doing in the world, the routes
I take endeavoring to accomplish them, and the meaning the other beings I encounter in the
world have for me. However, when I do fundamental ontology – that is, raise the question of my
being or existence – I employ the radical-scientific operation of Grundlegung in an effort to
discern the structures that enable me to give those ontic interpretations. For instance, the
structure of interpretation itself, for Heidegger, is an ontological element of my existence – i.e.,
one of the “existentialia.” Ontological truth consists in the disclosure of ontological structures
constituting my being. Examples of these in Sein und Zeit include interpretation, projection, care,
disclosedness, unconcealment and concealment, historicality, and temporality, among others.

For Lautman, the distinction between ontic and ontological truth describes the distinction
between mathematical theory and its purchase on dialectical Ideas. The participation of
mathematics in Ideas is analogous to Dasein’s disclosure of ontological truth – the disclosure of
originary ontological structures grounding the ontic. How, though, does this enable Lautman to
explain the genesis of mathematics from the dialectic or, in other words, the realization of ideal
relations in mathematical theory? For this, he reconstructs Heidegger’s account of disclosure as
an “act” of transcendence: “in the analysis of the disclosure of being, a general theory of these
acts is constituted which, for us, are geneses, and that Heidegger calls acts of transcendence or of
surpassing.” But acts of transcendence are acts by which Dasein surpasses itself, e.g., toward a
world or toward the Grundverfassung of its own being. Lautman’s discussion addresses both of

these, but I will focus on the latter. His reconstruction of disclosure operates in terms of the logic of questions and the answers generated in response to them.

“The disclosure of being” “comes primarily from the act of asking a question about something.” Of course, the subject matter Heidegger asks about is the being of beings, as accessible as the being of Dasein. Indeed, in a certain sense, Dasein exists as a question: it is a being that has its own being as an issue. But, more pertinent here is the fact that because of its pre-ontological understanding, Dasein can develop a science in which being is explicitly conceptualized. Though the act of asking a question does not involve a sufficient understanding of the subject matter inquired into, it does constitute a “prior delimitation” of it. That is, the question itself delimits the subject matter in a pre-conceptual way: it delimits a problematic field on the basis of the vague understanding available. In the case of fundamental ontology, this delimitation is granted by the pre-ontological understanding of being. By disclosing basic structures of that problematic field, a developed “concept of being” can be formed. We know from Heidegger’s account of the productive logic belonging to fundamental ontology that this operates by the process of Grundlegung. That is, the Grundverfassung of Dasein’s being (i.e., Dasein’s Seinsverfassung) is problematized, and the logic of the vague understanding of being articulating the question is tracked to the ontological ground enabling that articulation. The structures of that ground are elaborated and concepts (Grundbegriffe) are cast articulating them. The logic of the ontological structures disclosed is borne in these Grundbegriffe. In Lautman’s words, the formation of such a concept of being is “an act by which a structure is disclosed to the intelligence,” and on this basis the intelligence “becomes capable of outlining the set of concrete

problems relating to the being (l'être) in question.” The “act” of asking the question about being delimits a thematic space, and the intrinsic relation of the question and the subject matter inquired into constitutes a preliminary articulation of that subject matter, which can then be elaborated and more formally articulated by a set of Grundbegriffe that serve as an answer to the question.

This genetic movement of the disclosure of ontological truth is essential for Lautman, but incomplete without carrying it through to the genesis of ontic truth, or of effective mathematical theory. The next necessary step follows quite easily, though: “What then happens, and for us this is the fundamental point, is that this disclosure of the ontological truth of being cannot be done without the concrete aspects of ontic existence taking shape at the same time.” In other words, the disclosure of ontological truth simultaneously modulates the ontic state of affairs (and does so in a non-mimetic way). To continue the example from above, when I disclose the structure of interpretation as partially constitutive of my being and work out the logic of interpretation (the hermeneutical circle), this undermines the legitimacy of the ontic terms in which I had previously hypostatized myself (my being is not defined essentially by “American,” “tax-payer,” etc.). This in turn modulates the matrix of projects and meaning constituting my world. The way I understand myself and the world – and in fact the way that the world and I are – at the ontic level is reconfigured to be consistent with the ontological structure of my being that I have disclosed. The logic of interpretation percolates into it. Heidegger describes this change in terms of the gravitation toward greater authenticity. In this way, disclosing ontological truth
simultaneously modulates ontic truth. For Deleuze, the reconfiguration described here in Heideggerian terms becomes recast in terms of actual events. When, for instance, the actual discourse of a science is exposed to new aspects of the dialectical Idea that defines the science as a field of potential solutions, that field undergoes a reconfiguration. In other words, an actual event occurs that produces new fields of solution. Lautman makes the Heideggerian point again in a broadly scientific register as follows: “a same activity is seen to … act on two different planes: the constitution of the being of the being, on the ontological plane, is inseparable from the determination, on the ontic plane, of the factual existence of a domain in which the objects of a scientific knowledge receive life and matter.”

For Lautman, the same inseparability and simultaneous – but non-representational – modulation occurs in the relation between dialectical Ideas and mathematical theory. Within this context, the way Lautman understands the immanence of mathematical theoretical solutions to dialectical problems can be better specified:

Insofar as posed problems, relating to connections that are likely to support certain dialectical notions, the Ideas of this Dialectic are certainly transcendent (in the usual sense) with respect to mathematics [that is, they constitute a reality that exceeds that of mathematics]. On the other hand, as any effort to provide a response to the problem of these connections is, by the very nature of things, constitution of effective mathematical theories, it is justified to interpret the overall structure of these theories in terms of immanence for the logical schema of the solution sought after. An intimate link thus exists between the transcendence of the Ideas and the immanence of the logical structure of the solution to a dialectical problem within mathematics. This link is the notion of genesis which we give it, at least as we have tried to grasp it, by describing the genesis of mathematics from the Dialectic.

Structurally speaking, the genetic movement described by Lautman is precisely the same movement of fundamental-ontological transcendence found in Heidegger. And Lautman’s genetic relation can be given more detail by briefly looking to that. When Dasein does fundamental ontology, it enacts the movement of transcendence along the radical-scientific axis of ground. I examine the fundamental structures in terms of which I currently understand my

812 “New Research” 201.
813 “New Research” 205-206
being and – according to Heidegger – find them insufficient. I inquire into the ground enabling those structures to be at all and develop a set of Grundbegriffe to articulate them. Likewise, mathematical theory engages the dialectical Ideas or problems and casts a set of Grundbegriffe to articulate them. On these bases whole ranges of positive scientific discourse are generated at the ontic level. However, just as the structurally problematic dimension of my being is displaced beyond the new ontological Grundbegriffe, the problematic dimension of dialectical Ideas exceeds the grasp of the new fundamental mathematical theoretical concepts. This drives me (or the mathematician) to work out new Grundbegriffe to articulate the problematic element in yet more originary ways. In turn, a freshly configured positive ontic or mathematical discourse is generated… and so on. The movement of radical scientific or fundamental ontological transcendence motivated by the problematic element is genetic of “solutions” at the ontic level.

On the basis of Lautman’s appropriation of Heidegger, we see that his mathematical Platonism consists not in asserting any metaphysical transcendence, but in a certain ontological realism – that is, a realism about ontological structures (dialectical Ideas and notions), which mathematical theory endeavors to articulate. This constitutes not a constructivism, but a sort of rationalism. The theoretical practices of mathematics get their grip on reality by disclosing aspects of dialectical structural schemas, adopting the logic of those schemas in the Grundbegriffe of mathematical theory, and then recasting the field of positive mathematics on that basis. In other words, there is an immanent structural information by which the operation of radical mathematics generates mathematical theory that participates in the logic of the dialectic and its Ideas.

There is one further point to make before returning to a more direct analysis of Deleuze. While Lautman is primarily concerned with dialectical Ideas or problems and their relation to
mathematical theoretical solutions, he takes the structure described here to apply in every science. In his words, “mathematical logic does not enjoy in this respect any special privilege. It is only one theory among others and the problems that it raises or that it solves are found almost identically elsewhere.” In fact, he takes the genetic relation of the Idea/problem-solution structure to describe the ontological operation by which things are generated in general. “One can,” Lautman writes, “in regards to the relations between the Dialectic and Mathematics, follow the mechanism of operation closely in which the analysis of Ideas is extended in effective creation, in which the virtual is transformed into the real. Mathematics thus plays with respect to the other domains of incarnation, physical reality, social reality, human reality, the role of model in which the way things come into existence is observed.”

3: Ideal Event, Multiplicity, and Genesis in Deleuze’s Ontology

Though Deleuze finds mathematics – in particular, classical calculus – to have an important role in ontology, the significance of Lautman for him is not limited to the mathematical. In *Différence et répétition* Deleuze embraces Lautman’s claim that dialectical Ideas are not preferentially indexed to mathematical solutions/theories, but rather structure multiple solution fields. Following Lautman, the genetic relation in the Idea/problem-solution structure supplies a description of the ontological operation by which beings of any order are generated. There are different orders of dialectical Ideas or problems, which structure a variety of theoretical fields. In Deleuze’s words, “mathematics appears with the fields of solution in which dialectical Ideas of the last order are incarnated, and with the expression of problems relative to these fields. Other

815 “New Research” 203.
orders of Ideas are incarnated in other fields and in other modes of expression corresponding to
different sciences. In this manner, a genesis of diverse scientific domains takes place on the basis
of dialectical problems and their orders.816 Deleuze takes a step farther yet: in the system
proposed in Chapter IV of *Différence et répétition*, reality itself is structured like a problem
complex, i.e., like the dialectical Idea-solution couple.

Deleuze adopts the framework of Lautman’s theory of problems/Ideas almost wholesale.
Recalling three of the central points addressed above, Deleuze defines the problem/Idea-solution
complex in Lautmanian terms as follows:

Following Lautman’s general thesis, a problem has three aspects: its difference in kind from
solutions; its transcendence in relation to the solutions that it engenders on the basis of its own
determinant conditions; and its immanence in the solutions which cover it.817

Given my analysis in the preceding sections of this chapter, the transmission of elements
of Heidegger’s early ontology to Deleuze is evident here despite the fact that in *Différence et
répétition* Deleuze does not acknowledge the influence of Heidegger on Lautman. One must
simply recall that Lautman defined the difference in kind between problems or Ideas and
solutions in terms of Heidegger’s difference between the ontic and ontological; that Lautman
understood the problem’s transcendence in relation to solutions in terms of Heidegger’s
fundamental-ontological transcendence; and, on that basis, that he understood the problem’s
immanence in solutions in terms of Heidegger’s immanence of ontological structures in the
beings constituted on their basis.818 Yet Deleuze’s ontology is by no means reducible to
Heidegger’s.

816 DR 235/181.
817 DR 231-232/178-179.
818 Note that Peden also argues that “the virtual and the actual… operated as a translation of Heidegger’s ontological
difference in his [Deleuze’s] own system” (Peden, *Spinoza Contra Phenomenology* 249).
Deleuze agrees with Lautman that “problems are always dialectical” and that “the ideal connections constitutive of the problematic (dialectical) Idea are incarnated in the real relations which are constituted by mathematical theories and carried over into problems in the form of solutions.” He also agrees that “what is mathematical (or physical, biological, psychical or sociological) are the solutions,” not the problems. Yet, within this Lautmanian/Heideggerian framework, Deleuze recalibrates the nature of dialectical Ideas in terms of his differential ontology and recasts the terms of their genetic relation to solutions on that basis. This is where his concept of ideal event is defined. For Deleuze, “the problematic or dialectical Idea is a system of connections between differential elements, a system of differential relations between genetic elements.” In his terminology, this can be restated by saying that dialectical Ideas or problems are “multiplicities.” Multiplicities are systems of structured difference. Worlds of quasi-stable, actual simulacral identities are the solutions to problems constituted as differential multiplicities.

In ontologies based upon identity, a common paradigm understands events to be the alterations of attributes predicated of a subject. This picture is dependent upon the ontological priority of the identity of the subject (which takes on the role of its essence) and that subject’s ability to bear a variety of inessential or accidental attributes. I might be “two-armed” today and then, after an operation, “one-armed” tomorrow, yet my personal identity remains. The event in this framework is the alteration of the predicate: from “two-armed” to “one-armed.” But such an event is defined in relation to the identity operating as a substratum bearing it. Thus, the event is secondary.

\[819, \text{DR 232/179, italics removed.}\]
\[820, \text{DR 232/179.}\]
\[821, \text{DR 234/181.}\]
In Deleuze’s system, a correlate of the ontological priority of difference over identity is the position that events are not contingent upon any substratum. Recall that for Deleuze there is “a double series of events which develop on two planes, echoing without resembling each other: real events on the level of the engendered solutions, and ideal events embedded in the conditions of the problem.”822 Granted what we know about Deleuze’s appropriation of Lautman, Lautman’s appropriation of Heidegger, and the partial clarifications of Deleuze’s conception of actual events above, this double series of events can be given greater structural definition. The difference between the two planes on which events develop is structurally analogous to Heidegger’s distinction between the ontic and the ontological. Heidegger’s fundamental ontology worked to disclose ontological structures constituting the being of Dasein – structures like interpretation, care, historicality, and temporality. Though Lautman and to a great degree Deleuze were unaware of it, beginning during Heidegger’s *Kehre* his project proceeded to ontological structures diagenically prior to Dasein, structures like ἀλήθεια and λήθη, abyssal ground, primordial ground, distorted ground, time-space, and domains of propriety and alienation from propriety.823 Deleuze’s differential ontology replaces these ontological structures with ideal multiplicities and the singularities or events that structure and reconfigure them. Deleuze’s second order of events – on the plane of solutions – take the position of singularities modulating the structure of beings in Heidegger’s ontic register. Just as Heidegger’s ontological structures are simultaneously transcendent and immanent to the ontic state of affairs, for Deleuze ideal events are simultaneously transcendent and immanent to actual events at the level of solutions. Ideal events are differential elements, the introduction of which into a multiplicity

822 *DR* 244/189.
823 The evolution of Heidegger’s ontology through the *Kehre* exemplifies precisely the genetic movement whereby mathematical theory becomes transformed by disclosing new aspects of dialectical Ideas, as described by Lautman, or the genetic movement whereby the actual is informed by the virtual, as described by Deleuze.
reconfigures that multiplicity, i.e., produces a new multiplicity. Such events form the conditions enabling the production of simulacral systems of actual quasi-stable identities modulated by their complex relations. Actual events correlate with ideal events, though in a non-mimetic way, and structure the state of affairs composed by solutions or worlds of simulacral beings.

These points and my analysis in the sections above can now serve to inform a technical reconstruction of Deleuze’s account of events as defined in terms of his recalibration of dialectical Ideas as multiplicities or structures of difference. Though I will discuss actual events to a limited degree, my focus will be on Deleuze’s account of virtual or ideal events. I turn to this now.

3.1: Deleuze’s Ontology of Virtual or Ideal Events

In the Platonic dialectic, Deleuze identified the presence of a question-problem complex or problematic element that led to his overturning of Platonism. That problematic element was found both in the riddle, task, or enigma presented in the myth invoked to provide the dialectic with a probative force and in the very existence of simulacra. By affirming the being of the enigmatic dimension of myths, their capacity to function as an ideal ground (fondation) was undermined. Similarly, affirming the being of simulacra undermined any definition of “being” within the bounds of the circuit of resemblance between the ideal ground and icons or well-grounded claimants. Together, simulacra and the enigmatic character of myth form a problematic dimension of the dialectic that is ontologically prior to and in excess over the dimensions of the dialectic complicit to the subjection of difference to identity, the reduction of repetition to generality, and implementation of representationalism. Deleuze’s overturning of Platonism sets
up his interpretation of this excessive dimension of the dialectic in terms of difference and allows him to recast the figure of Platonic Ideas as inherently problematical, rather than as loci of identity. For Deleuze, “the problematic element, with its extra-propositional character, does not fall within representation.”\textsuperscript{824} Instead, the problematic element is a \textit{differential} element: “this differential element is the play of difference as such, which can neither be mediated by representation nor subordinated to the identity of a concept.”\textsuperscript{825} As I have shown, Deleuze appropriates Lautman’s metamathematics to provide the overall framework for his account of dialectical Ideas and their relation to simulacra or fields of solution in which they are actualized. But Deleuze recasts the problematic or differential element defining dialectical Ideas in terms of multiplicity.

For Deleuze, “an Idea is an n-dimensional, continuous, defined multiplicity.”\textsuperscript{826} A multiplicity is not “a combination of the many and the one, but rather an organization belonging to the many as such, which has no need whatsoever of unity in order to form a system.”\textsuperscript{827} In other words, a multiplicity is a differential structure. Recall that for the early Heidegger, ontological structures or existentialia of Dasein determine the ontic truth of Dasein’s existence, but always do so in conjunction with the unique factical conditions of the world. Likewise, for Lautman dialectical notions and Ideas govern the logic of mathematical theories in which they are actualized. For Deleuze, multiplicities take the place of Heidegger’s ontological structures or existentialia and Lautman’s dialectical notions and Ideas, and they are always conjoined with the actual dimension of systems of simulacra. Multiplicities or differential structures consist of three aspects: “differential elements, differential relations between those elements, and singularities

\textsuperscript{824} \textit{DR} 231/178.  
\textsuperscript{825} \textit{DR} 231/178.  
\textsuperscript{826} \textit{DR} 236/182.  
\textsuperscript{827} \textit{DR} 236/182.
corresponding to those relations.” Genetically speaking, these three aspects compose a track of virtual or ideal determination that progresses from undetermined differential elements to completely determined singularities. Two orders of ideal events are found in multiplicities, corresponding respectively to their determinate and indeterminate aspects. In a primary sense, ideal events are differential elements, the introduction of which into a multiplicity reconfigures that multiplicity’s structure. Deleuze refers to the production of determinateness in an Idea’s singularities and relations as “differentiation.” Since this determinateness is produced exactly by the introduction of differential elements, ideal events in this first sense can also be called “events of differentiation.” In a secondary sense, ideal events are the singularities, distinctive points, or coordinates defining the structure of an Idea. These singularities or distinctive points define the potential regular or ordinary points that might be extended in a genetic series proceeding from a singularity, points that either converge with or diverge from the series of regular points proceeding from the other singularities composing the Idea. Since these singularities are in themselves virtual and define the virtual structure governing the production of actual cases of solution or simulacral beings, they are also called “pre-individual” singularities. I shall define these technical terms in what follows.

Differential elements, or ideal events in the first sense, are undetermined and can therefore be said to constitute a principle of determinability (they become determined). At times Deleuze also refers to this as a “principle of quantitability,” since differential elements become determined in a quantity of singularities. Deleuze struggles to give examples of undetermined differential elements, precisely because they are undetermined. His examples (epicurean atoms in a “physical Idea,” anatomical elements such as small bones in a “biological Idea,” and who

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828 DR 356/278.
829 DR 356/278.
knows what in Marxist “social Ideas”) all seem already to carry determination. Modifying one of his better examples a bit, perhaps in the multiplicity of color we can say that white light takes the place of an undetermined element: it is in principle determinable in varieties of color. Though it is difficult to conceptualize (or in fact impossible, given Deleuze’s position that the differential elements in multiplicities disrupt the stability of any concept grounded in identity), Deleuze ultimately maintains that differential elements or events are the play of difference as such. As he puts it, these differential elements “imply no prior identity, no positing of something that could be called one or the same. On the contrary, their indetermination renders possible the manifestation of difference freed from all subordination.”

Deleuze’s and Heidegger’s evental ontologies are not the same. But the beginnings of an important comparison are found in Deleuze’s notion of differential elements. In Chapters II and III, I argued that the ontology Heidegger produces in Beiträge is underwritten by a logic of difference that is the logic of beyng as event. Beyng as event is the differentiation of pure difference from itself, together with the logic of determinateness thereby originated and the primal difference that exceeds that determinateness. The logic of determinateness is articulated in terms of the registers of truth, ground, time-space, and evental appropriation/expropriation. In Deleuze’s account of multiplicity, which replaces Heidegger’s account of ontological structures, differential elements are undetermined pure differences that generate determination. In this particular sense, they are therefore a Deleuzian parallel to the abyss of Heideggerian primal difference. However, while Heideggerian primal difference generates the logic of determinateness, there does not seem to be room in his ontology for that difference to interrupt the logic of determinateness from just any point along its curves. Heidegger’s undetermined difference can be figured as a focal domain in his ontology. In contrast, Deleuze’s differential

\textsuperscript{830} DR 237/183.
elements can irrupt into the determinate logic of a multiplicity or milieu of multiplicities from any point. The closest thing to this in Heidegger’s ontology are the procedures of 1) *Ergründen* or fathoming the ground, whereby alienated human existence re-grounds itself by disclosing the logic of the event through the productive logic of *Grundlagen*, and 2) *Er-gründen* or creative grounding, in which the evental nature of beyng is made present in a work of art or poem. However, these are results of human endeavor, whereas for Deleuze the ideal events that irrupt into a multiplicity are aleatory, virtual, and no more indexed onto human existence than onto any other simulacral beings.

For Deleuze, if the differential elements of a multiplicity are undetermined, singularities or ideal events in the second sense are completely determined and therefore can be said to constitute a principle of complete determination. Deleuze sometimes calls this a “principle of potentiality,” since the singularities of an Idea define the range of genetic series that can follow from them and the range of potential solutions actualizing the Idea.831 Singularities take the place of the counter-posed poles of Lautman’s dialectical notions (e.g., the continuous vs. the discrete, algebra vs. analysis, finite vs. infinite, or whole vs. part). For Deleuze, there can be multiplicities of any number of singularities. As mentioned above, a singularity is a distinctive point that governs the progression of ordinary or regular points that follow from it. To illustrate this, we can imagine a geometrical figure – a rectangle, for instance. A rectangle has four singularities, one at each of its points. Each singular point defines or functions as a rule governing how a series of further points must be extended to compose a line that leads to the next singular point and thereby to construct the rectangle. Each singular point is an event, for it changes the rule governing how the series must proceed. The series of points that follow the rule and compose the line are not distinctive, but regular or ordinary points. Deleuze explains this as follows: “a

831 *DR* 356/278.
singularity is the point of departure for a series which extends over all the ordinary points of the system, as far as the region of another singularity which itself gives rise to another series which may either converge with or diverge from the first.\textsuperscript{832} Returning to the multiplicity of color, the primary colors – red, blue, and yellow – could be said to form singularities, completely determined in the sense that they form distinctive coordinates determining the various series of potential color combinations. In another of Deleuze’s examples – that of the Idea of language – phonemes constitute such singularities or coordinates determining the range of words that can be actualized.

The third aspect of multiplicities – differential relations – constitutes a principle of reciprocal determination. Undetermined differential elements or pure differences generate determination by generating differential relations. In these relations, coordinates that become fully determinate become singularities. But singularities exist only in states of reciprocal differential determination in relation to one another. Deleuze also sometimes refers to this principle of reciprocal determination as a “principle of qualitability” since the singular events reciprocally determined in these relations are determined as qualitatively distinct: “red” or “yellow,” for example.\textsuperscript{833} The traits of one singularity are defined by differing from other singularities. Differential relations constitute, moreover, differential fields or liaisons between singularities. In Lautman’s metamathematics, these liaisons were the fields of possible relations between dialectical notions, i.e., fields of possible structural schemas traversing the gulf between dialectical notions or rendering the poles of notions consistent. For Deleuze, Lautman’s terms can be translated by saying that differential relations are intensive fields between singularities, where those singularities form poles of tension. In other words, in these differential relations are

\textsuperscript{832} \textit{DR} 356-357/278.  
\textsuperscript{833} \textit{DR} 356/278.
defined the ranges of series of convergent and divergent ordinary points following from distinct singular events. In the multiplicity of color, white light is differentiated and becomes determined in the singularities of red, blue, and yellow. But red and blue, blue and yellow, yellow and red are determined in differential relations to each other (in a field of pure red, red would have no qualitative distinctness, i.e., not be singular). The fields of those differential relations constitute schemas of consistency (purple, green, and orange) and inconsistency (purple is inconsistent with yellow, green with red, and orange with blue).

Another point of systematic comparison with Heidegger can be identified here. In the logic of Heidegger’s evental ontology, the origination of determinateness is indeed the origination of differential relations: difference differs from itself and thereby originates the structures of the logic of determinateness. In the register of truth, for instance, originary openness and self-concealing are correlated ontological structures that are constituted by the differential relation between them. That differential relation is named “Lichtung” or “clearing.” Without it, neither openness nor concealment would have any distinctness, i.e., would not be. However, it is unclear whether it would be accurate to say that the differential relations involved in Heideggerian evental ontology produce singularities in the sense Deleuze has in mind. Openness and concealment are qualitatively distinct and, in a way, form coordinates defining the ranges of potential worlds of beings that might be. But they are structurally distended, not point-like. The same can be said of the structures of ground, time-space, and propriety/alienation from propriety.

For Deleuze, all multiplicities consist of the three aspects of differential structure: differential elements or ideal events in the primary sense, differential relations, and singularities or ideal events in the secondary sense. As such, multiplicities include both indeterminate and
determinate aspects. What then should be made of Deleuze’s definition of an Idea as an n-dimensional, continuous, defined multiplicity? Though “multiplicity” and “Idea” are often taken to be synonymous for Deleuze, this is not quite accurate. In a preliminary sense, if multiplicities include both indeterminate and determinate dimensions, Ideas are multiplicities insofar as they are determinate. Dimensionality, continuity, and definition describe aspects of this determinacy.

The dimension of a multiplicity refers to “the variables or co-ordinates upon which a phenomenon depends,” i.e., the number of a multiplicity’s singularities. \(^{834}\) “The Idea of color” “is a three-dimensional multiplicity” because it has three singularities: red, blue, and yellow. \(^{835}\) The Idea of language has a dimensionality equal to the number of phonemes. A clear distinction between Deleuze, Heidegger, and Lautman is evident here. The dialectical notions that Lautman discussed were each two-dimensional. Similarly, if Heidegger’s originary ontological structures of openness and concealment or propriety and alienation from propriety could in fact be called singularities, the Ideas they respectively compose would be two-dimensional. Moreover, Heidegger does not seem to hold that these structures are themselves subject to radical reconfiguration or decomposition. However, Deleuzian multiplicities come in any variety of dimensions and can be entirely transformed with the introduction of new differential elements or events in their systems.

The second aspect of an Idea’s determinacy is its definition. An Idea is a defined multiplicity because an Idea is always constituted by a distinctive set of singularities and their correlated dimensionality, qualities, and relations. If an event were to occur with respect to the singularities of an Idea, i.e., if a singularity were to change its quality, be added, or removed, a new Idea would be composed. Thus, Deleuze writes: “by definition, we mean the elements

\(^{834}\) DR 236-237/182.
\(^{835}\) DR 236/182.
reciprocally determined by these relations, elements which cannot change unless the multiplicity changes its order and its metric.” If the singularity of “red” were to change its quality and become some new color, were to dissolve into indeterminacy, or if a new color singularity were introduced into the Idea, the Idea of color would become a different Idea. In this sense, “the conditions of a problem themselves imply events such as sections, ablations, and adjunctions,” and these events redefine an Idea, i.e., produce a new Idea.

Finally, the reason Deleuze calls an Idea a continuous multiplicity is not straight forward and has to do with its genetic operations. Recall that for Lautman, mathematical theories that serve as actual answers to dialectical problems appear in a state of fragmentation with respect to one another. Though they might articulate different aspects of a dialectical problem, the logic of each theory is discontinuous with that of the other(s). In contrast, each theory is genetically continuous with the dialectical problem, that is, there is an ontological continuity by which mathematical theory is structurally informed by the dialectic. Similarly, for Deleuze, simulacral beings at the level of the actual are discontinuous with respect to one another (they exist in states of explication). However, there is a continuity in the flow of ontological genesis by which they are produced. It is this continuity of ontological genesis that Deleuze has in mind when he says that an Idea is a continuous multiplicity. At the level of the virtual, continuity describes the genetic progression of determination: the progression from undetermined differential elements to determination in differential relations to complete determination in singularities.

Since Ideas are never produced in a vacuum, but always in the milieu of multiplicities, it amounts to the same thing to say that continuity describes the genetic progression by which one Idea changes into another. In Deleuze’s words, “by continuity, we mean the set of relations

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836 *DR* 237/182-183.
837 *DR* 244/188.
between changes in these variables,” i.e., in singularities. Here, continuity is not simply the set of relations between singularities, but the set of relations between changes in singularities. In other words, if an Idea’s singularities enter into new differential relations or change qualities, thereby producing a new Idea, there is a genetic continuity from one Idea to the subsequent one. At the level of determinate singularities, such changes are events like sections, ablations, or adjunctions. But these types of events result from changes in the field of differential relations determining the singularities. And even if the changes in differential relations can be traced in chains through the milieu of multiplicity in which an Idea is located, changes in differential relations are ultimately the result of the introduction of differential elements into their system, i.e., the result of ideal events in the primary sense. Such an event changes the relations of reciprocal determination, which changes the quality of singularities and perhaps their quantity, i.e., the dimensionality of the multiplicity. This completely reconfigures the Idea or, rather, produces a new Idea with a distinct definition. For Deleuze, the logic of change in the register of virtual multiplicities and Ideas is the logic of events. The continuity of a multiplicity at the virtual level is the genetic track of the logic of ideal events.

**Conclusion**

In Chapters I-III of this dissertation, I reconstructed Heidegger’s ontology of the event as found in *Beiträge*. There, the nature of beyng as event is accessed through the problematic of truth and the concept of pure difference that Heidegger placed at the heart of his ontology. I developed an account of the differential structure of the event by elaborating the logic of difference in terms of truth, which is one of the key registers of the event. I then further elaborated the structure of the

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838 *DR* 237/182.
event in terms of the correlative registers of ground and time-space. Through my analysis of these concepts, I reconstructed the account of the event in *Beiträge* in terms of the logic of difference that underwrites the ontology in that text. There, beyng as event is the differentiation of pure difference from itself, together with the logic of determinateness or structure of the Da of Da-sein thereby originated and the abyss of difference that exceeds that determinateness. The logic of determinateness is defined in terms of the correlative structures of truth, ground, time-space, and appropriation/expropriation. The differential logic defining beyng as event in *Beiträge* shows that in its most advanced state, Heidegger’s ontology was much closer to Deleuze’s than is recognized by most scholars.

In Chapters IV and V, I turned to an analysis of Deleuze’s ontology of the event. I built this around one of the central tasks that Deleuze set for himself, a task that connects his work directly to Heidegger’s ontology at a systematic level: developing a sufficient ontology of difference. In Chapter IV, I also highlighted a set of related points of contact between Heidegger and Deleuze that are important for establishing the connection between their ontologies of the event. Of particular importance were the way Deleuze adopted the problematic of being framed by Heidegger’s ontological difference, their critiques Aristotelian ontology, their shared commitment to the radical critique of the regime of representation, the fact that both advanced certain forms of ontological realism, and their shared claim that in one way or another being is evental in nature.

Deleuze’s theory of events is presented especially in two contexts in *Différence et répétition*: first is the preliminary account given in terms of the third synthesis of time and second is the more developed account given in terms of his theory of problems, dialectical Ideas, or multiplicities and their actualization in systems of simulacra. In order to set up an analysis of
the second of these in Chapter V, in Chapter IV I began with an analysis of Deleuze’s treatment of
the problem of difference, i.e., the problem of the history of the subordination of difference to
identity (together with the correlated problems of the reduction of repetition to generality and the
perpetuation of the conceptual framework of representation). This is necessary in order to see the
motivation of Deleuze’s ontology and its approach to the philosophy of difference within which
his concept of event is defined. I focused in particular on Deleuze’s engagement with Aristotle
on this matter. An especially important factor here are Deleuze’s arguments showing that
systems subjecting difference to identity are unable to explain individual beings without reducing
them to particular instantiations of general kinds. I then reconstructed the basic framework of
Deleuze’s univocity of being, which he finds to be a necessary step in producing an ontology of
difference able to account for individual beings. I focused in particular on the way Deleuze
employed Nietzsche’s eternal return as a figure for the univocal genetic flow of being. Deleuze’s
account of univocity leaves the structure of that genetic flow somewhat vague. Thus, I turned to
a brief reconstruction of Deleuze’s complex theory of time to give more conceptual structure to
it. This treatment of time also enabled me to establish Deleuze’s first, preliminary definition of
the event in terms of the third synthesis of time. There, the event is the caesural pure and empty
form of time that enables the processes involved in the pure past, living present, and future. The
event is the form of ontological determinability, i.e., the form in which anything that occurs in
time occurs. Finally in Chapter IV, I turned to an analysis of Deleuze’s engagement with
Platonism. Here, I showed how Deleuze subjected a certain standard form of the Platonic
dialectic to the test of the eternal return in order to bring about an overturning of that Platonism
and develop a basic theory of beings as systems of simulacra. This is crucial for framing
Deleuze’s more developed account of the nature of events in his theory of dialectical Ideas, since
dialectical Ideas are precisely the virtual dimension ontologically determining systems of simulacra.

In Chapter V, my focus turned to the nature of events as defined within Deleuze’s theory of dialectical Ideas, problems, or multiplicities. In this context, there is a profound indirect Heideggerian influence on Deleuze’s ontology mediated by Albert Lautman. Deleuze developed his theory of dialectical Ideas (in which he gives his theory of virtual or ideal events) largely through an appropriation of Lautman’s metamathematical theory. In Lautman’s metamathematics, he distinguishes between a register of virtual non-mathematical dialectical Ideas or problems and the mathematical theories that operate as actual solutions to them. Lautman, however, developed his theory of dialectical Ideas or problems largely through an engagement with Heidegger’s early ontology. I provided an extensive analysis of this historical and conceptual lineage – running from Deleuze to Lautman to Heidegger – in order to establish the important Heideggerian influence on Deleuze’s theory of dialectical Ideas and events. I focused on a set of particularly important links. First, Deleuze understands the relation between dialectical Ideas or problems (together with the events defining them) and actual solutions in terms of Lautman’s account of the relation between metamathematical dialectical Ideas and the mathematical theories that act as solutions to them. Lautman, though, understands this relation in terms of Heidegger’s ontological difference between being and beings or, more precisely, the distinction between the ontic and ontological registers of beings. Second, one of Deleuze’s essential claims about this relation is that virtual dialectical Ideas or problems are simultaneously transcendent and immanent to actual solutions. Likewise, ideal events are simultaneously transcendent and immanent to actual events and their solution fields. Deleuze again explicitly borrows this characterization from Lautman. And, again, Lautman understood the simultaneity of
transcendence and immanence in terms of Heidegger’s ontology. Namely, he understood the transcendence of dialectical Ideas to mathematical solutions in terms of Heidegger’s account of Dasein’s constitutive transcendence or “surpassing.” Of particular importance were Dasein’s transcendence 1) toward a world and 2) more importantly, along a diagenic axis when engaged in the radical scientific methodology of Grundlegung (particularly as a part of doing fundamental ontology). Correlatively, Lautman understood the simultaneous immanence of dialectical Ideas to solutions in terms of the immanence of Dasein’s ontological structures to its ontic life. Third, Deleuze maintained that dialectical Ideas or problems are genetic in certain respects to actual solutions. Correspondingly, the logic of ideal events is understood as a logic of ontological genesis in relation to the determination of virtual Ideas and, in turn, of fields of solution at the level of the actual. Again, Deleuze understood the genetic relation between the virtual and actual in terms of Lautman’s account of the genesis of actual mathematical theories on the basis of dialectical Ideas. Here, Ideas define the structure of formal mathematical theories that aim to articulate them. Lautman, in turn, understood the nature of this genetic relation in terms of that between Heideggerian ontological and ontic truth. Together these points are crucial for making sense of Deleuze’s theory of dialectical Ideas (together with their ideal events) and their actualization in fields of solution, as well as demonstrating the essential Heideggerian influence on Deleuze with respect to this matter.

Within this context of Deleuze’s theory of dialectical Ideas, a statement of the nature of virtual or ideal events can be given. While Deleuze maintained the relational framework between the virtual and actual just described, he replaced the Heideggerian ontological structures of Dasein’s existence with differential multiplicities or Ideas. Multiplicities are composed of three differential components: differential elements, differential relations, and pre-individual
singularities. Ideal events come in two forms: they are 1) differential elements and 2) pre-individual singularities or distinctive points. An event occurs when a differential element is introduced into an extant multiplicity, thereby fundamentally reconfiguring that multiplicity and redefining the singularities governing the structure of actual solution fields. Likewise, the redefinition of an Idea or multiplicity’s singularities is an event, since this fundamentally reconfigures the actual solution fields governed by those singularities.
Conclusion

Why is it necessary and what exactly does it mean to conceive being as event? I have aimed to answer this question in terms of the ontologies advanced by Martin Heidegger and Gilles Deleuze. Heidegger inaugurates the move to evental ontology in the twentieth century. Deleuze advances evental ontology in ways that move beyond Heidegger. In available scholarship, Deleuze is ordinarily taken to be a decisively non-Heideggerian thinker. However, analyzing their respective ontologies with an eye to the event reveals close connections, both at the level of systematic comparison and the level of the Heideggerian influence on Deleuze. Attention to these connections is crucial for making sense of Deleuze’s overall ontology in *Différence et répétition* and especially his theory of the event.

Heidegger’s most developed account of the evental nature of beyng is presented in *Beiträge* and the related private manuscripts. Interpreting these is a difficult task, since they were not polished for publication. However, with a proper methodological approach, good sense can be made of Heidegger’s evental ontology. His ontology evolves in a complex way along a diagenic axis, i.e., an axis of ground. In other words, Heidegger’s methodology operates in the manner of the productive logic or *Grundlegung* enacted by radical science. It examines a set of extant fundamental concepts used to articulate the problematic of being, inquires into the ground enabling that articulation, and recasts the fundamental concepts in a more originary way in terms of that ground. Heidegger’s work repeats this pattern over and again, thereby progressing along a diagenic axis. Making proper sense of Heidegger’s often abstruse concepts – particularly those involved in his account of the event – requires reconstructing this complex evolution and locating the concepts in their position on diagenic and syngenetic axes. Failing to do this means failing to register the level of the ontology at which any particular concept operates and thereby
fundamentally confusing the character of that concept. Much of the more perplexing scholarship on Heidegger results precisely from failing to take this methodological order into account.

Heidegger’s evental ontology in *Beiträge* evolves from his earlier formulation of the ontological problematic in *Sein und Zeit*. There, Heidegger established Dasein as the condition for the possibility of doing any ontology. Fundamental ontology progresses by inquiring into the being of Dasein. In other words, the necessary arena for doing fundamental ontology is the existential analysis of Dasein. Making sense of Heidegger’s later account of beyng as event requires tracking the evolution of his ontology from its formulation in terms of the existential analysis of Dasein. In *Beiträge*, Heidegger claims that the problematic of truth is the problematic preliminary to that of beyng as event. This makes good sense given the role of the problematic of truth in his work during the early 1930s and the place of truth in the existential analysis in *Sein und Zeit*. In *Sein und Zeit*, truth is understood phenomenologically as the unconcealment of beings or ἀλήθεια. Untruth on the other hand is not falsity, but λήθη: the occlusion or concealment of beings that is coessential with truth. Both truth and untruth are grounded in Dasein’s disclosedness. Overall, this forms a first *a-lēthic* account of the essence of truth in Heidegger’s ontology. In the 1930 lecture “Vom Wesen der Wahrheit,” Heidegger’s project progresses along a diagenic axis, recasts the nature of truth in a more originary way, and produces second *a-lēthic* account of the essence of truth. Here, the problematic of being is explicitly articulated in terms of the problematic of truth. Rather than ἀλήθεια and λήθη being grounded in Dasein, they come to be ontological structures prior to Dasein on a diagenic axis. In other words, ἀλήθεια and λήθη are ontological structures enabling human existence and the world of beings to be. Here, Heidegger distinguishes between “Dasein” or human existence and “Da-sein” or the more originary ontological structure of disclosedness constituted by the *a-lēthic*
structures. The account of these structures constitutes a form of ontological realism that will persist in Heidegger’s ontology in the 1930s and 1940s.

Most interpretations of Heidegger’s account of the essence of truth in *Beiträge* hold that truth, there, remains within the second a-ληθικ stage. However, this is a serious mistake that leads to confusing the most important parts of the ontology presented in that text. Instead, Heidegger progresses once again along a diagenic axis by inquiring into the ground enabling the very structures of αληθεια and ληθη. This ground is pure difference. This difference is prior to the difference between any two determinate beings or ontological structures. It is a difference characterizing beyng as event and enabling the ontological difference between being and beings to be cast at all. The essence of truth in *Beiträge* is differential in this sense, not a-ληθικ. Since the problematic of truth serves as the problematic by which the evental nature of being is accessed and first articulated, mistaking the differential account of the essence of truth with an a-ληθικ account confuses everything. Instead, the evental structure of beyng can be elaborated first in terms of the differential essence of truth. In other words, the logic of difference can be elaborated in order to provide an account of the ontological genesis and constitution of the correlative structures of αληθεια and ληθη. Since the essence of truth constitutes part of the structure of the event, the differential logic worked out in terms of the essence of truth provides a foothold in the logic of the event. Here, the logic of the event is the logic of pure difference that must be taken to underwrite the ontology presented in *Beiträge*. More precisely, beyng as event is the differentiation of difference from itself, together with the logic of determinateness this originates and the abyss of difference that exceeds that determinateness. The logic of determinateness is the logic of beyng’s self-intensification, distension, and elaboration, i.e., the
the origination of the *Da* expressed in the term “Da-sein.” This logic of determinateness is articulated in terms of the correlative problematics of truth, ground, and time-space.

Even though Deleuze did not have access to Heidegger’s *Beiträge* or the related private works, establishing the differential logic of the event underwriting Heidegger’s ontology in that text sets the ground for systematic comparison between the two thinkers (though I carry out this comparison only to a certain extent in the current project). In *Différence et répétition*, the central problems that Deleuze is concerned with are the subjection of difference to identity, the reduction of repetition to generality, and the perpetuation of the conceptual framework of representation. Given the direct systematic connection of the problematic of difference with Heidegger’s evental ontology, I have focused on Deleuze’s treatment of it and the way it leads to his ontology of events. Deleuze gives two accounts of the event in *Différence et répétition*. The first, preliminary account is given in terms of his third synthesis of time. The second, more substantial account is given in terms of the differential structure of problems, dialectical Ideas, or multiplicities and their actualization in systems of simulacra. In this second account, Deleuze identifies two main series of events: virtual or ideal events and actual events. I focused upon virtual or ideal events since Deleuze’s virtual register corresponds in important ways with Heidegger’s ontological structures (as contrasted with the ontic dimension of beings that they structure). Since virtual or ideal events are differential factors defining dialectical Ideas or problems and the potential solution fields actualizing them in systems of simulacra, examining Deleuze’s accounts of dialectical Ideas and simulacra are essential steps in reconstructing his conception of events. Both of these, though, require showing the problem with historical treatments of difference upon which Deleuze focuses.
In the history of philosophy, difference has been subjugated to identity, and this has prevented the development of a sufficient ontology. Among other requirements, a sufficient ontology must be able to account for individual differences, i.e., the differences that make an individual thing this thing, rather than another one. The problem with the subjection of difference to identity that Deleuze focuses on can be seen particularly well in terms of Aristotle’s categorial system. In it, difference appears in the forms of specific difference and generic difference. At the bottom end of Aristotle’s categorial system, specific difference is inscribed in a genus in order to define distinct kinds of beings. The difference “rational,” for instance, is applied to the genus “animal” and thereby defines the kinds “rational animals” and “non-rational animals.” The difference between these kinds, however, is grounded in the identity of the genus or third term. In this system, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and Alexander can be each be defined as an instantiation of the kind “rational animal,” but the individuating differences that make Socrates distinct from Plato cannot be properly explained. At the top end of Aristotle’s system, difference is generic difference, i.e., the difference between equivocal genera. Here, difference remains subjected to identity insofar as the being of each genus must be defined in reference to the single, unifying sense of being, “substance.”

In order to move toward an ontology of difference that is not subjected to identity, Deleuze argues for the univocity of being. Univocity offers a framework for explaining the differences determining beings not in terms of the extrinsic predication of a subsistent identity, but as intrinsic and intensive difference. Deleuze develops his account of univocity through engagements with Scotus, Spinoza, and Nietzsche. Nietzsche’s eternal return is particularly important here because it offers a figure for thinking the genetic movement of being in terms of forms of difference and repetition that are not subject to prior identity. It also offers a
simultaneously methodological and ontological test by which superior or affirmative forms of
difference are distinguished from average forms of difference derived from prior identity or
inscribed with negativity. Yet, the account of the univocal movement of being in terms of the
eternal return remains quite vague. The genetic sequence involved in Deleuze’s three syntheses
of time offers a way of giving greater conceptual definition to this movement. In this genetic
sequence, the passing present of the first synthesis is grounded by the immemorial memory or
pure past described in the second synthesis. If time were reducible to just these two syntheses,
though, it would be a circular repetition of the same events with no capacity for fecundity. Thus,
Deleuze argues that a third synthesis must enable the first two. The third synthesis is a caesura of
time that fractures the circle of the first two syntheses and opens up time to an ordinal and
creative progression into a future. In this context, Deleuze gives his first, preliminary definition
of the event. Here, the event is the caesural pure and empty form of time that enables the
processes involved in the pure past, living present, and future. The event is the form of
ontological determinability, i.e., the form in which anything that occurs in time occurs.

In order to proceed to Deleuze’s second, more substantial account of events, his
conception of simulacra must be clarified. Deleuze develops his concept of simulacra by
submitting a certain version of the Platonic dialectic to the test of the eternal return. By showing
that the Platonic dialectic implicitly acknowledges the being of two things that it works to excise
from reality, Deleuze argues that the dialectic can be overturned. Those two things are 1)
question-problem complexes that are built into the mythic structure of the dialectic and that
violate the circuit of resemblance and identity between icon and Idea and 2) simulacra.
Affirming the being of these two things shatters the world of beings conceived on the basis of the
identity of the Idea and replaces it with a world of simulacral beings or systems of simulacra. For
Deleuze, systems of simulacra are systems of being that rely upon no prior identity for their constitution. Rather these systems are ones in which different relates to different on the basis of difference itself. Ontologically speaking, simulacra have both actual and virtual dimensions. Dialectical Ideas, problems, or multiplicities and their related events are the virtual differential structures that determine the character of simulacra. More precisely, simulacra are sites for the actualization of dialectical Ideas, problems, or multiplicities.

Deleuze developed many of the core aspects of his theory of dialectical Ideas, problems, or multiplicities and the events they involve by appropriating elements of Albert Lautman’s metamathematical theory. Lautman distinguished between 1) non-mathematical virtual or dialectical problems and 2) the properly mathematical solutions that actualize the structures contained in those Ideas. Lautman, though, developed his metamathematical theory especially through an engagement with Heidegger. Of particular importance for Lautman were the ways Heidegger’s early ontology allowed an account of the distinction and relation between dialectical Ideas or problems and mathematical solutions. Lautman was especially concerned with the way Heideggerian ontology allowed him to explain 1) the distinction between Ideas and solutions in terms of the Heideggerian ontological difference between being and beings or between the ontological and ontic dimensions of beings, 2) the simultaneous transcendence and immanence of Ideas to solutions, which Lautman modeled on Heidegger’s account of the movement of transcendence characterizing Dasein and the immanence of constitutive ontological structures to the ontic dimension of Dasein, and 3) the genetic relation of dialectical Ideas with respect to solutions insofar as solutions incarnate or are genetically informed by Ideas. To explain this genetic relation, Lautman borrowed the Heideggerian account of the way that ontological truth is disclosed and informs ontic truth, that is, informs the manifestation of beings as beings. In turn,
Deleuze directly adopts the Lautmanian accounts of the distinction and relation between dialectical Ideas and solutions, the simultaneous transcendence and immanence of Ideas in solutions, and the genetic relation whereby Ideas are incarnated or actualized in those solutions. Thus, a profound but covert line of Heideggerian influence is present in Deleuze’s theory of virtual dialectical Ideas (together with the events defining them) and their actualization in systems of simulacra.

Though Deleuze maintains the relational characteristics provided by Lautman’s theory (and in turn by Heidegger’s), he recasts the composition of dialectical Ideas in terms of multiplicity. Deleuzian multiplicities take the place of the Heideggerian ontological structures constitutive of Dasein. For Deleuze, multiplicities are composed of three differential components: undetermined differential elements, fully determinate pre-individual singularities, and the reciprocal differential relations in which singularities are determined. There are two levels of virtual or ideal events in Deleuze’s system. At the most originary level, an ideal event is a differential element, the introduction of which into an extant multiplicity or Idea reconfigures that Idea by changing the differential relations involved in it and, in turn, the singularities defined by those relations. At the second level, pre-individual singularities themselves are events in the sense that they operate as distinctive points governing the series of potential ordinary points that progress according to their rule. When a series of ordinary points progresses to a singular or distinctive point, an event occurs: the rule is changed for how the series is to continue. Moreover, these singularities define the fields of potential actual solutions to problems or Ideas, i.e., they define the virtual structure of the systems of simulacra that actualize such solutions. At the level of Deleuze’s account of dialectical Ideas, there is a genetic order of determination that moves from 1) undetermined differential elements or events to 2) reciprocal
determination in differential relations and, finally, to 3) fully determinate singularities. This order is that of the ontological genesis of a dialectical Idea. Since, however, dialectical Ideas never exist in a vacuum, but always in a milieu of differential elements, relations, and singularities, the genesis of a new Idea is the reconfiguration of relations and singularities within a differential system. Such reconfigurations occur upon the introduction of new differential elements, i.e., as the result of virtual or ideal events.
Bibliography

“GA” designations refer to Heidegger’s Gesamtausgabe volumes.


