

FRAGMENTATION OF TRUTH:
HEIDEGGER'S CONFRONTATION WITH PLATO

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ABSTRACT

Fragmentation of Truth: Heidegger's Confrontation with Plato

Heidegger's interpretation of Plato's concept of truth falsely accuses Plato of incarcerating truth in proposition and losing the experience of truth as un-concealment. Plato didn't give priority to truth as correctness over truth as un-concealment. I demonstrate that both senses of truth are interwoven with each other in Plato's thinking. I reinforce my argument by showing how Heidegger himself indicates the presence of this dual conception of truth in Plato's thinking. Examining various dialogues of Plato along with Heidegger's interpretations side by side, I show that Heidegger could have engaged with Plato's dialogues in a meaningful way rather than distorting his conception of truth with a caricature of Plato. Heidegger's reduction of Plato into Platonism leads him to conclude that from Plato on truth becomes fragmentary ushering the end of philosophy.

ÖZET

Hakikatin Fragmentasyonu: Heidegger'in Platon'la Yüzleşmesi

Heidegger'in Platon'daki hakikat kavramı yorumu Platon'un hakikatle ilgili gerçek düşüncelerini yansıtmamaktadır. Heidegger yanlış bir biçimde Platon'u hakikatin gerçek anlamından vazgeçip önermelerin içine sıkıştırmasından ötürü suçlar. Fakat Platon hakikatin doğruluk anlamını önceleyip hakikatin gerçek anlamı olan açığa çıkarma eylemini göz ardı etmez. Bu tez Platon'un düşüncesinde hakikatin bu iki anlamının nasıl birbirinin içine geçtiğini göstermektedir. Argümanlarım

Heidegger'in de aslında nasıl hakikatin bu iki anlamlılığını Platon'u yorumlarken işaret ettiğini destekler niteliktedir. Bu tez Platon' un çeşitli diyaloglarını ve Heidegger'in yorumlarını yan yana incelemektedir. Bu şekilde tezim Heidegger'in hakikat nosyonunu Platon'un karikatürüyle ilişkilendirilerek zedelemesinden ziyade Platon'un diyalogları ile anlamlı bir ilişki kurma imkanını ortaya koymaktadır.

Heidegger'in Platon'u Platonculuğa indirgemesi onu Platon'dan sonra hakikatin nasıl parçalandığı sonucuna götürür.

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INTRODUCTION

In this thesis, I discuss Heidegger's criticism of Plato's conception of truth. Although this problem has been deemed subordinate to the question of Being, it is important to re-consider the historical transformation of the concept of truth in order to gain a deeper insight into 'the meaning of the question of Being, Heidegger's main concern. Interpreting the Greek notion of *ἀλήθεια* as un-concealment, Heidegger characterizes the primordial conception of truth as what shows itself as itself, in other words, as unhidden. He claims that the traditional conception of truth— *adaequatio intellectus et rei* —replaced the conception of truth as un-concealment of Being, for which he criticizes what truth has become after Plato.

Heidegger reflects on Plato's understanding of *ἀλήθεια* and truth in his 1931/32 and 1933/34 lectures and 1940 essay. In this research, I examine Heidegger's engagement with the dialogues *Sophist*, *Theaetetus* and *Republic* and support my claims referring to other relevant texts, *Cratylus*, *Symposium*, *Phaedo* and the *Seventh Letter*. Heidegger is particularly interested in Plato's cave and *Theaetetus* as he thinks that his thesis finds support in these texts. He attempts to show that there is a transition from truth as un-concealment to truth as correctness in Plato's philosophy. The main objection is that the former meaning (truth as un-concealment) is lost in the transmission, and the latter (truth as correctness) is incomplete. According to Heidegger, Plato gave priority to truth as correctness and initiated the process of losing the experience of *ἀλήθεια* as un-concealment within his struggle between these two meanings, and as a result, truth has become a general and an empty concept. From Plato on, there is a gradual shift towards understanding truth solely as correctness of

propositions, which causes human Dasein to detach from the question of Being, and puts the fundamental question of the essence of human into astray.

In his famous essay called as *Plato's Doctrine of Truth*, Heidegger examines the allegory of the cave in *Republic*, and interprets the connection between the essence of truth and education. The crucial claim in this lecture is that the essence of truth as un-concealment is replaced by *Idea* which is all about the correctness of gaze. His reading of Plato suggests that the doctrine of Ideas changed the location of truth, and thus, Plato is responsible for the fallacy in the transmission of the concept of truth. I would like to respond to this allegation and whether Plato and his so-called doctrine of Ideas falls short of maintaining 'the primordial meaning of truth'. I argue that Plato acknowledges the primacy of disclosing beings in his dynamic philosophical method. Truth is not a property of knowledge regarding the Ideas statically preserved in them. Rather, the experience of truth is a life-time journey for thinkers who go out of the cave and come back. More importantly, Plato does not hint at any kind of the transformation of the concept of truth in the cave allegory. Heidegger imposes that idea onto the text only because the philosopher who comes back to the cave 'sees' everything more correctly. However, I argue that Plato in this context intends that the philosopher is able to disclose beings which are on different levels of concealment in the cave. The progressive stages of discovering truth are only possible because the ontological condition that makes what is seen possible and what is seen simultaneously present at-hand.

In the 1931/32 and the 1933/34 lectures, Heidegger devotes the first part of the lectures to explain the Cave Allegory and how truth has become correctness. In addition to this, he claims that both the ascent and the descent of the soul is a form of un-concealment. Plato puts falsehood as opposed to un-concealment since he has no

understanding of concealment. Drawing upon this interpretation, Heidegger examines *Theaetetus* and untruth in the second part of the lectures. He thinks that the discussions on what knowledge is and true belief in this dialogue proves his point. However, I argue that his distorted understanding of the allegory of the cave precludes him from realizing that Plato struggles to understand how false statements and false judgments can be possible at the first place. I show the harmony between the *Sophist* and *Theaetetus* together in this context demonstrating that Plato aims to challenge human being as the measure of truth. More precisely, I maintain that Plato questions the sophistical idea that knowledge is what can be measured by human beings. I evaluate the possible consequences of this idea and argue that Plato himself is also critical about the incompleteness of truth as correctness.

The Platonic tradition attached the doctrine of Ideas on Plato, for which Heidegger misunderstood Plato's thinking. For this reason, I want to elaborate on the misguided development of Heidegger's thinking and present a possible dialogue between Plato and Heidegger. It is crucial to note that I don't simply aim to refute Heidegger's criticism of Plato. I argue that Heidegger could have enriched his philosophy by highlighting the conjunction of their philosophies. The connection between Heidegger and Plato has been interpreted by many scholars as Heidegger's misreading of Plato. The most common criticism is that Heidegger assimilates Plato into Aristotelianism, for which he could not engage with Plato's work in a meaningful way. Based on this, the main claim of this thesis is that what disturbs Heidegger is not Plato as he interprets, but the Platonist tradition under the influence of Aristotle and further, Heidegger himself is a residual Platonist.

Heidegger argues that the beings are primarily concealed as a whole and that they do not appear as themselves. For this reason, the oblivion of the truth as un-concealment has two main consequences: 1) The subject-object polarity, with which human Dasein understands whether a proposition is true or false, distorts the inquiry into the essence of truth. 2) The conception of truth as correctness keeps Dasein in untruth. Thus, there is only truth as correctness left for the humans. A correct proposition provides a piece of knowledge about the being at-hand, and that piece of knowledge includes information about the individual properties of that being, not its essence. I argue that understanding truth as correctness surrounds Dasein with fragmentary truths and destroys the unity of the experience of truth. In this thesis, I designate propositional knowledge as fragmented truths. Since the propositional content is constituted by measuring beings and their individual properties, I will argue that the fragmentation does not allow the happening of the un-concealment of Being. A fragmentary truth gives ordinary information about inner-worldly beings, and consequently, humans lose the possibility to be authentic in truth of Being. Thus, it is possible to live in truth authentically only if humans remember the experience of *ἀλήθεια* in their Dasein.

In the 1960s, Heidegger becomes very pessimistic about the task of philosophy as the search for the truth. He abandons the idea that Greeks understood truth as un-concealment. In *the End of Philosophy*, he argues that there was no transition from un-concealment to correctness, and Plato always understood truth as correctness. Apart from that, he interprets *ἀλήθεια* as the ground for the possibility of truth, but still it is a lost experience. Thus, I argue that his reduction of Plato into Platonism led him to think that the new task of thinking is only measuring the truth. The new task of thinking leaves us with fragmentary truths and no philosophy. Heidegger complains that truth

as un-concealment is undeveloped in thinking. Therefore, I wish to expand on this discussion by thinking the subject matter afresh. Although Heidegger's exegetical strategies on Platonic dialogues are questionable, I claim that there could be a fruitful discussion between them, if they are forced into a confrontation once again. In this dissertation, I will argue that Heidegger misreads the entirety of Platonic dialogues, and Plato does not choose correctness over un-concealedness. In my point of view, both Heidegger and Plato acknowledge that understanding truth as correctness destroys the experience of *ἀλήθεια*, for which Dasein lives deeply in untruth. I wish to interpret Heidegger's Dasein and its strive towards truth with a strong emphasis on its Platonic roots.

CHAPTER 2

TRUTH AS UNCONCEALMENT AND THE EXPERIENCE OF ἀλήθεια¹

Heidegger develops an unconventional concept of truth in his interpretation of Plato's dialogues; his reading of the allegory of the cave² is central to this conception. Heidegger argues that truth as unconcealment is the ontologically fundamental conception of truth, which is forgotten and replaced by truth as correctness through the dialogues of Plato. According to Heidegger, this replacement was a huge mistake since truth defined in terms of the epistemic value of propositions does not reflect the essence of truth. He argues that the breaking point is in Plato's philosophy as he prioritizes truth as correctness over unconcealment.

In this chapter, I will elaborate on truth as un-concealment and how Heidegger understands the experience of ἀλήθεια in the allegory of the cave. I argue that Heidegger was more sympathetic to Plato in his 1931/32 and 1933/34 lectures³; however, he is highly critical of the philosophy of Plato in his only published work on him, the 1940 essay.⁴ For this reason, I will examine the lectures and the 1940 essay extensively and argue that Heidegger's misinterpretation of Plato's allegory of the cave leads him to overlook crucial points in the text. I will trace the misleading reasons for his interpretation of Plato and then demonstrate that various dialogues of

¹ ἀλήθεια translates truth, however, it literally means unconcealment.

² Plato, *Republic* 514a-517b.

³ See, Martin Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, trans. Gregory Fried and Richard Polt (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2010), and Martin Heidegger, *The Essence of Truth: On Plato's Cave Allegory and Theaetetus*, trans. Ted Sadler (London: Continuum, 2004).

⁴ Martin Heidegger, *Pathmarks*, ed. William McNeil and trans. William McNeil (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

Plato disprove Heidegger's allegation that truth as un-concealment is not prominent in Plato's philosophy.

In *Being and Time*, Heidegger argues that there is a primordial meaning of truth that allows Dasein to disclose beings.⁵ Beings are primarily concealed as they do not show themselves as themselves. Thus, Dasein has to disclose them in order to reveal the truth about them. The problem is the traditional concept of truth as correspondence deals with what is discovered, however, there is an essential step of discovering that makes truth possible in the first place.⁶ For this reason, Heidegger examines the inner connection between being and truth and how truth is based on being's showing itself. In § 44., Heidegger discusses the meaning of the "inquiry into truth" and how it is related to the being:

. . . if truth rightfully has a primordial connection with being, then the phenomenon of truth moves into the orbits of the problematic of fundamental ontology . . . being in fact does "go together" with truth, the phenomenon of truth has already been one of the themes of our earlier analysis, although not explicitly under this name.⁷

It is evident that he deeply cares about the question of truth in the background while analyzing Dasein and being. The central issue is the meaning of the question of being throughout the book, which is a directive thinking about the truth. Heidegger asks a series of questions to understand the connection between Dasein and truth, and among those, the most delicate question is the ontic-ontological connection of truth with Dasein.⁸ The reason is that Heidegger attributes an ontic character to truth, which enables Dasein to grasp being. The ontological character of truth, however,

⁵ Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, ed. Dennis J. Schmid and trans. Joan Stambaugh (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2010), 210.

⁶ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 211.

⁷ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 205.

⁸ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 205.

allows Dasein to stand out and live in truth. I argue that this ontic-ontological connection between truth and Dasein is the key to understand the distinction between the traditional concept of truth and the primordial meaning of truth. Firstly, I will elaborate on how Dasein is distinguished from other beings and then discuss the specialty of its connection to the truth concerning the ontic-ontological characteristics.

Heidegger states that there are three priorities of Dasein over other beings: “1) Ontic priority: Dasein cares about its being. 2) Ontological priority: Dasein understands its own being and shows its determination as existence. 3) Ontic-ontological priority: Dasein is the condition of the possibility of all ontologies.”⁹ For Heidegger, these priorities create a special bond between Dasein and truth. Firstly, Dasein is ontically prior to other beings, which makes Dasein care about beings in general. Its ontic priority underpins scientific investigation which examines the innerworldly beings. I shall discuss this kind of ontic inquiry in the next chapter, however, for the purposes of this chapter, it suffices to say that for Heidegger Dasein primarily has to conduct an ontological inquiry.¹⁰ The reason is that the ontological inquiry is fundamental for the ontic delineations of the domains of the different sciences and the development of their methodologies. The ontological priority enables Dasein to grasp its own being and make an ontological inquiry. This kind of inquiry reveals the being of beings and allows Dasein to interpret the constitution of their being. Heidegger claims that ontology is essential for all the sciences. More importantly, ontological inquiry makes the question of the meaning of being possible. Without questioning the meaning of being, scientific investigations are

⁹ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 12.

¹⁰ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 9.

“naïve and opaque.”¹¹ Ultimately, the question of the meaning of being comes down to the question of truth. The ontological inquiry lets beings manifest themselves and reveals the genuine truth about them. For Heidegger, the primordial meaning of truth conditions ontological inquiry. It is the unconcealment of beings that reveals the truth of being. Lastly, the ontic-ontological priority suggests that there is no truth without Dasein. Dasein is the inner condition of all ontologies so that the truth is dependent upon Dasein’s discoveries. For this reason, the ontic-ontological connection between Dasein and truth is very decisive.

Heidegger’s primary concern is Dasein’s comportment towards the truth of being while investigating the question of being. Thus, I argue that the strong connection between Dasein and truth shows us how Heidegger has already embedded truth as unconcealment in his philosophy before his interpretive works and lectures on Plato’s conception of truth. For him, the primordial meaning of truth as unconcealment is forgotten whereas the traditional conception of truth which can be defined as correctness survives without a solid foundation. Truth has to be unconcealment for Heidegger because it provides the foundation for truth as correctness, and it allows leading an authentic life for Dasein. In the everyday life, beings are concealed, and engaging with them seems to be inauthentic as they are not fully disclosed whereas unveiling beings allows Dasein to see the truth of the beings, for which Dasein understands their grounding concept. Unconcealment is the fundamental meaning of truth as Dasein realizes the true essence of beings themselves by disclosing them. Thus, there is an undeniably genuine connection between unconcealment and Dasein, which must be remembered and experienced by human Dasein.

¹¹ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 10.

Heidegger engages with Plato's work after developing these thoughts about truth and its primordial meaning. In a nutshell, he thinks that Plato raised the question of truth and also obscured it.¹² For Heidegger, truth as unconcealment remains in the background in Plato's philosophy, and Plato ultimately chooses truth as correctness.¹³ He insists on the idea that there is a substantial meaning of truth understood by Greeks which grounds propositional truth, and for him, Plato lays the possibility to inquire into both of them. Both in his 1931/32 and 1933/34 lectures and the 1940 essay, he examines the word ἀλήθεια extensively as he believes that to be the origin of truth. It literally means unconcealedness if we break down the word into ἀ- and λανθάνω. The verb λανθάνω means escaping one's notice. It refers to a state in which things are hidden from us. As the prefix a- negates the meaning of the words, ἀλήθεια becomes unhiddenness. Heidegger emphasizes the negative meaning of the word and wonders why concealment refers to a positive state. I think that the positive situation could be linked to our immediate interaction with the visible world. As for the negative connotation of ἀλήθεια, I think that the idea could be explained if we turn to Plato's own explanation of the word. In the *Cratylus*, Plato defines ἀλήθεια as follows: "Alētheia" ('truth') is like these others in being compressed, for the divine motion of being is called 'alētheia' because "alētheia" is a compressed form of the phrase "a wandering that is divine (alē theia)."¹⁴ For Plato, it means a divine wandering¹⁵ that overlaps with the meaning of unconcealment in a way.

¹² Martin Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, trans. Gregory Fried and Richard Polt (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2010), 128.

¹³ Heidegger, *Pathmarks*, 179.

¹⁴ Plato, *Cratylus*, 421a10-b3.

¹⁵ See, Sean D. Kirkland, *The Ontology of Socratic Questioning in Plato's Early Dialogues*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2012) for an insightful discussion about the etymology of the word, especially the section called "Alētheia as Divine Wandering".

Unconcealing the beings could be a divine experience since the visible world is also primarily concealed for Greeks. Perhaps, the negative meaning of the word comes from the idea that it is an inhuman experience. When we think about human nature and our worldly life, the experience of *alētheia* negates the down-to-earth human life. By disclosing beings, it is as if humans wander in the intelligible realm. Also in Heidegger's philosophy, the world around us is primarily concealed, and when we make a judgment, "truth has been presupposed."¹⁶ For this reason, Heidegger complains that it is never questioned on what grounds a statement (judgement) is decided to be true or false.¹⁷ Dasein's entanglement with the everydayness of life does not require humans to investigate the meaning of presupposition, for which we usually assume things to be true and forget the ontological foundation on which it stands.¹⁸ This is the reality of everyday life and of human nature that is inescapable. As opposed to that, Heidegger matches the experience of disclosing beings to an authentic life, which is not an everyday experience. It requires Dasein to modify its perspective towards beings and everyday life. However, Dasein becomes anxious and fearful when the authentic life demands the disclosure of beings. Probably, Heidegger thinks of this modification in Dasein's life to be compelling that is negative for someone who gets used to the inauthentic way of living. To sum up, both for Heidegger and Plato, the uncanny experience of awakening to truth could be the explanation of the negative connotation of the word.

It is a crucial concept for Heidegger because he strongly believes that unconcealment is the experience that we should return to. The primordial conception

¹⁶ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 219.

¹⁷ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 219.

¹⁸ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 219.

of truth, namely the experience of unconcealment, allows us to inquire about the essence of the human, the human Dasein. That's why Plato's conception of truth has great importance to Heidegger's own philosophy. Heidegger contends that understanding truth as unconcealment opens the possibility to interpret historical beings according to their historicity. However, Heidegger tends to read Plato according to the receptions of his philosophy in the history of metaphysics, rather than the context in which Plato wrote.¹⁹ As Hyland states, Heidegger reads Plato as if we have only fragments of texts, however, it is a mistake to read a certain part of a dialogue detached from the context.²⁰ Similarly, I think that he misses the opportunity to understand Plato genuinely by not reading the dialogues according to their interrelationship. Rather, he accuses Plato because of the development of Platonic thinking in the Western metaphysical tradition. Still, he has valuable insights about the question of truth interpreting Plato's allegory in an unorthodox way.

It is philosophically primary to trace the historicity of beings by disclosing them, which gets us closer to Dasein and the world. "Dasein is ontically "nearest" to itself, ontologically farthest away; but pre-ontologically certainly not foreign to itself."²¹ On the other hand, truth as correctness belongs to our everyday life which makes human Dasein forget about the fundamental concepts and lose the possibility of having an authentic life. For this reason, Heidegger insists on stressing the power of unconcealment. This primordial meaning of truth is highly important because

¹⁹ Catherine H. Zuckert, "Heidegger's New Beginning", In *Postmodern Platos*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 33.

²⁰ Drew. A. Hyland, "Truth and Finitude: On Heidegger's Reading of Plato", In *Finitude and Transcendence in the Platonic Dialogues* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995),141-142.

²¹ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 16.

Heidegger thinks that the propositional truth is incomplete without the foundation that unconcealment provides. I will discuss the consequences of understanding truth as correctness in the coming chapter, however, I should note that Heidegger is not content with the idea that propositional truths do not form a unity, instead they only give fragments about the objects around us. The foremost reason is that reducing truth to propositions limits the notion of truth to the domain of judgment and multiplicity of truths. It becomes a matter of correspondence between fact and assertions about the facts, which puts truth in opposition to falsehood. However, disclosing beings makes the assertion possible in the first place. For Heidegger, the problem with truth as correctness is that the correspondence between fact and assertion is static and unhistorical. As opposed to that, the experience of unconcealment is the dynamic discovering of Dasein which understands its being in the historical happening. Understanding truth as unconcealment lays the foundation for propositional truths and it clears the connection between the judgment and its object. Furthermore, it holds the multiplicity of propositional truths together in unity which is grounded in the Being of the beings. Although it is unsaid in Heidegger's philosophy, I think that he looks for a uniform idea of truth that can be historically constructed. As he himself tries to find the 'unsaid' in Plato, I argue that his secret intention is to provide unity for the concept of truth and Dasein in his own philosophy.

Confronting Plato is crucial for Heidegger's philosophy because he thinks that the process of forgetting the experience of ἀλήθεια started with Plato. To understand Heidegger's approach better and to trace the transformation of his thoughts I will examine his lectures on Plato delivered in 1931/32 and 1933/1934 together. Then, I will compare the lectures to his famous 1940 essay on Plato's

doctrine of truth. While explaining his thought process, I will discuss why he is critical about Plato and where I think Heidegger misinterprets him. Ultimately, I will offer a Heideggerian interpretation of Plato's account of truth as unconcealment, with which I hope to build a genuine connection between them.

Heidegger carefully examines Plato's allegory of the cave the *Republic* Book VII. The reason is that Heidegger thinks Plato's philosophy is about the struggle between the two conceptions of truth, and it is represented very clear in the allegory of the cave. In his lectures, Heidegger examines the allegory of the cave apart from the political context in which Plato also speaks. His close reading of the allegory of the cave makes it easier to follow where exactly Heidegger persuaded himself that Plato does not conceive of truth as unconcealment.

In the 1933/34 lecture, Heidegger breaks down the text into four parts corresponding to the four stages of the occurrence of truth:

I. Stage 514a–515c.

The situation of the human being in the subterranean cave.

II. Stage 515c–e.

The liberation of the human being within the cave.

III. Stage 515e–516c.

The authentic human liberation into the light.

IV. Stage 516c–517b.

The look back and the attempt to return to the Dasein of the cave.²²

According to Heidegger, each stage on its own should be examined while putting emphasis on the transitions to be far more important for our subject matter, namely truth as unconcealment. The progressive stages symbolize the unconcealing

²² Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, 102.

process for our own Dasein, for which the whole process as a unity matters for the inquiry into the essence of truth.

In the first part, Plato presents people in the cave sitting in a fixed position chained and looking at a wall. The people are seeing the shadows of the objects which are carried by people behind them. At this stage, the unhidden is made available through fire which only makes shadows possible. Heidegger interprets this situation as people being in the unconcealed since childhood as they are directed towards the unhidden, the shadows on the wall. What is unhidden is “what they immediately encounter, what faces them. These are the shadows that the people behind them cast against the wall in the glow of the fire.”²³ In Heidegger’s philosophy, already being in the cave correspondence to Dasein’s already being in the world. What lies before them is the truth for them as they comport themselves to the wall since nothing else is available. Heidegger argues that what is unhidden in this stage is not determinate enough. Simply, the people under chains do not see the object but only the shadows. They are unaware of what the shadows represent. It is clear to us that there is an ambiguity concerning the unhidden, however, the people who are seeing them could describe them as the only truth. For Heidegger, the people in the cave live in truth in the sense that they have an immediate connection to what is unhidden. However, they do not know the fire that makes shadows available to them let alone the light that is present behind them. For Heidegger, it is crucial to distinguish fire from light at this point. The people sitting in front of the wall are unable to know the difference as they are in contact with neither of them. The people in the cave understand the shadows to be beings themselves since the real objects are not reachable for them. They are not in a position to compare two different situations

²³ Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, 104.

and realize the difference. Heidegger thinks that the situation of the people in the cave is simply the everydayness of life. The first stage represents the lowest point in our relationship to what is unconcealed and Heidegger insists on the idea that there is no truth as correctness there. Heidegger repeatedly states that “to be human and to exist as human means...: to stand in truth,”²⁴ even in the lowest degree. Therefore, this stage represents the situation in which human Dasein finds itself as being-already-in the world.

In the second stage, one of them is released from their chains and turns back to see the objects. Plato describes the situation as a slow, painful awakening to the truth. The person gets confused and does not know whether what she sees is real. At this point, I think that Heidegger stretches the translation of the word *ὀρθότερον* in the *Republic*.²⁵ Heidegger argues that the two forms of truth have collided here as Plato uses the word *ὀρθότερον*.²⁶ However, I think that what Plato meant is that the prisoner is closer to being and can see the objects straight, not through an image on the wall. It is a new level of unconcealing in which the prisoner appropriates his position to disclose beings. Heidegger adds that “truth as correctness is impossible without truth as unconcealment.”²⁷ Unconcealment is the grounding principle of understanding truth as correctness. Although this is agreeable, the prisoner has just exposed to the difference between the object and its image. For this reason, he is

²⁴ Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, 106.

²⁵ Plato, *Republic*, 515d.

The passage in the original language:

τότε τὰς σκιάς ἐώρα, τί ἂν οἶε αὐτὸν εἰπεῖν, εἴ τις αὐτῷ λέγοι ὅτι τότε μὲν ἐώρα φλυαρίας, νῦν δὲ μᾶλλον τι ἐγγυτέρω τοῦ ὄντος καὶ πρὸς μᾶλλον ὄντα τετραμμένος ὀρθότερον βλέπει, καὶ δὴ καὶ ἕκαστον τῶν παριόντων δεικνὺς αὐτῷ ἀναγκάζει ἐρωτῶν ἀποκρίνεσθαι ὅτι ἔστιν; οὐκ οἶε αὐτὸν ἀπορεῖν τε ἂν καὶ ἠγεῖσθαι τὰ τότε ὀρώμενα ἀληθέστερα ἢ τὰ νῦν δεικνύμενα;

πολύ γ', ἔφη.” 515d.

²⁶ Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, 109.

²⁷ Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, 109.

confused about what is real, or truer, not about what is correct or false. By comporting himself to the being, he gets closer to the truth of being that is not yet correctness of being, but slowly unconcealing the being.

He does not even know what is unconcealed as something unconcealed.

Moreover, he could choose to turn back to the shadows as he has been accustomed to looking at them. Thus, liberation is not a success, as Heidegger says, because there is no direct relation to light yet. Light is the condition for unconcealing beings properly since there is always a concealing power in the cave. The liberated person becomes qualified to distinguish the prior situation from the present, also the shadows and the objects. We can only say that they are looking more correctly. According to my interpretation, his experience is still very primitive since he only encounters actual beings, not the essence of their being. The awakening to truth comes very slow, and the unwillingness to turn to the truer beings also means that he cannot correct his gaze in the first place. The sudden liberation from the chains is not an authentic event because the prisoner has not yet realized his own Dasein. Although Heidegger does not touch upon the political nuances in the allegory, it is worth noting that the prisoners are not yet individuals in the cave. They are unaware of their Dasein as a human being on its own because they are all prisoners together as a single entity. In Heidegger's language, there is a communal life sustained via the everydayness of the world. The prisoner becomes aware of the everydayness and its continuance with the first liberation that is not an authentic experience.

For Heidegger, the third stage is at the centre of the inquiry into the essence of truth. The unchained person is forced to move out of the cave into the sunlight. This level of unconcealment is not achieved without a struggle. Heidegger describes this liberation as a violent act because it is a demanding process through which the

unchained person reaches the truth. At the same time, that person should be perseverant and courageous enough to follow these steps although it is perplexing and against the human instinct. After going out of the cave, he gets used to seeing the shadows, the images and finally, ἰδέα of beings. Outside the cave, the freed person can see the visible form of ideas. As Heidegger himself also realizes, the translations of εἶδος and ἰδέα are misleading. εἶδος is usually translated as form, however, it literally means “that which is seen.”²⁸ ἰδέα means “the look of a thing.”²⁹ For this reason, it is questionable whether Plato talks about the ideas of beings that are cognitive concepts standing separately in one’s mind. I argue that what Plato means is that the person sees the look of a thing that is seen. Although it sounds trivial, I think that being nearer to the being themselves one can disclose beings and so have a much better vision.

The authentic experience of ἀλήθεια starts outside of the cave and develops in a slow process. At this point, the freed person can distinguish each of them because of the sunlight. Heidegger says that “the sun itself is the ground of all Being.”³⁰ The source of the light becomes available with the beings that it has unconcealed. Thus, revealing beings under the sunlight and seeing the connection between Being and beings are leading the person to the source of truth, the sun. The light in this context analogous to truth as un-concealment. The unconcealing power belongs to the light that is made the whole process possible. There is an obscure relation between Light and freedom and Unconcealment and Being. However, I argue that Heidegger’s argument in the *Essence of Truth* has its roots in genuine

²⁸ *A Lexicon Abridged from Liddell and Scott's Greek-English Lexicon*. 9th ed. (1940), s.v. “εἶδος.”

²⁹ *An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon (Middle Liddell)*, 7th ed. (1889) s.v. “ἰδέα.”

³⁰ Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, 114.

reflection of the Platonic way of thinking. Since light is a condition that makes visible things possible and it is actually analogue to truth, Heidegger secretly admits that his teaching is nourished by the allegory of the cave. The man who goes out of the cave becomes free as the light shines on the beings. It is precisely the experience of ἀλήθεια that frees the person and makes the connection possible. Even if Heidegger does not express this, I believe that the essence of truth for him adumbrates Plato's picture of unconcealment. Heidegger's twofold approach to Plato's philosophy can be applied to the difference between the inside and the outside of the cave to give a clearer picture of his interpretation.³¹ I believe that the progressive stages in the cave is the journey towards the being of truth, "what was first constructed out of the experience of being."³² That is the inquiry of what appears to us and accepting them as 'given' without questioning what is underneath. And going out of the cave possible only because the freed person wishes to understand the truth of being, "what remains yet to come in the arrival of being."³³ The truth of being is seen outside of the cave because of the last stage of unconcealing, the arrival of being through the light.

Lastly, there is the fourth stage that the freed person comes back into the cave. After three progressive steps of ascent, a descent is happening in the dialogue, for which Heidegger made three bold claims. Firstly, he thinks that truth is transformed when the freed person goes back inside, and this is how Plato is

³¹ Claudia Baracchi, "Contributions to the Coming-to-Be of Greek Beginnings: Heidegger's Inceptive Thinking", In *Heidegger and the Greeks* ed. Drew A. Hyland and John P. Manoussakis (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006), 26.

³² Baracchi, "Contributions to the Coming-to-Be of Greek Beginnings: Heidegger's Inceptive Thinking", 25.

³³ Baracchi, "Contributions to the Coming-to-Be of Greek Beginnings: Heidegger's Inceptive Thinking", 25.

responsible from the beginning of the degradation of truth. Secondly, his idea that after going back into the cave, truth is all about the ‘correctness of the gaze’. Thirdly, the locus of truth becomes the human itself. I want to analyze first how the descent is happening in the text.

Plato describes the situation in which the freed person comes back to the cave: his eyes will hurt because of coming into the darkness and won’t be able to see. Before his eyes are adjusted to the dark, the prisoners who are dealing with the shadows in the cave will make fun of him. Since the prisoners think that they are living in reality, they would think that the journey out of the cave is in vain, since it only hurts the eyes. Plato adds that if the freed person forces someone to go upwards, the prisoners could try to kill him. Heidegger thinks that the person who pushes other people to go upwards is the philosopher whose fate is in the unconcealing of Being. In 1933/34 lectures, Heidegger reflects on the philosopher as a liberator and his task extensively, which is not present in the 1940 essay. Putting the task of the philosopher to liberate others aside, I want to focus on the transition from light to dark especially presented in the 1940 essay. Because it is the only published piece on Plato by Heidegger and the breaking point in his interpretation happens in that text. For Heidegger, the freed person goes out of the cave and sees the ideas which are the highest forms of reality. He thinks that ideas are simply the facts that we look at when we evaluate our assertions. In this way, Heidegger concludes that Plato prioritizes the agreement of what is known and the thing itself over ἀλήθεια. Going back into the cave symbolizes Plato’s relinquishment of unconcealment. In his own words:

...the priority of *ιδέα* and *ιδεῖν* over *ἀλήθεια* results in a transformation in the essence of truth. Truth becomes *ὀρθότης*, the correctness of apprehending and

asserting. With this transformation of the essence of truth there takes place at the same time a change of the locus of truth.³⁴

As mentioned above, there are three claims which I strongly oppose in this text. Firstly, there is no transformation of truth from unconcealment to correctness as Heidegger argues. For Plato, the freed person comes back to the cave as being aware of its Dasein and what it means to be in truth. The idea of the good as the ultimate principle is made possible only with the light. There is no idea without the sunlight in the allegory, which means that light is prior to the ideas. Furthermore, the light is analogue to the unconcealment which is the primordial meaning of truth. I argue that Heidegger overlooks Plato's devotion to truth as unconcealment. Secondly, Heidegger argues that: "The looks that show what things themselves are, the εἰδή (ideas), constitute the essence in whose light each individual being shows itself as this or that, and only in this self-showing does the appearing thing becomes unhidden and accessible."³⁵ As opposed to that, I argue that truth is analogue to the light, not to the ideas. The ideas are again static and unhistorical whereas the unconcealing power of humans is historical. The wandering outside the cave does not end, on the contrary, it supposed to be an ongoing practice of human life. Not only the freed person only makes corrections around the cave but also experiences ἀλήθεια every time in his journey. I think that Plato's comments on the cave clarifies the meaning as follows in the original text:

“καταβατέον οὖν ἐν μέρει ἐκάστῳ εἰς τὴν τῶν ἄλλων συνοίκησιν καὶ συνεθιστέον τὰ σκοτεινὰ θεάσασθαι: συνεθιζόμενοι γὰρ μυρίῳ βέλτιον ὄψεσθε τῶν ἐκεῖ καὶ γνώσεσθε ἕκαστα τὰ εἰδῶλα ἅττα ἐστὶ καὶ ὄν, διὰ τὸ τάληθῆ ἔωρακέναι καλῶν τε καὶ δικαίων καὶ ἀγαθῶν πέρι.”³⁶

³⁴ Heidegger, *Pathmarks*, 177.

³⁵ Heidegger, *Pathmarks*, 169-170.

³⁶ Plato, *Republic*, 520c1-6.

I would translate this paragraph as follows:

“So each person in his turn must descend into the dwelling place of others and accustom himself to contemplate about the obscure things. For having being accustomed to see infinitely better than others there and to know the image of each thing that is and its being, they find the beautiful, just and good about them through wandering.”³⁷

The revealing and unconcealing are the preconditions for the correctness of the gaze around the cave, and the power of unconcealing is not forgotten. It is part of the journey in the cave because the freed person constantly visits outside the cave with or without others. As Heidegger says it is a constant overcoming of the concealedness of concealed beings after turning into the cave.³⁸ The descent is necessary because human Dasein is always already in the world and there is no other way for human to live. Plato understands the necessity of being in the visible world and adjusting to life in the cave. However, he emphasizes the importance of going outside the cave many times as he praises the freed person who takes up the journey upwards. As Plato states, the freed person should not be allowed to stay there and do anything he wants. There should be harmony within the community, which could be maintained only by the guidance of the philosophers who are liberating other people from their chains in the ideal city.

Heidegger thinks that the core idea of the allegory for Plato is to show the unity of education and truth in the 1940 essay.³⁹ Reinterpreting Plato’s own comments on

³⁷ The translation that I don’t think is accurate as follows: “Therefore each of you in [c] turn must go down to live in the common dwelling place of the others and grow accustomed to seeing in the dark. When you are used to it, you’ll see vastly better than the people there. And because you’ve seen the truth about fine, just, and good things, you’ll know each image for what it is and also that of which it is the image.” Plato, ed. John M. Cooper, 520c1-6.

³⁸ Heidegger, *Pathmarks*, 170.

³⁹ Heidegger, *Pathmarks*, 167.

the allegory Heidegger points out the importance of *paideia* in this context.⁴⁰ *Paideia* is often translated as education, however, it means turning the body and the soul to the light. The process of turning happens as the freed person follows each step of unconcealment. The journey as a whole is also a constant overcoming of ignorance. That's how Heidegger links education to truth in the text, the former is explicit whereas the latter is not. Thus, Heidegger wants to focus on what is unsaid in the text as he states at the beginning of *Plato's Doctrine of Truth*:

In order to experience and to know for the future what a thinker left unsaid, whatever that might be, we have to consider what he said. To properly satisfy this demand would entail examining all of Plato's "dialogues" in their interrelationship. Since this is impossible, we must let a different path guide us to the unsaid in Plato's thinking.⁴¹

He realizes that this is not the ideal way to read the allegory of the cave, nevertheless, he interprets it without the context. When it comes to the title of the essay, Heidegger claims that there is a doctrine of Plato hidden in the text. As Hyland criticizes, it is curious how Heidegger concludes that Plato possesses a set of belief throughout his dialogues.⁴² Since Plato himself is not talking in the dialogues, how do we know which person expresses his true opinions? Although we usually assume that Socrates is the mouthpiece of Plato, it is not very clear. Plato speaks to us from a different point of view in every dialogue, which shows that he has no doctrine. For Hyland, the essay should have been titled Socrates' doctrine of truth in the *Republic* granting the doctrine ideas to him.⁴³ However, the characters in the dialogues are finite human beings who are expressing their own opinions and are engaging in

⁴⁰ Heidegger, *Pathmarks*, 179-180.

⁴¹ Heidegger, *Pathmarks*, 155.

⁴² Hyland, "Truth and Finitude: On Heidegger's Reading of Plato", 142.

⁴³ Hyland, "Truth and Finitude: On Heidegger's Reading of Plato", 142.

various discussions without coming to a sort of conclusion. It shows that Plato realizes the limits and the disputability of all views, for which we cannot assume that there is a doctrine of his which he necessitates to accept and follow. I argue that the humanization of truth is the main problem that Heidegger goes back to both in the lectures and the essay, which is inherently tied to the maturation of his own philosophy. Towards the end of *Plato's Doctrine of Truth*, Heidegger says that the allegory of the cave is the beginning of modern subjectivism.⁴⁴ He thinks that there is nothing objective outside of the cave. It is also the reason why he thinks that judgment is the new abode of truth after coming into the cave. However, I strongly oppose this idea given that Plato has always been critical of sophists who are the ultimate defenders of subjectivism. I will elaborate on how Plato represents Protagoras and his view on truth in the next chapter.

Since I don't agree with Heidegger on Plato's conception of truth, I argue that what Plato means in the text is more compatible with Heidegger's own thinking especially about the experience of ἀλήθεια. I think that there is an alternative way of looking at the text by which I would argue that Plato hints at the double nature of truth. Since unconcealment and concealment are always interbedded for Dasein, it is always like a wrestling match for Dasein to disclose beings. For this reason, even man being free and coming back into the cave symbolizes Dasein living both in truth and untruth. In this case, living in both unconcealment and concealment. There is no transformation but a realization of the freedom that makes the movement possible in space. Indeed, the freed person is looking more correctly, but it is because of the experience of unconcealment. Looking more correctly would make Dasein more aware of the cave and be authentic even if the inauthenticity surrounds him

⁴⁴ Heidegger, *Pathmarks*, 182.

everywhere. Plato wants to resolve the disunity between the visible world and the intelligible realm. Since he realizes that he cannot choose one over another, he tries to balance out these two worlds. For this reason, unlike Heidegger, I think that there is no collision of two conceptions of truth but a reconciliation. There is no transformation in the locus of truth, however, there is an expansion and enrichment, which satisfies the essential unity of truth and education. The freed person has to have the experience of ἀλήθεια in order to make use of truth in the cave. If there is any transformation, there is one in the body and the soul of human beings. Education makes the transformation possible for the human being who was formerly uneducated and perplexed. Going back into the cave makes ‘proper’ education possible since the freed person learned to disclose the beings themselves. The journey itself makes all the difference for the Dasein, not for the essence of truth. The difference is that now the light is available to him and now he has a chance to remind that to himself every step of the way. It is needed because everything is primarily concealed in the cave. In Heideggerian philosophy, I think that the inside of the cave symbolizes our everyday lives. However, the person who experiences ἀλήθεια will have a correct vision for the everydayness of life. Plato is very much aware of how Dasein is struggling with being already in the world, however, the only thing transformed in this process is the human who found the path of his Dasein in truth. And hopefully, will he find a way to balance the two worlds and live authentically.

Expanding on the allegory of the cave I think that by looking at the other dialogues we can understand Plato’s conception of truth as unconcealment better and connect it to my Heideggerian interpretation. In the *Symposium*, for example, Diotima puts judgment in-between ignorance and knowledge while explaining eros to

Socrates.⁴⁵ She says that it hits the scientific truth but not wisdom. To me, this is the indication that Plato wouldn't suggest a transformation of truth while rejecting that it is the wisdom philosophers are looking for. Dasein is looking for wisdom out of the cave by disclosing the being with the suspension of judgments. Thus, truth as unconcealment is prior to correctness in Plato's philosophy. From this point of view, I think that Plato presents Alcibiades as the epitome of the living situation in-between ignorance and wisdom. One side of Alcibiades lives in the cave dominating everyday life violently while the other side of him agonizing, to tell the truth through images. Telling the truth in this way is not enough to attract Socrates and feel complete with his object of eros. As Rosen states, *care* in Heidegger's philosophy corresponds to *eros* in Platonic dialogues.⁴⁶ Drawing upon that connection, I think that Alcibiades does not care about the truth itself, but only the images. Since his object of love is not the ultimate wisdom, it is as if he lingers around the cave lacking the experience of unconcealment. However, Socrates tries to force him to go out of the cave and see the ideas with the light which makes it possible for us to see them. I think that Rojcewicz's idea that the Platonic way of life adumbrates the Heidegger's Dasein and its urge towards Being supports my Heideggerian interpretation of Plato's philosophy.⁴⁷ Human Dasein searches for the truth and cares about the actual process of un-concealment in an erotic way. A philosopher cares about the truth of being at

⁴⁵ I am quoting the *Symposium* here: "...haven't you found out yet that there's something in between wisdom and ignorance? It's judging things correctly without being able to give a reason. Surely you see that this is not the same as knowing—for how could knowledge be unreasoning? And it's not ignorance either—for how could what hits the truth be "ignorance? Correct judgment, of course, has this character: it is in between understanding and ignorance." Plato, 202a4-11.

⁴⁶ Stanley Rosen, "Remarks on Heidegger's Plato." In *Heidegger and Plato: Toward Dialogue* ed. Partenie C. and Rockmore T. (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 2005), 181.

⁴⁷ Richard Rojcewicz, "Platonic Love: Dasein's Urge toward Being" In *Research in Phenomenology*, no:27, (1997): 103-120, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24654672>.

first and always searches for the being of truth until his death. The happening of the human history of Dasein searching for the being of truth is the experience of ἀλήθεια.

Both Plato and Heidegger understand the philosopher's journey towards their own death. For Plato, philosophy is the practice of dying and humans have to accept that destiny and live a good life accordingly. Similarly, Heidegger holds the view that Dasein is always going towards death. While comporting himself towards death, the philosopher strives for understanding the Being itself. By accepting and owning his own death Socrates manifests his authentic experience of ἀλήθεια. At this point, we can see the connection between freedom and truth as well. The authentic experience of ἀλήθεια frees us making our Dasein free for death.

In conclusion, I think that Plato lets the reader experience the unconcealment of beings in the dialogues as the discussions unfold, however, Heidegger overlooks that intention of Plato. Although he aims to look beyond the text, he does not see the 'unsaid' part of Plato's thinking which is very close to his own thoughts. I argued that Heidegger's Dasein has a similar experience with the freed person in the cave. The descent into the cave is necessary for Dasein and the only way to make the descent less painful is to adapt. The correctness of the gaze could compensate for the rupture opened by the sunlight. It opens the way for the freed person to live a temporally meaningful life within the deceitful world. Moreover, the experience of unconcealment would always follow the freed person and that's why he has a correct way of looking at things. My alternative version of the return to the cave is more appropriate for Heidegger's own thinking since it symbolizes the trap Dasein finds itself in the world. Heidegger could have illustrated his own philosophical position through the allegory of the cave as I tried to do in the last part. However, Heidegger surprisingly overlooks the subtle meaning of the cave analogy. Besides that, Plato's

own interpretation of the allegory also tells us how much Heidegger misses the ‘unsaid’ part. What is unsaid in the Republic is not a doctrine of Plato, but it is unsayable.

Although many commentators put enough emphasis on how Heidegger fails to understand the genuine meaning of Platonic dialogues, I believe there is more to discuss. I agree that it is disappointing to see the unrealized potential in Heidegger’s critique of Plato, however, it is also curious why Heidegger does not go back. Why Heidegger does not reconsider his own critique of Plato although his later work gives us hope? I think that the concept of subjectivity he attached to Plato and fragmentation caused by that makes Heidegger reluctant to re-analyze his interpretation. Not only Aristotle but also the tradition which comes from Pre-Socratics makes him believe that Plato understands truth as correctness and nothing else. However, Plato is explicitly critical about truth as correctness in various dialogues, for which I will continue by examining truth as correctness and its place in Platonic dialogues.

CHAPTER 3

INCOMPLETENESS OF TRUTH AS CORRECTNESS (ὀρθότης) AND THE ESSENCE OF UNTRUTH (ψεῦδος)

In the previous chapter, I analyzed truth as unconcealment and demonstrated that Heidegger is mistaken to claim that truth as unconcealment is lost in Plato's philosophy. I argued that Heidegger's distorted understanding of the cave allegory and confusion of Aristotle's ideas with Plato's complicates his interpretation. Lastly, I presented a Heideggerian interpretation of Plato's allegory of the cave, which draws a better connection between their philosophies. In this chapter, I explain the concept of truth as correctness and examine Heidegger's accusation of Plato closely in the 1933/34 lectures. Heidegger asserts his interpretation of the *Theaetetus* as evidence of Plato's error for prioritizing truth as correctness. The reason why Heidegger wants to examine this dialogue is the concept of ψεῦδος which is the Greek word for untruth or falsehood. After elaborating on the essence of truth in the first part of the lecture, Heidegger thinks that the inquiry into the essence of untruth is equally important. He wishes to defend his position that Plato chooses truth as correctness over truth as unconcealment by way of showing how he places falsehood as opposed to truth. In this way, he aims to draw the conclusion that Plato is responsible for the downfall of the history of metaphysics followed after him. For this reason, he devotes the second part of the 1933/34 lectures for interpreting the *Theaetetus* after a preliminary discussion of Plato's conception of knowledge. His strategy is to show the essence of untruth as falsehood and deduce the conclusion that truth is understood as correctness the first time by Plato. Although it is true that Plato is the first Greek philosopher who expresses the concept of truth as correctness, I argue

that truth as correctness is an incomplete notion for Plato as much as it is for Heidegger. I will demonstrate that Plato criticizes truth as correctness reflecting a sophistical perspective that takes humans to be the measure of truth. I conclude that Heidegger and Plato are on the same side considering Heidegger's complaints about the incompleteness of truth and the ontological base of the essence of untruth.

In *Being and Time*, Heidegger makes a distinction between the primordial meaning of truth (truth as disclosedness) and the traditional conception of truth.⁴⁸ He characterizes the traditional conception of truth under three theses: Firstly, the primary place of truth is the proposition. It is also called propositional truth since truth only resides in the propositional truth value of statements. Secondly, the essence of truth is the agreement between the judgment and its object, which is the dominant view on truth after Aristotle. Thirdly, Heidegger mentions Aristotle as the initiator of the definition of truth as 'agreement'.⁴⁹ He does not mention Plato here, however, he talks about his own views regarding this traditional understanding of truth, which I am interested in. In brief, Heidegger thinks that truth as correctness belongs to the truth as disclosedness. Making a judgment about an object happens as Dasein discovers inner worldly beings. The agreement between the judgment and its object provided on the basis of the discovering. He says that "confirmation is accomplished on the basis of the being's showing itself."⁵⁰ Dasein has to unveil beings and see them as what they are, which is the essential step to make a judgment about them in the first place. The judgments about them symbolize the discoveredness of their being. For this reason, Heidegger thinks that things that are

⁴⁸ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 204-220.

⁴⁹ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 206.

⁵⁰ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 210.

discovered are true in a secondary sense.⁵¹ Truth as unconcealment searches for what is as it is. In contrast, truth as correctness suggests that, as Heidegger complains: “what is, is what is posited in a proposition as being.”⁵² Without seeing the beings themselves, it is only an agreement between the judgment and the object that has been assumed. Thus, he puts emphasis on the necessity of the unconcealment and the insufficiency of correctness.

In the 1933/34 lectures, Heidegger combines these early reflections with his interpretation of Plato’s *Theaetetus*. In the second part of these lectures, he reflects upon the central question of the dialogue first –What is knowledge?⁵³ The word ἐπιστήμη is usually translating as scientific knowledge. However, this meaning of the word does not reflect Plato’s usage and understanding of the concept of knowledge. Heidegger explains the verb ἐπίστασθαι as: “to oversee a thing, to stand over it, to stand before and understand it, to be fit for it, to know one’s way around it.”⁵⁴ Although this is different from the meaning I am going to suggest, Heidegger tries to get at the meaning that is knowing how to do something.⁵⁵ I agree with Heidegger that ἐπιστήμη not only means scientific knowledge but also all sorts of knowledge including the skill of archery or any other kind of profession. In this dialogue, the subject matter is the know-how as a general concept encompassing the multiplicity

⁵¹ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 211.

⁵² Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, 174.

⁵³ In the original language, the question is: τί ἐστὶν ἐπιστήμη?

⁵⁴ Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, 182.

⁵⁵ The verb ἐπίστασθαι is the infinitive form of both ἐφίστημι and ἐπίσταμαι. The former means to stand near something, which is Heidegger’s primary understanding of the word. The latter means to know how to do something, which is the correct one in this context. In a way, Heidegger synthesizes these meanings and explains the verb form of the word ἐπιστήμη accordingly. However, I wanted to clarify the verb actually ἐπιστήμη derived from to avoid any confusion.

of the domains of knowledge.⁵⁶ However, there is a prior question of knowing before indulging in the matter of knowing-how. The question of what is knowing is fundamental for the human being who sets the boundaries of knowledge or knowing how. For Heidegger, it is a lost question. This is also the central question of philosophy since the question of knowledge is only possible within the question of truth. For this reason, Heidegger describes this question as an attack on philosophy, which must be taken care of seriously. In parallelism, he asserts that the question of the essence of untruth (ψεῦδος) lies under the question of ἐπιστήμη, and it will guide us to the concept of truth as correctness. However, he overlooks the other meaning of ψεῦδος which is deception.⁵⁷ There is an ontological background of the epistemic meaning of the word. I will clarify this meaning when in my discussion of the essence of untruth below.

In the dialogue, the first answer to this question is ἐπιστήμη is αἴσθησις. It means that knowledge is sense perception. Plato presents this idea as a different way of saying that: “Man is the measure of all things: of the things which are, that they are, and of the things which are not, that they are not.”⁵⁸ Protagoras, who is a well-known sophist, defends this idea which is a kind of perceptual relativism. Since the appearance of a thing is the same as its perception, it depends on the individual who perceives it. Heidegger contends that Plato’s concern is not only to refute Protagoras. Plato aims to present the question of what knowledge is in every aspect. However, I argue that Plato does both throughout the dialogue. He deeply cares about the sophisticated pitfalls that remain unquestioned.

⁵⁶ Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, 178.

⁵⁷ The word I am referring to is ψευδής which is also translated as unreal.

⁵⁸ Plato, *Theaetetus*, 152a3-4.

Since humans' immediate interaction with beings happens through sense perception, it is no surprise that Plato examines sense perception as the first answer to the question of what knowledge is. With this immediate encounter, humans perceive the things around them in their most basic form as they appear to them, however, not more than that. For this reason, Heidegger treats this answer as not a false one, but an insufficient one. He concedes that αἴσθησις is necessary, “...but perception and being-perceived are insufficient to make openness equal the truth of a being for us.”⁵⁹ Sense perception is not the way to grasp beings as themselves, but only as they appear to us. It enables us to perceive a sound and a color at the same time, however, it does not tell the difference that we perceive between them. Understanding the difference requires a higher level of perception, for which sense perception does not suffice to be knowledge. The question is on what grounds the multiplicity of properties of a thing perceived? Besides this multiplicity and our relative perception of them, the changeable nature of those properties makes it almost impossible to perceive those things as what they are. Plato highlights the Heraclitean idea that everything is changing in nature, and he questions how we can attain the truth of a being through our senses. How can we trust our own judgment since we will not be the same person too? Even if we are the same person how come we can trust our own judgments? Motion in the visible realm complicates Plato's approach to perception, for which he continues to search for a substantial ground for knowledge. Towards the end of the discussion of the first answer, Socrates asks if “...it is possible for someone who does not even get at being to get at truth.”⁶⁰ The simple answer is that it is not and for this reason, perception and knowledge are not

⁵⁹ Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, 187.

⁶⁰ Plato, *Theaetetus*, 186c8-9.

the same. Plato thinks that without the being itself, we cannot reach its truth. Since we do not perceive beings themselves through sense perception, the locus of knowledge should be something else.

As Socrates suggests to look at the activity of the soul for it, Theaetetus gives the second answer: ἐπιστήμη is δόξα. Heidegger gives several meanings of the word δόξα⁶¹. However, he asserts that the most appropriate understanding of the word is “...looking a certain way, standing in visibility and respectability.”⁶² Thus, he believes that Greeks held these two perspectives regarding δόξα: It could mean either 1) the look of a thing e.g. color, shape or sound of a bird or 2) holding a belief about a thing. Heidegger matches the former with the purpose of αἴσθησις, viz., to give us information about how an object looks to us. The latter character of δόξα represents our way of thinking and grasping, that is διάνοια. It enables us to differentiate our perceptions, which was missing in the first answer. Heidegger claims that Plato is not very clear about the nature of δόξα, and he doesn't connect these two meanings. However, I argue that Plato does that in the *Republic* as he presents the so-called divided line. The nexus is πίστις which means the trust in the look of an object while holding a belief about it. Plato realizes the importance of trusting our perception that is the basis of understanding the visible realm. However, the problem is whether that trust will be abused or not by the cave-dwellers.

When Socrates and Theaetetus discuss the second answer, another problem arises: δόξα can create an illusion and be false. Therefore, Heidegger says, it is possible that the object does not show itself, but conceals what is behind.⁶³ In the

⁶¹ The standard definition of δόξα in the dictionaries are belief, imagination, thinking, supposition, opinion.

⁶² Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, 189.

⁶³ Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, 190.

same context, Socrates presents the problem of δόξα creating illusion as a continuation of his examination of Protagoras's view; thus, he suggests to go back and elaborate on this second answer related to the sophistical perspective. Our judgment could be true or false depending upon the correspondence of our perception with the object. The object could also hide. Therefore, we could have a wrong impression about it. For this reason, similar to Plato, Heidegger thinks that it is a matter of faith whether we think that we hold a true belief regardless of its justification. I think that it is a legitimate approach for our immediate experience of things in order not to become an extreme sceptic. Trusting our sense perception seems to be the only way to sustain our everyday lives. However, I think that the possibility of deception should be always present in one's mind to check the validity of our judgments about everydayness. Still, falsity and illusion belong to δόξα and they are inescapable. In this way, the concept of ψεῦδος becomes prominent in the inquiry of knowledge. There is always a danger that a belief can be false or a view can be distorted. Heidegger chooses not to follow the dialogue but to examine the concept of ψεῦδος on its own. I think that this strategy deviates from his original aim to show Plato's prioritization of truth as correctness insofar as the interpretation becomes distant from the text.

For Heidegger, Plato's investigation of false belief more than true belief is rather intriguing. Heidegger maintains that Plato intentionally does that because he sees it as a fundamental problem of philosophy.⁶⁴ Although I concede that it can be seen as a problem of philosophy, I think that it is because of Plato's Parmenidean ideas along with his criticism of sophistical perspective against the true nature of knowledge. His Parmenidean inclination tells that we cannot talk about being of a

⁶⁴ Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, 191.

non-being because it has no being whatsoever. In other words, it is a false speech as it does not contain anything about something true that exists. The question is whether it is possible to talk about what is not as much as what is. At this point, Socrates says that false belief is not possible because how can we know the things that we do not know. How is it possible for a person to know the things that he does not know? Or how is it possible to not know the things that he knows? Since the inquiry of knowledge is deeply connected to the inquiry into being, from this passage onwards, Plato turns the discussion into ways of being and non-being instead of knowing and not-knowing.⁶⁵ The problematization of non-being and its expression via language interest both thinkers. Heidegger writes: ‘‘Plato forces us to decide. Which is true. Must we hold to the *impossibility of the false*, or hold that we stand under the *power of the fact of the false*?’’⁶⁶ I think that Plato forces us to think about what is wrong with the ways of sophists, which Heidegger treats as a side problem despite Plato’s endless dispute with them.

Heidegger then examines the impossibility of false belief with an example: If false belief does not exist, how the situation where the person who sees Theaetetus thinks that he is Socrates can be explained? In this case, the person who makes this judgment has a false view which cannot be possible for Plato. The arguments are as follows:

- 1) Familiarity and Unfamiliarity: If the person who sees Theaetetus thinks that he is Socrates, it means that he has a familiarity with how Socrates looks. However, he has also no familiarity with the person he looks at. Thus, the

⁶⁵ Plato, *Theaetetus*, 188c12-d2.

⁶⁶ Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, 191.

person should be both familiar and unfamiliar with the person he encounters, which is impossible.

- 2) Being and non-Being: The false is null or nothing. For this reason, holding a false belief means believing in nothing. For example, if he sees nothing, his activity is not seeing.
- 3) Substitution: When the person thinks that he sees Socrates, he substitutes Theaetetus for Socrates. Plato argues that it is even impossible in dreams to substitute one thing for another.⁶⁷

These are the arguments against the existence of false belief, however, how can we explain error, illusion and falsehood since our everyday lives are full of them?⁶⁸ For Heidegger Plato made his decision about the ψευδῆς δόξα and saw what the false belief is, however, I think that Plato only questions his own beliefs that he takes for granted. That is true philosophizing without any blind assumptions. He struggles between the perspectives of Protagoras and Parmenides, which comes to a deadlock and forces him to try another way for the continuation of the discussion.

As Heidegger argues, Plato offers alternative ways of approaching this question of false belief:

- 1) The simile is of a wax block in the human soul, that is thought of as a gift of memory. The person who perceives a certain object kept in under the wax and as long as the image of that object remains in the wax, he remembers and knows. It means that the object is not present as in the case of αἴσθησις, but our souls are able to make it present in our mind.

This connection provides four different modes of making-present:

⁶⁷ Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, 193-194.

⁶⁸ Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, 194.

forgetting and things to be withdrawn from us, imagination and fantasy.

Plato says that these modes of making-present enable human souls to expand and go beyond mere sense perception.

2) The second simile is of an aviary of birds. This example clearly shows how Plato thinks of the multiplicity of knowledge. Socrates suggests understanding the birds as pieces of knowledge.⁶⁹ Plato pictures different kinds of birds to be discovered as pieces of knowledge by the hunter who 'has' the knowledge of the aviary. Most importantly, Heidegger clarifies how Plato distinguishes the pieces of knowledge in three as follows:

- a) Those things that are kept together resulting in unity which is mutable.
- b) Those that break away from the unity resulting in uniqueness and particularity.
- c) And finally, those that are standing out among all the others.⁷⁰

Heidegger states that the results are: "unity, otherness, difference, multiplicity."⁷¹ Possessing the aviary means possessing the ability to manipulate the cage of birds or to control the pieces of knowledge.⁷² Further, Socrates says that there are two kinds of hunting: First, to acquire for the sake of possession and the other is to acquire for the sake of taking and having what the possessor had acquired long before.⁷³ Thus, the former means to possess knowledge whereas the latter means to have it. In this way, a person can learn something that he already knows

⁶⁹ Plato, *Theaetetus*, 197e2-6.

⁷⁰ Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, 198.

⁷¹ Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, 198.

⁷² Plato, *Theaetetus*, 198b1-3.

⁷³ Plato, *Theaetetus*, 198d2-3.

and it does not mean that he does not know what he knows. Then, Socrates concludes that it is not possible not to possess what one knows, however, a false belief is possible insofar as one has a piece of knowledge about another thing, but not the knowledge of that thing. Therefore, in the example of taking Theaetetus for Socrates, the person who perceives Theaetetus catches a piece of knowledge about Socrates instead of him. Heidegger sees the outcome of this discussion as Plato's acceptance of the existence of false beliefs and his betrayal of Parmenides by showing these passages as the proof of how he realizes that false view belongs to humans one way or another. For Heidegger, the difference represents the idea that something can be absent and present.⁷⁴ However, the remaining discussion in the dialogue disproves what Heidegger holds onto.

Socrates immediately raises another problem after saying that ψευδῆς δόξα exists. If false belief exists, then he asks what if interchanging knowledge becomes a false belief.⁷⁵ He should also accept that there are pieces of ignorance in the aviary. Since the hunter thinks that he hunts a true piece of knowledge that is actually false, then again he knows something that he does not know. On the other way around, he does not know what he knows. Through a questioner's mouth, Socrates refutes the existence of false belief once again and accepts that they have to turn back to the original question of what knowledge is. He adds that it is impossible to know ψευδῆς δόξα before knowing what knowledge is. He chooses to follow a new line of reasoning and leaves it there, which shows that he is not decided yet. At the end of the *Theaetetus*, they will be still clueless about what knowledge is and false belief.

⁷⁴ Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, 198.

⁷⁵ Plato, *Theaetetus*, 199c11-12.

The discussion goes on in the *Sophist* where the Stranger and Theaetetus try to describe a sophist, and the Stranger says it is a hard task because: “The sophist escapes into the darkness of that which is not, to which he devotes himself by practice, and it is hard to perceive him because of the darkness of the place.”⁷⁶ Since the sophist engages himself with darkness and non-being, they begin to discuss who could be a philosopher. A philosopher devotes himself to see what is through the light. In a way, Plato decides that the place of a sophist is the inside of the cave. He is wandering in the dark and dealing with non-beings such as shadows or images whereas the philosopher wants to be near the Being in a brilliant place where light makes it possible to see. It is also a hard task because not many human souls have eyes to look at something divine patiently.⁷⁷

They further inquire how those non-beings blends with belief and speech, which was our concern in the *Theaetetus*, that is whether false belief and speech exist. I argue that Plato wants to show the existence of falsity, false belief and false speech in order to argue that sophists are dealing with those manipulative matters in ironically. For Plato, a sophist deals with that which-is-not which is described as the scattered differences among those which are. These differences are ‘visible’ in the dark place, which I think to be a reference to the concealing power of darkness. The difference, which also causes false judgments, is present because the beings are not showing themselves in the dark, namely in the cave. To me, the sophist adumbrates the hunter from the example of aviary who tries to control ‘the birds’ in the cage. There is a multitude of things in the cave, which makes sophists able to manipulate everything inside. Both the hunter and the sophist do not know what they know since the pieces

⁷⁶ Plato, *Theaetetus*, 254a4-6.

⁷⁷ Plato, *Theaetetus*, 254a8-b1.

of knowledge fly out in the cave either true or false. Yet, their manipulative tactics become useful in the cave to sustain the everydayness of life. However, it is defective because there is more to discover outside the cave.

Plato finds it painful to say that “...*that which is* and *the different* pervade all of them and each other, that *the different* shares in *that which is* and so, because of that sharing, is.”⁷⁸ Still, he is forced to accept that non-being is not contrary to being, but only different from it, which is my answer to Heidegger’s claim that there is nowhere in the text where Plato talks about concealment. He talks about falsehood, deception and darkness all the time, which refers to concealment and escaping one’s notice. The shadows and the images are hiding the real objects, for which we are deceived. The happening of the deception refers to living in the untruth. Not being able to see the connection between the objects that forms a unity and seeing the differences that makes them incompatible is the reason why I call this event fragmentation. Even if Plato does not talk about concealment as the essence of untruth, it is actually hidden in the text. As for fragmentation, he explicitly states that difference fragments beings into million things.⁷⁹ The difference is what causes the multiplicity insofar as it has a share in beings. Not being able to see the connections between different objects and having false beliefs about them is a part of everyday life. Not being able to form a unity, however, is the problem of someone who has not experienced his authentic side by unconcealing beings and trying to see the truth of their being. Falsehood is not even presented as the opposite of correctness but as a different kind of situation in which one can form false propositions. The essence of *ψεῦδος* alludes to the darkness in which most people live and their speech could be true or false depending on their view. There is no definite answer for the existence of

⁷⁸ Plato, *Theaetetus*, 259a6-8.

⁷⁹ Plato, *Theaetetus*, 259b1-5.

false beliefs, but only that they imitate true beliefs. For this reason, truth as correctness is a confusing concept because it results in fragmentation of truth that is not fully explicable.

Turning back to the end of the *Theaetetus*, Socrates and Theaetetus inquire what knowledge is once again after leaving the discussion about false belief unresolved. The last answer is that δόξαν ἀληθῆ μετὰ λόγου, true belief with an account. Then, the problem is what is an account? They inquire three possibilities: 1) Expression of one's own thought through speech 2) Comprehension of a whole through its elements 3) Explication of the object with its difference from everything else. The first and the second alternatives do not work since they both try to cover something unknowable. Also, I should note that Plato starts to use δόξα ὀρθῆ instead of δόξαν ἀληθῆ while assessing the second alternative and only uses ὀρθῆ in the third one. Perhaps Plato realizes that δόξαν ἀληθῆ cannot be possible and δόξα ὀρθῆ makes much more sense as they are talking about beliefs and judgments. As for the third alternative, it does not even add something to what true belief already contains. A true belief about an object already differs that object from others, and trying to tell the difference more does not add up to knowledge. Thus, I think that Plato puts ψευδῆς δόξα opposing to the δόξα ὀρθῆ whereas there is not really an opposite of δόξαν ἀληθῆ. The connection between δόξα and ἀληθῆ is contaminated by the domination of logos, which also makes us blind to see the link between ψευδῆς and ἀλήθεια. For this reason, Heidegger felt the need to clarify the nature of δόξα to understand the essence of untruth as clear as possible.

Although I mostly referred to the 1933/34 lectures, there are some detailed descriptions about the essence of untruth in the 1932/33 lectures that I will mention too. In both lectures, Heidegger wants to show the double nature of δόξα, which he

calls as forking or bifurcation. For him the condition of the possibility of untruth lies in this bifurcation that he explains via a diagram:

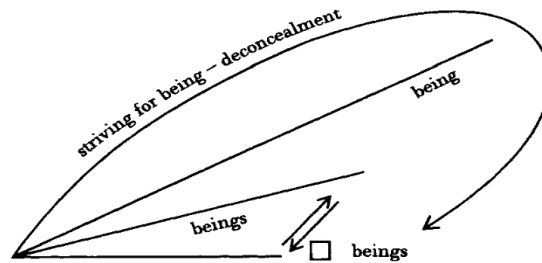


Figure 1. Heidegger's drawing in the 1931/32 lectures⁸⁰

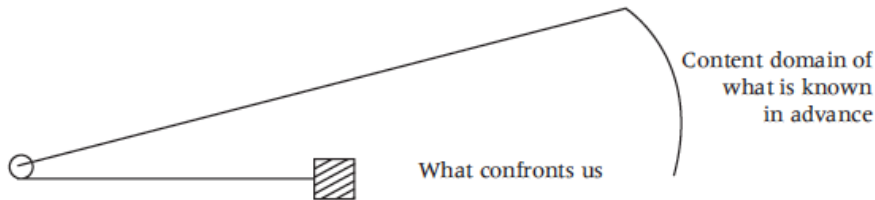


Figure 2. Heidegger's drawing in the 1933/34 lectures⁸¹

Figure 1 is used in the 1932/33 lectures, and the latter one in 1933/34. The same example of taking Theaetetus for Socrates as a false belief is used in both lectures to explain the structure of $\delta\acute{o}\xi\alpha$ with the help of these diagrams. Heidegger explains it as follows:

When I exchange an object, I give away one object in return for the other; but when I confuse them, this means that I hold onto the object and grasp the other together with it. Both are held together in this distinctive grasp.⁸²

⁸⁰ Martin Heidegger, *The Essence of Truth: On Plato's Cave Allegory and Theaetetus*, trans. Ted Sadler (London: Continuum, 2004), 228, fig.2.

⁸¹ Martin Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, trans. Gregory Fried and Richard Polt (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2010), 199, fig.2.

⁸² Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, 200.

Thus, the bifurcation is not a substitution but grasping the object with its domain. This experience results in either grasping who is present in front of me or mistaking him. For the latter case, Heidegger defines $\psi\epsilon\tilde{\nu}\delta\omicron\varsigma$ to be “...mistaking that looks past.”⁸³ Looking like Socrates means mistaking, looking away or disregarding.⁸⁴ Although the knowledge of Theaetetus and Socrates is in ‘the domain of what is known in advance’, the present experience could be deceitful, and Theaetetus could escape one’s notice. Thus, the experience of making-present contains the possibility of untruth. The domain of making present encompasses both the object in front of me and pieces of knowledge about it that I acquired beforehand. For instance, I know how Theaetetus looks like, however, mistaking him raises the problem of familiarity and unfamiliarity with Theaetetus. The doxastic experience allows for that false belief because there is a muddled experience of two people who are looking similar. For this reason, Heidegger thinks that the falsehood is in the fundamental constitution of human Dasein which constantly lives in the making-present.⁸⁵ In this way, Heidegger argues that false belief is possible on the grounds of this bifurcation of $\delta\acute{o}\xi\alpha$. Regarding the discussion about $\delta\acute{o}\xi\alpha$, I think Heidegger seems to be justifiable in his claims. Dasein is struggling with truth and untruth in this way in everydayness. More importantly, I also think that comporting oneself towards a being is possible with a particular perspective. Having a perspective itself conceals whatever outside the focus of that perspective, for which the essence of untruth is the condition of unseen possibility of possibilities. I will come back to that

⁸³ Heidegger, *The Essence of Truth*, 225.

⁸⁴ Heidegger, *The Essence of Truth*, 225.

⁸⁵ Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, 200.

in the next chapter, however, I want to emphasize that the essence of untruth also has a share in the primordial meaning of truth, namely truth as unconcealment.

In the final analysis, I don't think that Plato answers the question of what knowledge is in the *Theaetetus*, and makes his choice explicit in the *Sophist*. He only shows how sophists and their views are wrong. Plato argues that they only deal with images and the non-beings, and so untruth propositions. The correct gaze is needed for living in truth as well. Only philosophers acquire this gaze by the experience of ἀλήθεια and of seeing the form of the good. Thus, I strongly defend the idea that correct judgment with an account is not knowledge for Plato. It is still judgment that is possible in the doxastic realm, however, incomplete it may be to qualify as knowledge or truth itself.

Correct judgments are given on subjective grounds and adding a justification does not change anything about their subjective grounds. A justified statement never ultimately evolves into universally valid knowledge. At the end of the dialogue, there is no definite answer to the question of what knowledge is. There are various perspectives among which the sophistic one seems to be the most problematic for Plato. Going back to our original question of the incompleteness of truth as correctness, I think that the problem emerges from how unreliable a human being is as a measure of truth. Plato does not believe that humans as a measure can capture the whole reality. Not only does the arbitrariness of subjective experience make it impossible to argue that a system is complete as it is composed of a set of totally correct propositions, but also the very conditions of perceptual experience makes it impossible. Since making a judgment about a certain phenomenon leaves out the residual part that we do not reach or experience at the present, there is always a margin of error that we should consider. The underlying concept of truth as un-

concealment gives us the perspective needed. It grounds the authentic experience of Dasein within the world which conceals the beings primarily. Dasein has to disclose them and see what they are as they are.

In the 1932/33 lectures, Heidegger makes it explicit that he is actually critical of Aristotle. The failure to realize the ontological foundation of the essence of untruth and of truth belongs to Aristotle. Heidegger's false accusation is as follows:

Thus Plato grasps the essence of the ψεῦδος as the un-correctness of λόγος, of the proposition. In this way the λόγος becomes the seat and locus of the ψεῦδος... But untruth is the opposite of truth; accordingly, truth also must have its seat in the λόγος.⁸⁶

Before this remark, he quotes Aristotle to assert that truth is the correctness of a proposition.⁸⁷ In his analysis, Heidegger says that the essence of untruth belongs to the essence of truth, for which the concept of truth is obscured. However, the discussion about the existence of false belief showed us that Plato thinks that it is a non-being. Although Heidegger is right that Plato searches for truth in terms of λόγος, Plato realizes that he cannot find it in that way at the end of the *Theaetetus*. If he opposes untruth to truth and takes them as two separate concepts, then he should accept that untruth has some kind of being. Instead, he concedes that correctness and incorrectness are an essential part of propositions, λόγος, and our everyday life in the cave. However, the concept of truth as unhiddenness of beings remains to be the genuine meaning of the concept and it is the necessary step to gain the correctness of gaze.

Plato realizes the domination of λόγος to be decisive for the propositions and not capturing the whole truth, for which he does not give a precise answer. He expresses these ideas in the *Seventh Letter* quite clearly. For Plato, the knowledge of

⁸⁶ Heidegger, *The Essence of Truth*, 226.

⁸⁷ Heidegger, *The Essence of Truth*, 226.

an object is acquired if it has: 1) a name, 2) a definition, 3) an image.⁸⁸ Then, the fourth is ἐπιστήμη. However, one must attain the fifth, namely the being of the object to get the truth.⁸⁹ Plato adds that reason (νοῦς) is the nearest to the fifth whereas the others are not. He gives the example of a circle of which one can talk about the properties such as shape, size and color. Although we can explain the properties of a circle via language, it is not possible to fully understand its being. Yet, a clear expression of properties is not even possible due to the weakness of λόγος. That's why Plato thinks that the most substantial ideas are not expressed in words. The human soul searches for the essence of beings that are not easily refutable like the properties of objects.⁹⁰ Plato adds that people are not accustomed to searching for the truth, and they usually accept the first image suggested to them.⁹¹ However, these images are refutable because they are based on sense perception. These four things we can know about the object are not enough, and the human soul wants to know more. Thus, Plato states the outcome of the *Theaetetus* in an indirect way here:

...when it is the 'fifth' about which we are compelled to answer questions or to make explanations, then anyone who wishes to refute has the advantage...those who are listening sometimes do not realize that it is not the mind of the speaker or writer which is being refuted, but these four instruments mentioned, each of which is by nature defective.⁹²

Those people who have the upper hand in refuting the fifth kind of knowledge are actually the sophists. In the *Theaetetus*, Theaetetus and Socrates are trying to refute the idea that there is a false belief since humans are the measure of

⁸⁸ Plato, *Letter VII*, 342a5-b3.

⁸⁹ Plato, *Letter VII*, 342a5-b3.

⁹⁰ Plato, *Letter VII*, 343c1-5.

⁹¹ Plato, *Letter VII*, 343c6-d2.

⁹² Plato, *Letter VII*, 343d2-9.

truth, however, the discussion shows that what sophists actually refute is the four instruments that they use to manipulate people. Thus, Plato argues against the sophists who rely on truth as correctness and subjectivity while ironically trying to attain the fifth through discourse and examples. To conclude, I think that Plato's thoughts regarding the incompleteness of truth as correctness is evident in the texts.

Plato prioritizes the truth of being- or the unconcealment of being- as the highest form of knowledge without which we cannot fully understand an object while leaving the discussion about the existence of false belief up in the air. It is not that Plato makes a choice, but lays out the problem and shows a direction to go for Dasein which has to learn how to live in truth and untruth at the same time. The concealed realm is the place of deception and untrue propositions whereas Dasein has to unconceal the beings and achieve to live in truth by correcting its gaze. As Heidegger says: "the true is something for us to achieve, the decision about our mission."⁹³ The essence of truth still resides in the ontic-ontological experience that we have through the happening of the history of Dasein. Both Plato and Heidegger realize that the primordial meaning of truth is not truth as correctness, it is truth as unconcealment.

Heidegger's lectures show that he confuses Aristotle's assertions with Plato's. My close reading of the *Theaetetus* demonstrates that Plato is highly critical of the incompleteness of the concept of truth as correctness. He tries to establish the ontological background of the matter just like Heidegger. Both thinkers reject the arbitrariness of truth and try to give a fundamental explanation. Nevertheless, Heidegger concedes that "Truth is always truth for us."⁹⁴ I think what he means is

⁹³ Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, 201.

⁹⁴ Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, 200.

that truth is universally subjective because it depends on the human Dasein. In this way, he distinguishes himself from Plato who thinks that truth is something there to attain for humans not the other way around.⁹⁵ I think that Plato pictures the experience of ἀλήθεια as universally subjective since humans should experience the ascent and descent by themselves with or without the help of the philosophers, however, the truth is the same.

To conclude, I argue that both Plato and Heidegger were concerned about the danger in living in the untruth that is dominating the inside of the cave. Unlike Heidegger, I think that Plato was aware of the thin line between living in the truth and untruth, for which he tried to maintain the balance. The experience of ἀλήθεια was first lost with Aristotle's definition of truth as the correctness of propositions. Then the question is: If Plato and Heidegger think alike on this matter, what could be the consequence of understanding the truth as correctness that both of them could strongly oppose? What is the outcome of losing the experience of ἀλήθεια that is not acceptable? After Aristotle's destruction of truth, how should we de-construct the evolution of truth? It is important to find out the answers to these questions to make sense of Heidegger's understanding of Plato's conception of truth. Although he seems to do justice to Plato in some parts in the lectures, he does not do that in the 1940 essay and later on in his career. I will further discuss the consequences of the incompleteness of truth as correctness and living in untruth altogether while tracing the Platonic roots of Heidegger's conception of truth.

⁹⁵ Stanley Rosen, "Heidegger's Interpretation of Plato," in *The Quarrel between Philosophy and Poetry* (New York and London: Routledge, 1988), 137.

CHAPTER 4

FROM *ON THE ESSENCE OF TRUTH* (1930) TO *THE END OF PHILOSOPHY* *AND THE TASK OF THINKING* (1964): FRAGMENTATION OF TRUTH

It is no doubt Heidegger engages with Plato's work so deeply that his own philosophy carries the remnants of Platonic thinking even if he is unaware of it. His lectures on Plato's conception of truth in the 1930s converges with his own inquiry into the essence of truth, for which a genuine connection occurs between their perspectives. It is evident in the essay called *On the Essence of Truth* that Heidegger's thoughts regarding truth are nourished by his interpretive work on Plato. In this chapter, I argue that there is a unique, but also silent, dialogue between them led by Heidegger in that essay. It affirms that Heidegger criticizes Aristotelian tradition attached to Plato when he accuses Plato himself of the transformation of the concept of truth. Similar to Plato, Heidegger struggles to bring the primordial meaning of truth back to philosophical thinking. However, he becomes more distant in the later stages of his career and changes his way of thinking about Plato radically. His philosophical maturation leads to a place where he surrenders to what he criticized the most earlier.

In *On the Essence of Truth*, Heidegger starts with discussing the traditional conception of truth (truth as correctness) and gradually explains the ground on which the possibility of correctness becomes available to us. Within the traditional conception, the agreement between the knowledge and its object could be understood in two ways: 1) Propositional truth 2) Material truth. The first meaning refers to the agreement of propositions whereas the latter refers to the correspondence of matter to knowledge. Both are under the category of truth as correctness (*Richtigkeit*),

however, the agreement itself is problematic. The relation between the proposition and its object has no criteria that enable a discussion on the possibility and the degree of the correspondence.⁹⁶ Insofar as it is not grounded in its essence, Heidegger thinks that the correspondence itself becomes intangible. For this reason, truth as correctness is not the essential abode of truth. Not only does Heidegger find the traditional conception of truth unsatisfactory but also realizes the distortion it creates. Thus, I think that he shares the same concerns with Plato as they both complain about the lack of a pre-given standard for truth as correctness.

For Heidegger, there is something more essential than correctness that makes it possible, namely the openness of comportment. It provides the standard for the correspondence of knowledge to matter. More importantly, the openness of comportment is grounded in freedom. He identifies freedom as the essence of truth in the sense of correctness. Freedom enables beings to manifest themselves in open human comportment. Heidegger thinks of this freedom as “letting beings be.”⁹⁷ Therefore, the open human comportment lets beings be and allow oneself to engage with them. His description of this kind of freedom evokes the freed person from the chains in Plato’s cave allegory. There is a connection between the gradual awakening to truth and being free in Plato too. In each stage of the allegory, the person acquires the comportment that allows him to have ‘a correct gaze’ so that he can see beings as they are. Further, the beings manifest themselves as they are outside of the cave, which corresponds to the open region that Heidegger talks about. Thus, the essence of truth as correctness is freedom for both thinkers.

⁹⁶ Heidegger, *Pathmarks*, 141.

⁹⁷ Heidegger, *Pathmarks*, 144.

Freedom should not be understood as the arbitrary will of individuals in this context. Heidegger warns the reader about it and adds that freedom is not the property of human. Rather, freedom possesses human being.⁹⁸ He is not sympathetic to the sophisticated idea of relativism that Plato criticizes on all occasions. He presents freedom as the pre-given standard for the experience of truth. Human Dasein as a historical being experiences that freedom by already being in the world. In other words, freedom as the essence of truth as correctness is both cause and effect: It lets beings be and exposes us to beings themselves and at the same time, the disclosedness of beings sets us free. Freedom grounds truth as correctness, however, it does not give the essence that Heidegger looks for. An essence implies a complete foundation that makes what is known possible. As I discussed in the previous chapter, it is not in the nature of truth as correctness to be complete. Both thinkers realize that truth has a primordial meaning that allows for a unitary experience of life. For this reason, there is a deeper essence of freedom that makes the experience of truth undivided.

The experience of truth as unconcealment is the essence of freedom that grounds the possibility of truth as correctness. In Heidegger's own words: "the essence of freedom manifests itself as exposure to the disclosedness of beings."⁹⁹ The beings are disclosed in an open region where openness of human comportment reveals them as themselves. Thus, he concedes that truth as unconcealment is prior to truth as correctness. Further, unconcealing beings means clearing beings and Being, as he says "the name of this clearing (Lichtung) is aletheia."¹⁰⁰ It signifies the locus

⁹⁸ Heidegger, *Pathmarks*, 145.

⁹⁹ Heidegger, *Pathmarks*, 145.

¹⁰⁰ Heidegger, *Pathmarks*, 154.

of truth that shelters the open region “as the fundamental trait of Being.”¹⁰¹ It is evident that Heidegger is heavily influenced by Plato’s conception of truth as unconcealment. He preserves the experience of ἀλήθεια as the essential part of human Dasein and its authentic life. The experience of clearing is exactly what the freed person outside the cave experiences. The disclosure of beings makes the correct way of looking at them possible in that open region.

The experience of ἀλήθεια is the essential meaning of truth for both thinkers. They care about the way in which humans grasp the wholeness of Being. In *Platonic Love: Dasein’s Urge Toward Being*, Rojcewicz discusses how Heidegger and Plato have similar views about our relation to Being and other beings.¹⁰² Throughout the essay, Rojcewicz argues that Heidegger is a Platonist in an unusual sense.¹⁰³ In the *Symposium* and the *Phaedrus*, Plato discusses the subject of love. By synthesizing these dialogues, Rojcewicz describes the steps of Platonic love as “first encountering some being and then attending to this being and uncovering Being.”¹⁰⁴ The last step of uncovering the Being is what Plato calls recollecting. Humans recollect the ideas as they uncover them. These steps are necessary to arrive at Being, and experiencing the truth. For Rojcewicz, Heidegger presents a demythologized version of recollection in his philosophy with the analogy of a farmer.¹⁰⁵ It is not primarily the production of Being, but a releasement of its essence just as it is for planting seeds. In this respect, Heidegger gets closer to Plato as he undermines the creative role of

¹⁰¹ Heidegger, *Pathmarks*, 153.

¹⁰² Rojcewicz, “Platonic Love,” 103-120.

¹⁰³ Rojcewicz, “Platonic Love,” 118.

¹⁰⁴ Rojcewicz, “Platonic Love,” 108.

¹⁰⁵ Rojcewicz, “Platonic Love,” 119-120.

human beings. Otherwise, the essential role of the human being to uncover beings leads to the problem of subjectivism again. The grasp of the essence means “bringing forth” in Heidegger’s philosophy.¹⁰⁶ Therefore, the experience of truth is decisive for reaching the Being. It is evident that Heidegger understands truth as unconcealment to be the essence of truth, however, he does not realize that Plato also thinks in the same way.

Since both Heidegger and Plato prioritize truth as unconcealment, which is the origin of the concept, it is curious where they place untruth. I argue that they think of untruth in the same way, and it leads me to conclude that they are on the same side regarding the concept of truth as a whole. My reading suggests that they are unsatisfied with the concept of truth as correctness because it causes fragmentation of truth. They both express their concerns about the incompleteness of truth and secretly point out the problem that propositional truths about beings are un-unified and scattered. Heidegger’s discussion about the concept of untruth demonstrates that they connect with each other as they are looking for more than fragmentary knowledge of beings.

If the correctness of propositions is not the locus of truth, then the incorrectness of propositions cannot be the proper place of untruth.¹⁰⁷ For this reason, Heidegger answers that untruth as concealing is where we should look at. As opposed to unconcealment, concealment is the un-disclosedness of beings. The concealment is a derived concept from the truth as unconcealment, therefore, it is a privative concept. However, untruth is a closer phenomenon to humans than truth as

¹⁰⁶ Rojcewicz, *Platonic Love*, 120.

¹⁰⁷ Heidegger, *Pathmarks*, 146-147.

beings are primarily concealed as a whole.¹⁰⁸ Even if Heidegger does not see how much he thinks alike with Plato, it is evident that Plato turns the discussion about falsehood and untruth into a discussion about being and non-being, which I discussed in the previous chapter. Thus, I argue that they both examine the question of truth ontologically more than epistemologically. As Heidegger clearly says: “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.”¹⁰⁹ As humans, we are not aware of the concealment of beings because we have fragmented knowledge of beings. In the everyday life, humans understand truth as correctness and do not suspect that there is anything concealed. Accordingly, there remains nothing to be unconcealed. However, both Plato and Heidegger look for the meaningfulness of the concept of truth, which can be attained in unity. The unity of “beings as a whole” seems unmeasurable in terms of propositional truth.¹¹⁰ The fragments do not refer to the essence of beings, but only to the properties. Even the knowledge of properties is unreliable for both Plato and Heidegger because the measurement of truth is subjective and alterable. Thus, concealment of beings as a whole is a prior situation in which the understanding of the unity of concealment opens the possibility to unconceal the beings.

For Heidegger, the experience of ἀλήθεια or the clearing is at the same time a concealing.¹¹¹ In other words, “the clearing hides itself.”¹¹² From this claim, I

¹⁰⁸ Heidegger, *Pathmarks*, 147.

¹⁰⁹ Heidegger, *Pathmarks*, 147.

¹¹⁰ Heidegger, *Pathmarks*, 147.

¹¹¹ Heidegger, *Pathmarks*, 148.

¹¹² Thomas Sheehan, *Making Sense of Heidegger: A Paradigm Shift* (London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015), 225.

understand that it is not clear what clearance is. It refers to the openness of the region and the indeterminate situation that prepares Dasein to unconceal beings. Sheehan explains that the clearance remains hidden while disclosing beings.¹¹³ As far as I can express in my own words, the unconcealment itself is hidden in the concealing of what is concealed as a whole. Sheehan further asserts that “the clearing’s intrinsic hiddenness virtually guarantees that it will be overlooked and forgotten.”¹¹⁴ Living in untruth makes us unable to understand the cause of the thrownness of Dasein.¹¹⁵ Heidegger says that it is not a particular mystery about a certain thing but one mystery in the historicity of human Dasein.¹¹⁶ This mystery of Dasein is forgotten as humans are forgetful about the beings as a whole. In this way, humans take themselves as the standard for all beings, which is a big mistake according to Plato and Heidegger. Understanding humans as the measure of truth are deluding. Moreover, the negligence of the essence of the standards misguides human beings. The forgetfulness is filled by what is present, readily available and accessible just as the images on the wall in the cave. Again, the forgetfulness of the unity of beings leaves us with fragments that are present-at-hand.

From untruth as concealment Heidegger draws the discussion towards untruth as errancy. It covers falsehood and deception caused by the concealment of beings. He says that: “The insistent turning toward what is readily available and the ek-sistent turning away from the mystery belong together.”¹¹⁷ The ek-sistent turning away refers to the condition in which human Dasein is not itself. Thus, untruth as

¹¹³ Sheehan, *Making Sense of Heidegger*, 225.

¹¹⁴ Sheehan, *Making Sense of Heidegger*, 251.

¹¹⁵ Sheehan, *Making Sense of Heidegger*, 226.

¹¹⁶ Heidegger, *Pathmarks*, 148.

¹¹⁷ Heidegger, *Pathmarks*, 150.

errancy means escaping into what is present while reducing oneself to the current situation. Again, it means overlooking the mystery. The reduction of oneself into the everydayness of life also fragments Dasein. The fragmented knowledge of beings also refers to the common sense which focuses on the inner worldly beings. For Heidegger, common sense indicates the sophisticated position that Plato is not fond of.¹¹⁸ Heidegger argues that the common-sense philosophy is not compatible with philosophy as a questioning.¹¹⁹ Thus, he unwittingly demonstrates the Platonic ways of his philosophy to the reader. The questioning itself requires the unconcealment of beings, with which common sense is questioned in every respect. However, humans are stuck with the question of beings so much that they are unable to think about the question of Being and its meaning.

It is strange how Heidegger intentionally does not develop the question of the truth of Being even though his philosophy is centered around this question. He does not give a precise answer to the meaning of the question of Being in *Being and Time* and then, he explicitly says that he does not confront this question deliberately. The intuitive question is why? Why Heidegger does not elaborate on the most important question he deals with throughout his career? I can only think of one good reason: the limitation of language. Similar to Plato, I think that Heidegger realizes the trick intrinsic to language. Expressing thoughts in words leaves one's thoughts fragile as they are unchangeable and determinate. However, the openness of the region is indeterminate, and humans experience truth as unconcealment historically. Thus, the knowledge of the essence of beings never fully disclosed and expressed in language. It is unfortunate how Heidegger does not give credit to Plato as a background of his

¹¹⁸ Heidegger, *Pathmarks*, 152.

¹¹⁹ Heidegger, *Pathmarks*, 152.

thoughts regarding these questions, however, there is a genuine connection that I draw over their shared concerns.

After all, Heidegger's engagement with Plato's work in the 1930s is very peculiar. As my analysis of *On the Essence of Truth* demonstrates, Heidegger's philosophy largely benefits from Plato's ways of thinking. Later on, Heidegger changes his perspective regarding the concept ἀλήθεια and goes back to his initial project in *Being and Time*. Although I see a subtle continuity between these periods, it is generally agreed that Heidegger makes a turn in the 1930s and completely transforms his thinking in the later stages of his career. In this part of the chapter, I will examine *The End of Philosophy and The Task of Thinking* and present the evolution in Heidegger's thoughts regarding the concept of truth.¹²⁰ Firstly, I will discuss the project that Heidegger pursued in *Being and Time* and how he reshaped this project in *The End of Philosophy*. Then, I will dive into the essay and demonstrate how Heidegger defers to the fragmentation of truth.

In *Being and Time*, Heidegger's project is threefold: questioning being, time and truth. Although the question of truth is discussed in between the lines, Heidegger presents the primordial meaning and the traditional conception of truth extensively in section 44 section. Heidegger does not deny the traditional conception of truth but he argues that it is a hollow concept. He reminds the reader of the incompleteness of truth as correctness in various discussions, especially those on sciences and their methods. For this reason, I argue that Heidegger's critical stance towards the incompleteness of truth is intrinsically connected to his thoughts regarding science and its achievements. As I will continue, I will discuss how he returns to the scientific worldview in the End of Philosophy.

¹²⁰ I chose this text because I think that it is the best representation of the transformation in Heidegger's interpretation of Plato's conception of truth.

At the beginning of *Being and Time*, Heidegger has a cautious attitude towards science. He says that: “Science in general can be defined as the totality of fundamentally coherent true propositions. This definition is not complete, nor does it get at the meaning of science.”¹²¹ For Heidegger, science deals with the total sum of the correct propositions about the beings in the world, which is not a satisfactory explanation for what science is. Since he rejects that correctness is the proper place of truth, he argues that this definition of science is deficient. Heidegger continuously brings up the hollowness of propositional truths and how science relies on them. Every science focuses on a particular group of inner worldly beings and tries to find the true facts about those beings. In other words, the development of sciences depends upon the correct way of representing the properties of those beings. Although sciences investigate those inner worldly beings, they cannot reflect upon themselves. For this reason, Heidegger does not think that the totality of the propositional truths about the beings could give the meaning of science.

The meaning of science is a highly disputed subject in Heidegger’s philosophy. In *What is Metaphysics?*, Heidegger investigates the essence of science.¹²² In brief, he argues that the essence of science comes from nothingness. Since science deals with beings and nothing beyond that, it wants to know nothing about nothing. However, there is an inner connection between science and nothingness. Whenever science wants to express its essence, it appeals to nothingness.¹²³ Thus, I argue that the totality of true propositions reflects the nothingness on the other side of the equation. In a way, nothingness holds the beings

¹²¹ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 10.

¹²² Heidegger, *Pathmarks*, 82-96.

¹²³ Heidegger, *Pathmarks*, 84.

together. Further, he claims that the ultimate manifestation of nothingness belongs to Dasein. It enables Dasein to unveil beings based on freedom among the endless possibilities, which is deeply connected to the primordial conception of truth. Therefore, the meaning of science comes from the experience of disclosing the beings as a whole. In other words, the meaning of science comes from philosophy. Heidegger does not say that explicitly, however, the discussions about science strongly implies that sciences do not care about the primordial meaning of truth. It is the primary concern for a philosophical investigation.

In the 1933/34 lectures, Heidegger expresses his discontent with the way sciences are conducted openly. Although sciences answer various questions about beings, still there is an unanswered question of what a human being is.¹²⁴ He continues as follows:

Today we are used to getting the answer to this fundamental question from sciences such as biology, psychology, anthropology, sociology... These sciences... provide diverse information about man and yet no answer, because none of them asks about man anymore, because they are already grounded on a quite definite answer, namely: man is something that is given among other things, something that consists of body, soul, spirit, personality . . . All of this is correct, and yet, in the deepest sense, untrue.¹²⁵

According to this passage, Heidegger does not think that sciences could give the 'true' answer for what a human being is. Since these sciences provide fragmentary truths about the human being, this question primarily belongs to philosophy. Thus, in these early writing, I conclude that Heidegger finds the dominance of sciences to be on shaky ground. The incompleteness truth as correctness is the fundamental problem of sciences in the back of Heidegger's mind.

¹²⁴ Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, 166.

¹²⁵ Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, 166.

To summarize, Heidegger finds it problematic to treat the human being like an ordinary object among other beings around us.

Heidegger's critique of science and its methods continue to be a problem around the question of truth. In *Heidegger's Critique of Science*, Richardson explains what Heidegger understands from the scientific method and why he is critical about it.¹²⁶ For Heidegger, the modern sciences require "a rigorous operation and a controlled experimentation."¹²⁷ The nature of these kinds of research requires scientists to be specialized in a particular area since the field of research is growing continuously. As every scientist becomes an expert on a small portion of an entire field of research, they must collaborate and benefit from each other's research. Within this framework, a scientist is a subject whereas the beings in the research field are objects.¹²⁸ Then, the scientists measure the beings to use them in their experimentation according to their preferences. Thus, the sciences examine beings only as objects just as in the case of the human being.

Heidegger opposes this kind of scientific method since it is not as rigorous as it requires it to be because of the subject-object polarity. Similar to Heidegger's concern, Plato is also distant from the idea that humans are a measure of truth. The scientific worldview only collects the correct propositions regarding the objects and nothing more. It resembles Plato's example of the aviary of birds that I presented in the previous chapter. It is the domain of knowledge where humans grasp the properties of beings after certain examination and do not wonder what could be beyond that. Both for Heidegger and Plato, the reality is not only composed of

¹²⁶ William J. Richardson, S.J., "Heidegger's Critique of Science" in *Heidegger on Science*, ed. Trish Glazebook (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2012), 27-44.

¹²⁷ Richardson, "Heidegger's Critique of Science," 31.

¹²⁸ Richardson, "Heidegger's Critique of Science," 32.

subjects and objects. If reality is divided into subjects and object, then humans live deeply in untruth. It means that they lost the experience of truth, that is “the wondrous depth, the beauty, the deep-down (nonobjectifiable) freshness of things...”¹²⁹ For Plato, it is wondering “where philosophy begins and nowhere else.”¹³⁰ Therefore, Heidegger’s critique of sciences originates from the forgetfulness of the experience of truth and of the Being of beings. However, it is doubtful whether remembering the experience of truth as unconcealment could be of any help for scientists.¹³¹ Simply, it is not the kind of truth sciences are meant to be concerned with. Sciences are searching for the ontic truths that are about particular inner worldly beings. The philosopher should overtake the task of thinking in between concealment and unconcealment. For this reason, he struggles to build an ontology in his early writings believing that the experience of ἀλήθεια has to be in the center of his thinking.

Heidegger transforms his way of thinking about the concept of truth along with his perspective towards sciences. In *the End of Philosophy*, he concedes that the triumph of sciences means the dissolution of philosophy.¹³² He wants to rephrase the question that he started within *Being and Time*. There are two reasons why he makes this turn. Firstly, he wants to overcome metaphysics unlike what he aimed for at the beginning. Heidegger no longer holds the view that metaphysics could prevail as a ‘fundamental ontology’ in the age of sciences. Secondly, he is hopeless about the return of the experience of ἀλήθεια. His translation of ἀλήθεια as *Lichtung* in *On the*

¹²⁹ Richardson, “Heidegger’s Critique of Science,” 35.

¹³⁰ Plato, *Theaetetus*, 155d3-4.

¹³¹ Richardson, “Heidegger’s Critique of Science,” 42.

¹³² Martin Heidegger, “The End of Philosophy and The Task of Thinking” in *Basic Writings*, ed. David F. Krell, (New York: HarperCollins, 2008), 433.

Essence of Truth re-emerges, and Heidegger recedes from translating ἀλήθεια as truth, which makes a big difference in his approach towards Plato.

In *the End of Philosophy*, Heidegger begins with the question of what philosophy is. He says that: “Philosophy is metaphysics. Metaphysics thinks beings as a whole...with respect to Being, with respect to the belonging together of beings in Being.”¹³³ Further, he plainly says that “metaphysics is Platonism.”¹³⁴ There is confusion about what Plato himself thinks and what exactly Platonic tradition represents. Heidegger understands metaphysics as the sheltering of the multitude of beings that aims to manifest the truths of beings. He supposes that this idea belongs to Plato as the so-called Platonic ideas thought to be the ‘truths’ of beings. With these presuppositions, I think that Heidegger blends Aristotelianism and Platonism to which he reduces Plato. The metaphysical tradition that Heidegger wants to overcome initiated by Aristotle. The Aristotelian tradition defines metaphysics as a science of being in general, which is a kind of universal sciences binding the independent sciences together. Therefore, the metaphysical thinking that dissolved into sciences represents this tradition, not Plato. Heidegger is not very clear about the differences between the philosophers and the traditions that evolved out of them, however, Plato is not part of this downfall.

Although Heidegger had the intention to rectify the metaphysical thinking earlier, he becomes distant from this idea seeing the domination of sciences in the present age. Since the sciences share the ontologies of beings, philosophy deals with the Being of beings. However, the development of sciences and technology passes philosophy and transforms the methods of philosophical thinking. The modern

¹³³ Heidegger, “The End of Philosophy and The Task of Thinking,” 432.

¹³⁴ Heidegger, “The End of Philosophy and The Task of Thinking,” 433.

sciences reject the ontological enterprise and impose empirical research methods on philosophy. Even though Heidegger makes detracting comments on the representational-calculative thinking¹³⁵ enforced by sciences, he does not fight it properly. Rather, he acknowledges the idea that philosophy fragmented into independent sciences. To put it another way, Heidegger focuses on the concept of truth as correctness.

This later Heidegger realizes the tension between philosophy and sciences as a crisis of the task of thinking. This new task of thinking cannot be metaphysics or science. For Heidegger, it is the end of philosophy in the sense that metaphysics reached a point where “the whole of philosophy’s history is gathered in its uttermost possibility.”¹³⁶ The culmination of philosophical thinking shows itself as the gathering of the historicity of philosophy. In a way, the unconcealment of Being in the historicity of Dasein represents the achievement of seeing the possibility of endless possibilities within this open region. The priority of the experience of truth as unconcealment is apparent, however, Heidegger finds himself in a helpless situation. He says that “there is no way going back to the experience of aletheia.”¹³⁷ Thus, Heidegger tries to find a middle ground between metaphysics and sciences, which undermines his interpretation of Plato’s conception of truth. Problematizing the rise of sciences means problematizing the sole understanding of truth as correctness. As Heidegger completely changes his perspective on the transformation of truth, he goes down a different path with Plato.

¹³⁵ Heidegger, “The End of Philosophy and The Task of Thinking,” 435.

¹³⁶ Heidegger, “The End of Philosophy and The Task of Thinking,” 433.

¹³⁷ Heidegger, “The End of Philosophy and The Task of Thinking,” 434.

Heidegger translates ἀλήθεια as clearing (Lichtung) in *On the Essence of Truth* and after that, he amplifies his translation of ἀλήθεια in *the End of Philosophy* far enough that the previous meaning of the word gets lost. Originally, the word Lichtung means glade, forest opening. Heidegger explains the etymology of Lichtung as the following: “The substantive *Lichtung* goes back to the verb *lichten*. The adjective *licht* is the same word as “light.””¹³⁸ Giving reference to the origin of the word, Heidegger explains Lichtung as the lightening of the trees. Thus, the clearing, somewhere in the forest, makes trees free, open.¹³⁹ Although the clearing is close to the meaning of ἀλήθεια as unconcealment, it is quite different from the context in which Heidegger discusses Plato’s conception of truth. Heidegger adds that light and clearing are not the same. In his words: “...light never first creates the clearing. Rather, light presupposes it.”¹⁴⁰ Thus, light anticipates the clearing which Heidegger thinks of as an “open region for everything that becomes present and absent.”¹⁴¹ He states that there is no light without this open region.¹⁴² If we remember the first chapter, I argued that truth as unconcealment is analogue to the light outside of the cave, not the ‘ideas’. Here, Heidegger continues to think of this open region of beings or ideas as unconcealment. Although I concede that light presupposes the clearing or the open region of beings, still light means unconcealment. In the clearing, the beings are waiting to be discovered, in other words, to be unconcealed. However, ‘the discovering’ is prior to free the beings in

¹³⁸ Heidegger, “The End of Philosophy and The Task of Thinking,” 441.

¹³⁹ Heidegger, “The End of Philosophy and The Task of Thinking,” 441.

¹⁴⁰ Heidegger, “The End of Philosophy and The Task of Thinking,” 442.

¹⁴¹ Heidegger, “The End of Philosophy and The Task of Thinking,” 442.

¹⁴² Heidegger, “The End of Philosophy and The Task of Thinking,” 444.

the open region. Also, clearing as an act belongs to the light, and what is cleared is actually the open region that he refers to. In brief, I think that the happening of the discovering refers to the unconcealment. Heidegger himself describes the experience of aletheia as the journey of Dasein in the 1930s, however, he mistakenly matches the clearing or the open region with the unconcealment in this text.

For Heidegger, ἀλήθεια still means unconcealment, however, it is the clearing or the open region that makes the presencing possible. He no longer thinks of unconcealment as the experience of ἀλήθεια. Rather, he pictures unconcealment as a “place of stillness.”¹⁴³ More strikingly, he thinks that it was a mistake to translate ἀλήθεια as truth. He defines ἀλήθεια as the clearing of presence, which cannot mean truth. Neither truth of beings nor truth of Being refers to the unconcealment. For him, ἀλήθεια as the clearing only makes truth possible. For truth belongs to the open region of beings.

Heidegger complains that philosophy does not consider ἀλήθεια as clearing, however, I think that his translation leads to erroneous claims regarding the concept of truth. Heidegger argues that: 1) ἀλήθεια is not understood as truth in Greek philosophy. 2) Therefore, there is no truth as unconcealment. 3) By the same token, there is no transformation of truth from unconcealment to correctness. He claims that the natural concept of truth used by Greeks, in general, is correctness. Heidegger declines his early interpretations of Plato regarding the concept of truth and instead makes sloppy claims. Although Plato does not explicitly discuss the experience of ἀλήθεια, he clarifies his position in the *Seventh Letter* as follows:

...this knowledge is not something that can be put into words like other sciences; but after long-continued intercourse between teacher and pupil, in joint pursuit of the subject, suddenly, like light flashing forth when a fire is kindled, it is born in the soul and straightway nourished itself.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴³ Heidegger, “The End of Philosophy and The Task of Thinking,” 445.

¹⁴⁴ Plato, *Letter VII*, 341c7-d1.

Plato thinks of the experience of unconcealment as a dialectical method of thinking and discovering. For this reason, he does not write very clearly about the experience itself, however, his writing style already shows the happening of the unconcealment. Plato makes presencing possible in the open region of discussions through unconcealing the subject matters. Heidegger loses sight of how Plato stays solid on a thin line which does not allow for any pitfall. Once again, Plato is aware of the double meaning of truth and so ἀλήθεια. I argue that Plato does not transform truth from unconcealment to correctness, but states the existence of both concepts in human's life. The learning process through life realizes in this way. Indeed, it is a very substantial interpretation of Plato, which is inspired by Heidegger.

It is curious why Heidegger leaves ἀλήθεια as the experience of truth behind. Only one reason comes up very strongly: the fragmentation of truth at the age of science. The domination of sciences dissolved philosophy into pieces, and for this reason, there is only a multitude of truths. Heidegger asks: if the experience of truth is lost, then what is the task of thinking? This question intrigues him because the experience of ἀλήθεια is lost. There is nothing left solid enough to unify the truths and make the whole experience meaningful. Therefore, Heidegger is in search of something else as a new task of thinking. This new thinking cannot be metaphysics or science. Heidegger says that this new task of thinking is not foundational but prepares human for the advancement of sciences and technologies.¹⁴⁵ He shapes his thoughts around the reality of the happening human history, however, he does not realize that his thinking comes back to Plato.

¹⁴⁵ Heidegger, "The End of Philosophy and The Task of Thinking," 436.

Heidegger describes the new task of thinking as the examination of the concept of ἀλήθεια. What is ἀλήθεια if not the truth? Can we even ask this question? For Heidegger, these matters must be considered carefully. Although Heidegger pushes Plato far away, he proves to be a residual Platonist exactly because of the description of the new task of thinking that is going back to the primary question: the possibility of the possibilities. Heidegger's struggle with the concept of truth is very similar to Plato's. However, Heidegger chooses to relinquish the experience of truth for the sake of fitting into the scientific age whereas Plato constructs his philosophy around the experience of truth not forgetting the needs of human life. In the *End of Philosophy*, the last sentence of Heidegger is the most significant sign of his new way of thinking: "The task of thinking would then be the surrender of previous thinking to the determination of the matter for thinking."¹⁴⁶ The new task of thinking is rejecting the experience of truth, however, attempts to find a proper place for ἀλήθεια. From Heidegger's point of view, ἀλήθεια, in the sense of the clearing, serves to the concept of truth as correctness enforced by the rise of sciences. In the final analysis, the determination of beings puts the limit on thinking. However, I argue that it is completely against the essence of truth, that is, freedom. The human being cannot be free within the frame drawn by the methods of science. The calculative thinking of sciences only measures the correctness of propositions regarding beings, however, human is not all about the measurement. Both Plato and Heidegger are against this sophistical position. Plato emphasizes the importance of the educational methods that are needed for humans to experience truth whereas Heidegger highlights the need for the humanization of sciences. Humanization is not in the sense that humans are the measure of truth, however, Heidegger wants to find

¹⁴⁶ Heidegger, "The End of Philosophy and The Task of Thinking," 449.

the meaning of sciences with this new way of thinking. For this reason, Heidegger thinks that he secures the concept of ἀλήθεια in human thinking by problematizing its place. Although he wants to protect the dialectical relationship between unconcealment and concealment, he does not see the true representative of this ultimate wish, namely Plato.

In his dialogues, Plato always recreates this dialectical play of truth in its primordial sense by the wondrous discussions almost about every aspect of human life. The curiousness about beings keeps the discussions alive and the interlocutors of the dialogues unconceal beings whereas they keep concealing themselves. The confrontation of Heidegger's philosophy with Plato's only demonstrates the harm done by the fragmentation of truth. Heidegger's hopelessness causes him to overlook how much he benefits from Plato's thinking. Moreover, Heidegger mistreats Plato's conception of truth and presents this new task of thinking as something not thought by other philosophers before. To conclude, in my opinion, Heidegger catches something very precious with his interpretation of Plato's conception of truth in the 1930s, then loses it to the fragmentation of truth later.

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