

Heidegger's Differential Concept of Truth in *Beiträge*

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In *Beiträge zur Philosophie (Vom Ereignis)* (1936–38), Heidegger argues his treatment of the ontological problematic in earlier works like *Sein und Zeit* (1927) is ultimately inadequate.¹ As we will see below, the latter remains 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 claimed to be evental in nature.² A central task of *Beiträge*, then, is to work out what exactly the evental nature of beyng is.

Heidegger's account of truth (*Wahrheit*) in *Beiträge* is crucial to this project for a number of reasons. Perhaps 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 *as* event. To these points, he writes, “The precursory question [*Vor-frage*] of truth is simultaneously the basic question [*Grund-frage*] of beyng; and beyng qua event essentially occurs [*west*] as truth” (GA 65: 348). 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 Heidegger maintains an account of the essence of truth given in terms of the dual, correlative structures of *alētheia* (unconcealment or originary openness) and *lēthē* (originary concealment or withdrawal).⁵ Much available scholarship on *Beiträge* maintains an account of truth in this text understood within this originary *a-lēthic* schema.⁴ In this paper, I argue such an interpretation falls short of the account of truth Heidegger gives in this text. Of course, the structures of *alētheia* and *lēthē* remain crucial. However, by inquiring into the ground whence these very structures are originated, *Beiträge* argues for an account of the essence of truth more primal than the *a-lēthic* schema. *Alētheia* and *lēthē* are grounded in an originary difference or self-differentiation (*Unterschied* or *Entscheidung*), which constitutes an essential aspect of being as event itself. In other words, Heidegger's concept of truth in *Beiträge* is most primally differential, not *a-lēthic*.

To demonstrate this, I will begin by outlining 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. This will frame an account of Heidegger's conception 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 this text (GA 65: 348, em; 329). "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, *Beiträge* contains no *overt assertion* that the essence of truth is differential in nature. Rather,

this becomes evident by tracking the specifics of Heidegger's treatment of the problematic of truth, which drive thought beyond the *a-lēthic* account into a differential account entailed in its logic and confirmed in his thinking of "the decisional essence [*Entscheidungswesen*] of beyng" (GA 65: 455, em). Additionally, Heidegger's movement during this period toward an account in which a differential operation is at the heart of beyng as event is verified by statements regarding difference in *Das Ereignis*, composed in 1941–42 (GA 71). It 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 this text to lack a satisfactorily *explicit* elaboration of how originary difference originates the *a-lēthic* structures. However, the differential concept of truth is poised to do just that. Thus, I close with a brief proposal as to how Heidegger's concept might be developed in this way.

I. THE PROBLEM OF *SEIENDHEIT* AND THE SHIFTS FROM *SEIN* TO *SEYN* AND FROM THE *LEITFRAGE* TO THE *GRUNDFRAGE*

In *Beiträge*, Heidegger advances 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."⁵ 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 of being to *a* being – Dasein, my own existence. In *Beiträge*, Heidegger makes a radical shift: he finds it necessary to disassociate being from beings. In other words, being is to be thought independently of any relation to beings: "beyng can no longer be thought on the basis of beings but must be inventively thought from itself" (GA 65: 7). This shift is signified terminologically by rewriting "*Sein*" ("being") in the archaic form "*Seyn*" ("beyng").⁶ "*Sein*" signifies being, understood as codetermined by a relation to beings. Its conceptual successor, "*Seyn*," on the other hand, signifies being as thought independently of any relation to beings.⁷ The following passage crystallizes Heidegger's point

and indicates its implications for the related themes of metaphysics and the ontological difference. I will refer to it as “passage 1” later in this section of the paper:

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. (GA 65: 477)

As I will try to make clear, I do not understand this independence to mean beyng is transcendent or ultimately discrete from beings. I understand it to mean beyng itself is *not dependent upon* beings or its relations to beings. Beyng is, to borrow a phrase Richard Capobianco uses, “structurally prior” to beings.⁸ Of course, Heidegger deals extensively with codependent or reciprocal relations of being and beings, as we find in accounts of the mutual appropriation of being by human existence and human existence by being in the constitution of a meaningful world. 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. 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*].”⁹ 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. Arguing further for this specific logic goes beyond the scope of this paper. I will restrict my commentary here to clarifying what it means in *Beiträge* to suggest beyng must be thought independently of any relation to beings.

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 (*on hēi on*), which Heidegger terms *Seiendheit* (“beingness”).¹⁰ A series of related faults are involved with understanding being in the framework of *Seiendheit*. First, it renders 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*.¹¹ The Aristotelian analogue is found in his account of “*ousia* as the 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 *koinon*, the common and thus what is common to every being” (GA 65: 75). A second problem

is that within the framework of *Seiendheit*, “nothing is said about the inner content of the essence of being.”¹² 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.¹³

Similarly, we determine being on the basis of a relation to beings, i.e., as *Seiendheit*, when we take being as a condition for beings (GA 65, §268). The problem here is in the application of the very framework of conditionality to being. Concepts of condition must be distinguished from Heidegger’s concepts of ground in *Beiträge*, which constitute an essential register of being itself as event: namely, *Grund der Möglichkeit* (“ground of possibility”) or the more developed ground as *das Sich-verbergen im tragenden Durchragen* (“self-concealing in a protrusion that bears”).¹⁴ 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”) (GA 65: 307). 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 being itself as event. Grounding ground is necessary for beings to be, but is not itself 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 former is defined in terms of its relation to the

latter. 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 renders 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” (GA 65: 479). In *Beiträge*, on the other hand, grounding ground enables what is grounded on it to be, but is not itself essentially determined by the latter.¹⁵ In other words, it is conceived on the basis of the inherent grounding character of the event, not its relation to what is grounded.¹⁶ How this works can be seen in *Beiträge* §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” (GA 65: 307). This, as we will see, 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 clarify a point regarding how I understand the structural priority of beyng and the originary essence of truth in *Beiträge*. It will be helpful to mark my agreement and disagreement with the position on this matter that Capobianco has recently advanced. 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.”¹⁷ 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's formulation, 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 inadvertently reinstates the dependence of beyng upon the latter indicated above. Moreover, the very framework of conditionality remains within the transcendental mode of thinking Heidegger disavows both here and in later works like *Country Path Conversations* (GA 77). In my understanding, to say beyng is structurally prior to meaning is to say beyng is prior on the axis of ground, where "ground" must not be conflated with "condition." This renders a different formulation: in *Beiträge*, beyng is structurally prior, prior on the axis of ground, to meaning or beings.

Metaphysics, in *Beiträge*, is characterized by its essential governance by the orientation to think the beingness of beings: "all metaphysics" is "founded on the leading question [*Leitfrage*]: what are beings?" (cf. Aristotle's *ti to on*) (GA 65: 12). This is complicit in its downfall. "Metaphysics' asks about beingness on the basis of beings (within the inceptual – i.e., definitive – interpretation of *physis*) and necessarily leaves unasked the question of the *truth* of beingness and thus the question of the *truth* of beyng" (GA 65: 297, em). 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*. "*Sein*"/"being" then, 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 [*be-dingt*] beings either as their cause [*summum ens – dēmiourgos* ('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). (GA 65: 478)

Hence, “*Sein*”/“being” remains metaphysical in its signification. “*Seyn*”/“beyng” does not. Recall the point made in passage 1 above: “The attempts to represent both [beyng and beings] together, already in the very manner of naming them, stem from metaphysics” (GA 65: 477).

Beyng is not “the being of beings.” It is not to be understood on the basis of beings, in any way codetermined by a relation to them as its counterpart. Consequently the *question* of beyng cannot be oriented by the question of the being of beings. The distinction between being and beyng, then, correlates with a distinction between two configurations of the question about being (or beyng): the *Leitfrage* (“guiding question”) and the *Grundfrage* (“basic question”).¹⁸ The *Leitfrage* is governed by the question “about beings as beings (*on hēi on*).” For Heidegger, Aristotle’s *ti to on* (“What are beings?”) renders its “most general form.” Since it has this “approach and directionality,” when it comes to ask about being, it asks “the question of the being of beings.” The meaning of the term “*Sein*”/“being” ultimately remains determined by the framework of the *Leitfrage*. Thus, Heidegger argues that the *Leitfrage* must be supplanted. He does this with the *Grundfrage*, for which “the starting point is not beings, i.e., this or that given being, nor is it beings as such and as a whole.” 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*.” Here, truth “essentially occurs in advance [*Voraus-wesende*]” of (i.e., is structurally prior, prior on the axis of ground to) the determination of (1) beings, (2) the *Leitfrage*, and (3) the historical epoch of metaphysics. In other words, the *Grundfrage* inquires into the ground that enables these grounded structures to be, but not on the basis of any relation of this ground to what is grounded. Rather, it asks about this ground independently of any such relation.¹⁹

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 section III. In *Sein und Zeit*, the *Seinsfrage* was oriented by the ontological difference or 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 to its counterpart – beings. This shift is not meant to abandon or reject the ontological difference. Rather, he aims to give an account of the ground whence this very difference is possible. As we will see, 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 being itself. Recall passage 1 again, this time with respect to the ontological difference: “There is no immediate difference between being and beings, because there is altogether no immediate relation between them. Even though beings as such oscillate only in the appropriation [*Ereignung*], being remains abyssally far from all beings” (GA 65: 477). Importantly, Heidegger is not claiming being has *no* relation to beings, but that being has *no immediate* relation to beings. Being is related to beings only *mediately* through what he calls “the strife of world and earth.”²⁰ These mediate relations are consequent upon being, while being is primally independent of them.

II. THE ORIGINARY GROUNDING OF HEIDEGGER’S A-LETHIC FRAMEWORK: THE ESSENCE OF TRUTH AS THE CLEARING FOR/OF SELF-CONCEALING

With these programmatic and conceptual transformations in mind, let us return to the question of truth. As a point of emphasis, this is an essentially *ontological* problematic – it pertains directly to the nature of being as event.²¹ It is an epistemological problematic only in derivative forms. As we will see, Heidegger’s move to think being independently from beings has important consequences for his treatment of the problematic of truth.

Recall Heidegger’s strong *a-lēthic* accounts of the essence of truth in the late 1920s and early-mid 1930s. In *Sein und Zeit*, truth and untruth are cast as *alētheia* and *lēthē*, understood as the *Unverborgenheit* (“unhiddenness”/“unconcealment”) or *Entdecktheit* (“uncoveredness”/“discoveredness”) and *Verborgenheit* (“hiddenness”/“concealment”) of beings in a world.²² These are grounded in Dasein’s (human existence’s) *Erschlossenheit* (“disclosedness”) and thus dependent upon it. In *Vom*

Wesen der Wahrheit, the elements of the essence of truth – along with Da-sein – shift to become more originary than human existence.²⁵ That is, human existence is consequent upon them. There, the essence of truth articulates correlated ontological structures or dynamics enabling beings to come to presence, i.e., *to be* (cf. *Seinlassen von Seiendem*) (GA 9: 188/144). These are rethought in terms of: (1) truth as *alētheia*, the *Freiheit* (“freedom”), *Offenheit* (“openness”), or *Lichtung* (“clearing”) through which the movement of unconcealment, disclosure of beings, or origination of a meaningful world are enabled, and (2) untruth as originary *Verbergung/Verborgenheit* (“concealing”/“concealment”) or *verbergenden Entzugs* (“concealing withdrawal”), the ground enabling unconcealment, or the *lēthē* of which *alētheia* is the alpha-privative.²⁴ Truth (*lichtendes Bergen* [“sheltering that clears”]) here, in its most originary sense, is *a-lēthic* (GA 9: 201/153). It is the *alētheia/lēthē* dynamic in which a world of beings or meaning comes to be.

As noted, in *Beiträge*, Heidegger reformulates 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.”²⁵ This is recognizably related to the *a-lēthic* formulation of truth, but in fact articulates a fundamental transformation.

The core discussion of the essence of truth in *Beiträge* opens by posing an alternative formulation of the question of truth as a question “about *the truth of the truth*.”²⁶ Heidegger is well aware this is likely to draw charges of circularity or “vacuity” (GA 65: 327). It escapes 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 aligns his analysis of truth with the shifts discussed above (*Sein-Seyn/Leitfrage-Grundfrage*). “Truth,” here, signifies on the one hand *die Wahrheit selbst* (“truth itself”) and on the other *das Wahre* (“what is true”) (GA 65: 345). By “what is true” Heidegger means the world of disclosed beings or meaning, the domain of the *Da*, or the *Entwurfsbereichs* (“domain of projection”) (GA 65: 327). Truth itself is prior to what is true on the axis of ground 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)” (GA 65: 329). 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]*” (GA 65: 327, em).

For Heidegger, the immediate upshot is that truth – that is, truth itself – is “definitively detached [*abgelöst*] from all beings” (GA 65: 329). Rendered more poetically, “truth is the great disdainer of all that is ‘true’” (GA 65: 331, em). 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, 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 renders the disassociation of beyng from beings in terms of the problematic of truth. And 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 renders an account that remains metaphysical, and truth is an essential dimension or process of beyng itself, then truth itself must be accounted for independently of any relation 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. It is drawn primarily from Heidegger’s analysis of *Offenheit* (“openness”) in *Beiträge* §§204–7. He initially situates this in a critique of the confusion of truth with its derivative form, *Richtigkeit* (“correctness”) (GA 65: 327). Correctness operates on the level of a disclosed world of beings or meaning. Schematically, it should be taken as an equiprimordial guise of such a world, rendered in a traditional, representational model of truth. In contrast, on the axis of ground, correctness is consequent upon truth’s essential structure of openness. Since openness is the ground enabling truth as correctness, the latter

always bears inherent reference to the former. 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 (GA 65: 328). 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 antecedent on the axis of ground to correctness, and correctness is produced only consequently upon it, openness is not dependent upon any relation to its consequent. Openness can be cast as a *condition* only when understood on the basis of its relation to correctness. But, this understands it to be conditioned *by* correctness. Rather, openness must be rendered independently. Heidegger begins such an account on the basis of what he calls *das wesentliche Ausmaß* (“the essential extent”) of truth (GA 65: 329). Here, structurally prior, 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.²⁷ And openness is this cleared realm, the “amidst” in which beings come to stand (GA 65: 329). As Heidegger writes: “the essential extent itself determines the ‘place’ (time-space) of openness: the cleared ‘amidst’ of beings” (GA 65: 329). We should note that concealment plays a key role in the origination of the essential extent of openness, which I will address in section III.C. 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 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 as follows: “there is no immediate relation between be-ing [*Seyn*] as enowning withdrawal and beings, even if a being shelters the truth of be-ing. . . . Why not? Because the essential swaying [*Wesen*] of be-ing occurs in (but not only in) the ‘not’ of beings, because the withdrawal of be-ing is precisely what withdraws in the concealing-sheltering [*verbergen*] of truth.”²⁸

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.²⁹ I don’t think he does. In fact, he argues that the concept of transcendence itself belongs to the configuration of truth as correctness and of beings as objectively present (GA 65, §7, §227). I would like to suggest truth itself is immanent to worlds of beings, while enabling their existence. By “immanent” here, I don’t mean that truth itself is on the same, equiprimordial plane of ground as worlds of beings, which would render Heidegger’s ontology a thoroughly “flat ontology.”³⁰ I mean truth itself (as the truth of the event) is implicated within beings or worlds of beings, without any type of *real* distinction (cf. 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 in fact something like an inner recess [*hohle Mitte*], e.g., that of a jug. Yet it must be recognized that 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-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. (GA 65: 338–39)

For Heidegger the essence of truth is not dependent upon any relation to beings, while remaining immanent to them. From the standpoint of beings, the openness of truth is 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 [*abgründige Zerklüftung*] in which beings are divided [*zur Entzweiung kommt*] and must stand in the strife” (GA 65: 331). From a standpoint independent of this relation to beings, the openness of truth is a structure of the essence of truth; that is, a structure of the event as it occurs in and through truth.

What, then, are we to make of the formulation of the essence of truth as *the clearing for/of self-concealing*? To render it, 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 latter 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 is: *whence and wherefore concealment and openness*? That is, what is the origin of 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* [*Verbergung*] and unconcealment [*Entbergung*]?” (GA 65: 330). 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 (GA 65: 335). This crucial question

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 *alētheia* 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 *alētheia*.”³¹ Of central concern, he argues, is that the interpretation of concealment in terms of the *a-lēthic* framework is ultimately insufficient: “*A-lētheia* 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-*)” (GA 65: 350). Arguably, this definition of *alētheia* 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 crucial question: it “does not address concealment itself *and its ground*” (GA 65: 350, em). 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 *a-lētheia*, and that we must rectify this neglect. Rather, it is that we must press beyond concealment on the axis of ground, to a ground from out of which concealment and openness are themselves originated. And, 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 (GA 65: 350). It is important to be clear what this does *not* mean: it does not mean Heidegger *disavows* his earlier accounts of truth as *alētheia*, but that 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 – 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 axis of ground. 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 an equiprimordial axis with respect to one another, then questions along the axis of ground into the ground enabling the origination of these structures themselves. This is structurally akin to Hegel reframing Kant by arguing the very difference 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 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 concealment?” is to question into the origination of the most originary ontological structure thinkable prior to this point.

Yet, 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.³² 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 the intimacy that itself differentiates and generates these two; the very fabric that distends into them; or 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 or self-differentiation.

III. DIFFERENCE AND DECISION

As mentioned, Heidegger’s account of difference undergoes a major re-configuration in *Beiträge*. Here, we see a concept of originary difference or self-differentiation (*Unterschied* or *Entscheidung*) being developed, which constitutes an essential operation of being as event. We can develop this 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*) (GA 65: 465, 87).

A. THE ONTOLOGICAL DIFFERENCE

The ontological difference is the difference between being and beings so crucial to Heidegger’s earlier work. In *Beiträge*, this is now 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 being 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 remains understood in a way codetermined by its counterpart – beings, (2) being is understood as the being *of* beings, and (3) the question of being is thus 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 being, it is just as fatal – since it indeed arises precisely from an inquiry into beings as such (beingness).”⁵⁵

Yet the concept of the ontological difference is not simply discarded. Rather, “The question of being, as the basic question [*Grundfrage*],” is

“driven immediately to the question of the *origin* of the ‘ontological difference’” (GA 65: 465). Through this question Heidegger arrives at a more originary conception of difference that operates at the heart of the essence of truth and, in turn, being as event. The conceptual difference between being and beings is possible, Heidegger argues, only because being is of such a nature that it “*sets itself off in relief* [abhebt] over and against beings” (GA 65: 465). In other words, this *setting itself off in relief* is the mechanism by which being 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 being” (GA 65: 465). Why, then, is being such that it sets itself off in relief over and against beings? In Heidegger’s words, it is because:

Being, 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 being essentially occurs in the first beginning, namely, as *physis*, which comes forth as *alētheia* but which is at once forgotten in favor of beings (ones that are perceivable only as such only in virtue of *alētheia*) and is reinterpreted as a being that *is* most eminently, i.e., as a mode of being and specifically the highest mode. (GA 65: 466)

In other words, because being brings itself to determination (in part) in the operation of truth, the possibility is established for thought to account for being in terms of that determinate dimension, and to distinguish the former in terms of a co-determinate differential relation with beings. Certainly, one might deny that being, thus differentiated from beings, must be *a being* that *is* most eminently, as Heidegger does in *Sein und Zeit*. Yet, the ontological difference remains structurally determined as *a difference between* two “things.” Framing the problematic of being in terms of it captures being in this differential relation

with beings. It casts beyng in terms of a difference from beings. But the crucial point Heidegger recognizes is that this difference points to a character of beyng more originary than 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” (GA 65: 474). The clearing operation – which we gain access to first as the essence of truth – belongs to the essential occurrence of beyng as event. And clearing operates precisely as a decision or differentiation – which is not a difference between two beings, but difference itself. That is, it 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” (GA 65: 470). This originary self-differential operation of the event Heidegger calls the *Entscheidungs-wesen des Seyns* (“*decisional* essence of beyng”) (GA 65: 455).

B. DECISION

Heidegger articulates this self-differentiation or clearing earlier in the text (division 1: Prospect) as the ground of historical “decision” (*Entscheidung*) or “de-cision” (*Ent-scheidung*) (GA 65: 87). Again, decision is meant here in the sense of separating or, as Vallega-Neu describes, “partedness” or “parting.”⁵⁴ 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” (GA 65: 87). Such would fall under “the ‘existentiell’ misinterpretation of ‘decision,’” which is indeed an “existentiell-*anthropological*” 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 (GA 65: 87–88, em). 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 *Beiträge* §§45–49). 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” (GA 65: 88). William McNeill nicely calls this the “event of differentiation.”⁵⁵ Vallega-Neu understands it as “a differencing which occurs within the essential swaying [*Wesen*] of be-ing [*Seyn*].”⁵⁶ Decision should be understood in the current context as this separating, differentiation, or differencing occurring in the essence of truth, that is, the event insofar as it occurs in and through the essence of truth. As Heidegger writes: “de-cision refers to the sundering itself, which separates [*scheidet*] and in separating lets come into play for the first time the ap-propriation [*Er-eignung*] of precisely this sundered *open realm* [*Offenen*] as the clearing for the self-concealing” (GA 65: 88).

Heidegger's movement in this period 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 the volume entitled *Das Ereignis*, where he addresses “the difference as self-differentiating (event) [*der Unterschied als das Sichunterscheiden (Ereignis)*]” (GA 71: 122/104).

- “Inasmuch as nothingness is beyng, beyng is essentially the difference [*Unterschied*] as the inceptually concealed and refusing departure [*Ab-schied*]” (GA 71: 124/106).
- “The difference is a matter of the event (the resonating of the turning)” (GA 71: 123/105).
- “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” (GA 71: 125/106, em).
- “Beyng as the difference – essentially occurring as the departure [*Abschied*]” (GA 71: 126/107).

- “The difference, as beyng itself, appropriates [*er-eignet*] the differentiation [*Unterscheidung*] in which at any time obedience is involved” (GA 71: 126/108).
- “The difference [*Unterscheidung*] as the essential occurrence of beyng itself, which differentiates *itself* [*sich unterscheidet*] and in that way lets beings arise in emergence [*Aufgang*]. The differentiation is inceptually the difference [*Die Unterscheidung ist anfänglich der Unterschied*]” (GA 71: 127/108).
- “Without having experienced the truth of beyng as event, we will be unable to know the difference and, thereby, the differentiation” (GA 71: 129/109, em).
- “The difference, in which the differentiation essentially occurs, is the departure as the downgoing of the event into the beginning” (GA 71: 129/109, em).

C. THE ORIGINARY, DIFFERENTIAL GROUNDING OF CONCEALMENT AND OPENNESS

The essence of truth as the clearing for/of self-concealing is differential in this sense. Heidegger stops short, though, of developing a full account of the operations through which this primal difference generates the *a-lēthic* structures. However, I think the resources for doing so are present in the text, even if its author did not recognize this. To emphasize a couple of points from above, I understand this originary difference to be self-differentiation, that is, difference differing from itself. It is not a difference relegated to the role of marking a distinction between two “things.” And, 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. Rather, originary difference is the operation of beyng as event by which it self-coagulates or intensifies, distends, and becomes elaborated in distinct structures and dynamics. In terms mentioned in section III.A above, this is the way beyng “moves

itself into the clearing.” “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” (GA 65: 349). 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 concepts, let us propose the following genetic account of concealment and openness.

Concealment and openness *are* in their *differentiation* from one another. *As a point is extended into a line, openness is breached and 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 this refusal, generated as differentiation differing from itself.*

We can clarify this dynamic by highlighting different aspects of the formulation of the essence of truth as *the clearing for/of self-concealing*. First, the *clearing for/of self-concealing* is this originary differentiation. It is a clearing in the sense of a distancing or a “sundering” (*Auseinandertreten*): as two passing ships clear one another, concealment clears openness and openness clears concealment (GA 65: 88). To be certain, since this sundering originates and grounds the structures of openness and concealment, which in turn ground worlds of beings, it cannot be a sundering of two already established “things,” at any level. 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 distancing is itself the breaching open of openness, the breaching of the “essential extent” 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” (GA 65: 342). Here, the clearing for/of self-concealing cannot be one *or* the other, concealment *or* openness. To think the essence of truth is to think into the differentiation that originates concealment *and* openness. This exhibits the fault in the common interpretation that the essence of truth (and in turn of the event) in *Beiträge* is self-concealment.⁵⁷ 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 or self-displacing in the manner of clearing for/of self-concealing.

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

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 the imagery from above, 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 this, we can return to the evaluative point mentioned above. As a mark of success, this differential account should be able to ground 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. The challenge is to provide an account of the simultaneous strife and intimacy of openness and concealment and not simply assert it. Their *intimacy* 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. Openness and concealment each, though cleaved, are constituted by the same differential operation and bear a structural reference to it. But 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, it is the differentiation of difference from itself by which it simultaneously draws itself out, breaching openness, and refuses itself from that openness, originating concealment. Moreover, openness and concealment each require the contradistinction this establishes from the other in order to occur. 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. Originary differentiation explains the simultaneous origination of both and their logic.

We can briefly clarify the status of originary difference and its logic by recalling that, in *Beiträge*, the problematic of the essence of truth is directly related to a constellation of themes. I would like to emphasize three here: the problematics of ground, time-space, and, especially, the event, as mentioned above. Truth, ground, and time-space are three key registers in terms of which the evental nature of beyng is worked out in that text.⁵⁸ Each of these three overlaps the others in important ways, but none is reducible to the other two. Rather, Heidegger elaborates an account of the event by articulating it in the terms of these different registers. As I 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.⁵⁹ 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, etc. And exactly this gives us a foothold in this logic. But 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 that of truth, the accounts 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 mistake 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 such dichotomies are at play here, according to which difference could fall on the side of the transcendent. Rather, time-space and the structures of ground arise from the operation of originary differentiation, which is immanent to them and is precisely the mechanism of the event by which it self-intensifies, distends, and becomes elaborated.

IV. CONCLUSION

“The clearing for/of self-concealing” is a differential formulation, that is, it articulates the differential dynamic that constitutes the essence of truth. This is prior on the axis of ground to and originary of the *a-lēthic* structures, concealment and openness. Thus, Heidegger’s account of the essence of truth in *Beiträge* is most primally differential, not *a-lēthic*. Working through the problematic of truth to render this differential account establishes a position for thought in a more originary domain than was previously available for Heidegger. This is made possible, partially, by establishing the independence of the essence of truth from what is true and breaching the metaphysical framework of *Seiendheit* and the *Leitfrage*. That opens the question of the origination of the *a-lēthic* structures. Working through the problematic of truth pursues the *Grundfrage*, stepping back along the axis of ground into the originary dynamic of decision or differentiation, whereby thought grounds

itself in the evental nature of beyng. Heidegger's differential concept of the essence of truth sets up a positive account of beyng as event, operating independently of any relation to beings. Here, the event of differentiation is not just the heart of truth, but an essential aspect of the event of beyng itself. For, according to Heidegger, "this truth of beyng is indeed nothing distinct from beyng but rather is the most proper essence of beyng" (GA 65: 93).

ENDNOTES

- 1 'Beiträge' in this paper refers to *Beiträge zur Philosophie (vom Ereignis)* (GA 65). For the most part, I use the Macquarrie and Robinson translation of *Sein und Zeit*, noting the occasional reference to the Stambaugh translation. However, I replace Macquarrie and Robinson's translation of *Sein* as "Being" with "being" throughout.
- 2 I will differentiate Heidegger's technical terms "Sein"/"being" and "Seyn"/"beyng" in section one of this paper.
- 3 For instance, see: "On the Essence of Truth" in GA 9; *Introduction to Metaphysics* (GA 40); "The Origin of the Work of Art" in GA 5. In this paper I have transliterated all Greek.
- 4 For a general statement of such a position, see Mark A. Wrathall, "Unconcealment," in *A Companion to Heidegger*, ed. Hubert L. Dreyfus and Mark A. Wrathall (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), 337: "For Heidegger, the essence of truth is always understood in terms of unconcealment."
- 5 GA 2: 8–9/SZ 6, tm: "beings" rather than "entities" for "*Seiendem*."
- 6 It should be noted, though, that Heidegger is not entirely consistent with the use of this convention in *Beiträge*.
- 7 For a later clarification of the sense in which beyng is separated from beings, see the lecture record composed by Dr. Alfred Guzzoni, "Summary of a Seminar on the Lecture 'Time and Being'" (GA 14: 41/33).

- 8 Richard Capobianco, “Coda on Being is (not) meaning,” Heidegger Circle Forum post, August 30, 2013, 8:18 AM, em.
- 9 GA 65: 7. Though this analogy uses a relation of efficient causality, which is a decisively ontic relation, I certainly do not mean to suggest being is a cause of beings. Rather, I mean to illustrate that there is a relation of dependence, where, if being did not “occur essentially,” beings would not be. Thus, I intend this to be a structural analogy, not an example.
- 10 GA 65: 75. For more on Heidegger’s understanding of *Seiendheit*, see Richard Polt, *The Emergency of Being: On Heidegger’s “Contributions to Philosophy”* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006), 55–56, 63–64.
- 11 See GA 6.2: 227, 310/N4: 194, 206; on Aristotle, Kant, and Nietzsche, GA 6.2: 66/N4: 41.
- 12 GA 6.2: 188/N4: 156.
- 13 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.
- 14 GA 65: 297, 379. Note that in “On the Essence of Truth,” for example, a version of the former appears as “ground of enabling [*Grund der Ermöglich-ung*]” (GA 9: 177na/136na).
- 15 The language of ground prevalent in *Beiträge*, but not several other of his texts, is in no way to be understood in terms of substratum, foundation, principle, or any other metaphysical concept of ground. All grounding operations entail *Ab-grund* or abyssal ground, which both originates and exceeds ground, thus preventing any ground from becoming absolute.
- 16 Ground is also that which is most proper to what is grounded; it bears the gravity of essence. Recall that in “On the Essence of Truth,” “essence” was provisionally understood to mean “ground of enabling” or “ground of the inner possibility” (GA 9: 177na/136na; 186/143).

- 17 Capobianco, “Coda on Being is (not) meaning.”
 18 For this and the rest of the quotations in this paragraph, see GA
 65: 75–76.
- 19 For more on the *Grundfrage* vs. the *Leitfrage* see GA 65 §85, §91,
 and §172.
- 20 GA 65: 477. Again, GA 65: 471: “As a consequence of its solitude,
 beyng essentially occurs in relation to ‘beings’ always only medi-
 ately, through the strife of world and earth.”
- 21 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.
- 22 GA 2: 290/SZ 219; see Stambaugh’s translation of *Being and Time*,
 210.
- 23 GA 9: 190/145–46: “Freedom, ek-sistent, disclosive Da-sein, pos-
 sesses 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.”
- 24 GA 9: 188/144, 193/148, 201/154.
- 25 GA 65: 348, em; 329. The connection with beyng is highlighted
 again in the alternative formulation: the essence of truth is “the
 clearing concealment of beyng [*die lictende Verbergung des
 Seyns*]” (GA 65: 380).
- 26 GA 65: 327: “*nach der Wahrheit der Wahrheit.*”
- 27 It would be mistaken to take this to mean truth is originally
infinite. There is no infinite – finite dichotomy at play here, ac-
 cording 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 *a-lēthic* structures of truth.
- 28 Daniela Vallega-Neu, *Heidegger’s “Contributions to Philosophy”*
 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), 112.

- 29 See GA 65, §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, Daniela Vallega-Neu, and Alejandro Vallega (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), 176–78.
- 30 Cf. Manuel DeLanda, *Intensive Science and Virtual Philosophy* (London/New York: Continuum, 2002).
- 31 GA 65: 350. For more on this, see GA 65, §226.
- 32 Möbius strips have only one side. GA 65: 345.
- 33 GA 65: 250. Or again, GA 65: 467: “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.”
- 34 Vallega-Neu, *Heidegger's “Contributions,”* 109.
- 35 William McNeill, “The Time of *Contributions to Philosophy*” in Scott, et. al., eds., *Companion to Heidegger's “Contributions,”* 138.
- 36 Vallega-Neu, *Heidegger's “Contributions,”* 111.
- 37 Another version of the *a-lēthic* interpretation.
- 38 For Heidegger's discussion of ground and time-space in *Beiträge*, see especially 238–42.
- 39 As emphasized above, *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 eventual nature of *beyng* in terms of the *a-lēthic* framework. That, however, is not the full picture. As I have argued, Heidegger's account of the essence of truth in *Beiträge* moves to a ground more originary than that of the *a-lēthic* framework. Namely, it moves to an account of originary difference constituting the essence of truth, the dynamics of which originate the *a-lēthic* structures. Thus, the differential account of the essence of truth establishes a more originary account of the eventual nature of *beyng*.