

UNIQUENESS AND THE EVENT:
RETHINKING THE HORIZONTAL IN MARTIN HEIDEGGER'S
CONTRIBUTIONS TO PHILOSOPHY (OF THE EVENT)

by

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Abstract

This thesis explores the idea of uniqueness in Martin Heidegger's *Contributions to Philosophy (Of the Event)*. Written between 1936 and 1938, *Contributions* is an in-depth account of what Heidegger calls the event of appropriation [*Ereignis*]. It is written as a critique of the history of philosophy and a call to think this history from out of another beginning, which it attempts to sketch out in terms of what Heidegger calls beyng-historical thinking. This thesis focuses on the uniqueness of the event by focusing on what it means for the unique to emerge historically. This thesis challenges other scholarly research on the text by placing the idea of uniqueness within the context of its own horizon. Previously, the horizontal, as a concept, was inextricably bound to the concept of transcendence that Heidegger abandons as beholden to the metaphysical way of thinking in which he distances himself. This thesis attempts to show that the horizontal is in fact rethought in *Contributions* in terms of the unique. As a result, this thesis challenges the idea that only transcendence can be thought horizontally.

This thesis focuses primarily on the chapter in *Contributions* titled, The Grounding. This thesis is itself divided into three chapters: Da-sein, Selfhood, Imagination; The Essence of Truth and the Simplicity of the Unique; Time-space and the Persistence of Fathoming. Each of these chapters focuses primarily on one or more of the subsections within the chapter of *Contributions* mentioned above. I argue that the uniqueness of the event can be thought of in terms of the separation between the horizon of uniqueness and the uniqueness of the horizon that opens up within uniqueness itself with respect to the grounding of Da-sein, or "there-being," in its self-assignment to the event. It is the persistence of fathoming the simplicity of this uniqueness in the appropriation of the truth of beyng that opens up the time-space of the event for the coming to presence of the historical moment.

Furthermore, I explore the possibility that uniqueness holds for giving a positive account of nothingness, which is an imperative expressed by Heidegger himself within the text.

Preface

This thesis is the original, unpublished, independent work of the author, Matthew Hanasyk.

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List of Abbreviations

- BPP *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*
- BQP *Basic Questions of Philosophy: Selected “Problems” of “Logic”*
- BT *Being and Time*
- BW *Basic Writings*
- CP *Contributions to Philosophy (Of the Event)*
- CPP *Companion to Heidegger’s Contributions to Philosophy*
- DT *Discourse on Thinking*
- K *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*
- PM *Pathmarks*
- PR *The Principle of Reason*

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Introduction

Beiträge zur Philosophie (Vom Ereignis) was first published in German in 1989 as number sixty-five of Martin Heidegger's *Gesamtausgabe*. While this date, thirteen years after Heidegger's death, may suggest the publication of a text that was perhaps long forgotten or sidelined by more important works of Heidegger that took precedent, on the contrary, *Beiträge* had already developed a reputation within philosophical circles, and Heidegger scholarship in particular, as one of his major works, perhaps even his true magnum opus. This reputation is due in large part to certain Heidegger scholars, such as Otto Pöggeler, who championed *Beiträge* as a work as important, if not more important, than the already infamous *Being and Time (Sein und Zeit)*, published in 1927. However, the reason for the delayed publication of *Beiträge* was Heidegger's own reservations toward publishing the text too soon. During his lifetime, Heidegger showed *Beiträge* to only a select group of people. When it came time to consider his legacy, Heidegger insisted that *Beiträge* be published only after the publication of all his lecture courses, a request that was not entirely heeded, but nevertheless, delayed its publication until over a decade after his death. Since then, *Beiträge* has in no way diminished in reputation. In fact, the difficulty of the ideas and the fragmented and fugal style of writing in *Beiträge* have only added to its mystique, while at the same time repelling those who prefer a more structured and penetrable style of writing. However, it is not by accident that *Beiträge* is written in this way. The style reflects Heidegger's own reservations toward what language, which he considered to have evolved according to the demands of metaphysical thinking, could say about what is not metaphysical. The imperative of *Beiträge* is precisely this: to think and say what is not metaphysical from out of the history of metaphysics. Heidegger would continue to return to what he attempted in *Beiträge* for the rest of his life.

Since its German publication in 1989, *Beiträge* has been translated into English twice, both by Indiana University Press. The first translation came in 1999 by Parvis Emad and Kenneth Maly. Emad and Maly translate *Beiträge zur Philosophie (Vom Ereignis)* as *Contributions to Philosophy (From Enowning)*. The second translation came in 2012 by Richard Rojcewicz and Daniela Vallega-Neu. They translate it as *Contributions to Philosophy (Of the Event)*. The decisive difference in these titles comes from the translation of the word, *Ereignis*, which has no English cognate. Emad and Maly go with the neologism, “Enowning,” while Rojcewicz and Vallega-Neu prefer the more mundane, “Event.” While the former captures more of the sense of “being one’s own” conveyed by *Ereignis*, the latter is much more suitable to capturing its “historical” quality (*geschichtliches* as opposed to *historisches*). Furthermore, “event” is often expanded as “event of appropriation,” thus recovering much of the meaning conveyed by Emad and Maly’s “enowning.” As well, the translation of *Ereignis* as “enowning” is likewise accompanied by such strange translations as “en-thinking,” “en-temporalizing,” and “en-seeing,” all of which leave the English reader with the laborious task of having to decipher the meaning of words that would be, as a result, better left untranslated. Thus, I have preferred to use the Rojcewicz and Vallega-Neu translation whenever possible, with reference to the Emad and Maly translation when necessary to clarify difficult passages. I have also preferred the Rojcewicz and Vallega-Neu translation with respect to such translations as “Beyng” for *Seyn*, which is an archaic spelling of “Being” that Heidegger adopts for the purposes of differentiating it from “Being” as it had been used (by Heidegger himself up to that point) in ontology in opposition to beings. Emad and Maly prefer the translation, “Be-ing.” The difference here is not so much a semantic one as it is aesthetic.

Heidegger wrote *Contributions to Philosophy (Of the Event)* between 1936 and 1938. *Contributions* is often considered pivotal to what Heidegger himself calls “the turn” (*die Kehre*) in his philosophy away from the more phenomenological concerns of *Being and Time*, influenced by his mentor Edmund Husserl, toward a concern with language and the limits imposed upon it by metaphysics. Much of *Contributions* is in dialogue with the history of metaphysics, which Heidegger calls “the first beginning” of philosophy, spanning from the Greeks to its conclusion with Nietzsche. This first beginning is characterized by a concern with beings and beings alone, whether in the form of the most divine and singular being (God) or the most varied beings of nature. This concern with beings, which is the sole concern of metaphysics, has guided the history of Western thinking toward an exclusive preoccupation with perception, and consequently, with “the present” in which beings are perceived and from there procure the ontological status of being real. Thus, the history of metaphysics is for Heidegger a history of presence. As a result, language is itself tailored toward the present, which, in turn, leads exclusively to a kind of representational thinking. Representational thinking concerns itself only with what can be represented to a thinking subject, that is, what can be present to the thinking subject, whether in the form of an actually perceived object or simply as the image of thought. According to this way of thinking, what cannot be represented cannot be thought. Heidegger makes his first attempt in *Contributions* to overcome this way of thinking by suggesting that what is now necessary is to think “the other beginning” of philosophy, which means to think what has remained unthought throughout the first beginning of philosophy because it is not a thinking of presence, but rather, a thinking of what comes to presence and therefore is entirely other to the present itself. “The other beginning” is precisely that—other than the first beginning. It is not a new beginning that follows the end of the first; rather, it is that

first beginning in its otherness, that is, in its unrealized opening as what begins. It is this other beginning that the language of metaphysics struggles to say without distorting it into something metaphysical. Unfortunately, this language is the only language we have. Hence, the difficulties in speaking this dormant silence within the words themselves.

The limits of representational thinking motivate Heidegger to use metaphors that are auditory rather than visual. A major preoccupation in *Contributions* is with what it means to belong to the event, which is to belong to the truth of beyng. “To belong” in German is *gehören*, which is derived from the verb *hören*, meaning, “to hear.” Heidegger often uses “belonging” in conjunction with “the call of beyng.” What Heidegger has in mind here is that one is called into belonging to the event rather than sighting it in advance. Furthermore, one hears the call when one listens from the stillness of restraint [*Verhaltenheit*], which according to Heidegger, is the basic disposition of the event. Like in *Being and Time*, disposition, or mood, plays a major role in the eventuation of the event. Thus, it is not merely thinking, especially in the disinterested mode of logic, that is operative in philosophy. Heidegger is not trying to re-evaluate what it means to do philosophy by bringing it closer to feeling; rather, from the very beginning (the first beginning) philosophy has been closely associated with disposition. Heidegger makes a point of emphasizing the basic disposition of the first beginning in which the Greeks first came to stand in the openness of beings; this disposition is wonder. However, wonder can no longer serve those who think at the end of this first beginning, in which another beginning becomes necessary. This is not because there is no longer wonder in the world; it is instead because the truth of being—that beings *are*—is no longer something that strikes us with the same profound sense of urgency and awe as it once did in the beginning of Western history. In relation to this, another major theme in *Contributions* is that beyng has abandoned beings at the end of this first beginning.

Slowly, over the course of this history, being has become entrenched in a truth that procures for thinking a certainty that becomes coveted for its own sake, a certainty that abandons the truth of being in its historical eventuation. To hear the call of being in its abandonment is thus to restrain oneself from accepting the certainty of this truth, to restrain oneself from indulging in the ever-expanding gigantism of production, which wields the certainty of truth as a means to amass ever greater quantities of the most varied kinds. The image, for Heidegger, is the paradigm of this certainty in which everything is seen, in its order, all at once. To restrain oneself from accepting the certainty of the image, on the other hand, is to accept what cannot be seen, for it is unimaginable. This that is unimaginable is the truth of being as event, which eventuates in its uniqueness, beyond everything that is sighted in advance.

What is sighted in advance of all experience, for the sake of procuring an image of what can be experienced, is the *a priori*. This term, popularized by Kant, is the ground of all transcendental philosophies, and thus, that which grounds thinking at the end of the first beginning. In its own way, *Contributions* is an abandonment of the transcendental as a means of understanding the meaning of being. Even *Being and Time* is a work of transcendental phenomenology as fundamental ontology, and thus, it is still steeped in the language of metaphysics from which it arises. This is not to say that *Being and Time*, nor the great works of philosophy such as Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, in which transcendental philosophy has its roots, are in any way diminished in stature. On the contrary, it is for the first time that these works take their rightful place in the history of the first beginning of philosophy. It would be the case that this history is reduced to a great error only if the other beginning of philosophy were the correction of a mistake. This is not the case. As mentioned earlier, the other beginning is always other to this first beginning; it requires this first beginning in order to be the other

beginning. It is this other beginning precisely because it is what remains unthought in this first beginning: beyng-historical thinking. Where the first beginning finds its ground in the *a priori*, the other beginning is grounded by an abyss. Only what leaps away from everything that is sighted in advance can experience the truth of beyng historically. What is truly historical has recourse only to the event in which it comes to be. A thinking that thinks the event must be a beyng-historical thinking, and thus it is a thinking that is of the event itself and never a thinking that comes in advance of the event such that the event can be realized as yet another certainty. Heidegger does not mean to abandon the history of philosophy at all, but to think this history beyng-historically, which means to think this history in its proper transition to the other beginning. Heidegger's call for the destruction of the history of philosophy in division one of *Being and Time*, carried out most decisively by the deconstructionists, the most famous of which being Jacques Derrida, is the first step in this move to a beyng-historical thinking. It is the uncovering of all unrealized grounds as a means of preparing the leap into what is grounded abyssally—the unique event of appropriation. History is not abandoned; for history is already the history of the abandonment of beyng. In *Contributions*, Heidegger, for the first time, tries to make this abandonment felt as a plight.

The truth of beyng as event is the grounding of Da-sein as the “there” of the clearing for the self-concealment of beyng. In the event, beyng withdraws into concealment. Da-sein, or “there-being,” grounds this clearing by appropriating and being appropriated by beyng as it withdraws. This is one of the decisive moves in *Contributions* that separates it from the history of metaphysics and from what Heidegger himself had written prior to the late 1930s. The coming into appearance suggested by the word, *geschichtliches*, is at the same time a withdrawal of beyng from what appears as such. The historical is thus not an account of the past, but a being-

there to the clearing of what comes into appearance in the withdrawal of this coming into appearance in order to appear. Metaphysics fails to account for this withdrawal in its obsession with what has already appeared. For Heidegger, it is this very coming into appearance itself that must be thought beyng-historically. Hence why Heidegger speaks of a presencing rather than the present. The present has already been abandoned by beyng in its withdrawal; it no longer intimates toward its being given as an appearance. Thus, it is not *what* comes into appearance that interests Heidegger; if this were the case, it would simply be another metaphysical account of what there is. Rather, it is the very self-concealment of beyng in what appears that must be thought. The historical for Heidegger is this withdrawal of beyng into self-concealment, which is experienced only as the event in which Da-sein is appropriated by beyng as grounding the event. Da-sein grounds the event only as this grounding itself, which is to say that Da-sein does not provide a ground for the event by being this ground in advance, but in the very grounding itself. More accurately, Da-sein is the “between” of the ground and the grounding as what grounds in the grounding itself. The difficulty in expressing this arises because thinking has traditionally been a matter of abstracting concepts from experience whereas beyng-historical thinking cannot be divorced from what it thinks. Grounding in terms of the event is not the securing of a foundation, but the very dislodgement into historical being-there as such. To find oneself confronted by the abandonment of beyng is to already hear the call of history from the self-concealment of beyng in what there is rather than to experience the mere challenge of beings to produce and acquire that dominates the machinations of humans in the deadening thrust of the ahistorical. As long as history is dominated by production, the uniqueness of the event cannot be experienced. Here the new is merely the unproduced, sighted in advance of its production. Everything unanticipated, on the other hand, is dismissed for its perceived banality. Beyng has

no fanfare; for the event eventuates at the stillest moment to the restrained and reticent ones who remain with the future in being open to the past.

Contributions is thus not a work intended to speak to everyone. As Heidegger himself says, it is a work only for the few. He calls these few, the future ones. The future ones are those who are to come because they maintain themselves in the future. They are the beyng-historical thinkers who wait in silence for the intimation of beyng. The future ones create from the strife that opens up in the event between the revealing and the concealing of the clearing. The future ones create by sheltering beyng in beings in order to allow beyng to resonate among beings. This is not simply to create for the sake of creation itself, nor is it to create for the sake of novelty as what is merely new; rather, it is to shelter what is unique about the event as what is truly historical in order that beyng might remain near even in its abandonment. The future ones are those who experience the uniqueness of the event from the plight of the abandonment of beyng in its uniqueness. Hence why they are the future ones—the event does not arrive and remain in eventuation as something that is secured for all time. Beyng withdraws into self-concealment in that it maintains itself in its uniqueness as what is futural. The future ones maintain themselves in the strife of what is futural in that what is futural is threatened by the constant certainty of the present. Heidegger also speaks of this strife in terms of world and earth, which resonates with the opposition of that which has a future and that which is without a future. Heidegger does not dwell too much on this opposition in *Contributions*; however, in many instances he points to another work of his, *The Origin of the Work of Art*, written around the time of *Contributions*. It is in this work that Heidegger expands on this strife between world and earth in terms of the work of art, which, according to *Contributions*, is one of the domains in which creation is possible in this way. What is important here is to remember that Heidegger is not trying to bring about a

change in worldview for everyday living. He is not an elitist either. Rather, he is pointing to the extreme difficulty of hearing the call of being that is unlike anything that is experienced in everyday life. Furthermore, being is always in withdrawal, which means that it is never removed from this strife. Whenever it is thought of absolutely, that is, from some kind of certainty, then it is no longer thought of at all. Most people seek answers, but when it comes to being, it is only the question that matters. It is extremely difficult, in many ways impossible, to experience the plight of this questioning when the world is dominated by certainties. For only certainties are suitable to production when what is at stake is the gigantic and wielding the gigantic for the sake of domination. Few are able to remain open to what produces nothing and is without certainty even there.

Contributions, exemplifying the turn in Heidegger's philosophy between the earlier emphasis on fundamental ontology and the later emphasis on language, is in many ways a liminal text in Heidegger's oeuvre. This positioning of *Contributions* further solidifies its own internal positioning as transitional between the first and the other beginning. It is not by accident that this work has a reputation for being somewhat unpolished and fragmentary. Indeed, at times, sentences come to an abrupt end and often Heidegger repeats himself with only minor variations, even contradicting statements made elsewhere in the text. As mentioned earlier, *Contributions* is written in a fugal style, with each of its sections representing one or another aspect of the event. Heidegger is attempting in each of these sections to say the same thing about the event and in the same way. After all, these are *contributions* to the philosophy of the event; they are not rigorous arguments made in the attempt to persuade one toward a particular worldview or to definitively root out false beliefs, and most of all, not to obtain any kind of certainty. In many ways, this description of *Contributions* as being written in a fugal style, so

often pointed out by scholars of the work, is more apt than at first it seems. Not only does the work move through its variations like a musical fugue, but it is also written as if its author were himself under the spell of a *psychological* fugue. A fugue is defined as a loss of one's identity and flight from one's familiar environment. Taken figuratively, it is as if Heidegger, in writing *Contributions*, experienced not only the loss of his own identity as a philosopher through the partial abandonment of his earlier ways of thinking, but also the loss of identity as such, that is, the loss of the obviousness and familiarity in which the identical is thought. With this loss of certainty in the identical comes a loss of certainty in difference as well. This is not to say that identity and difference no longer have meaning; rather, this meaning has itself been dislodged into that beyng-historical way of thinking in which it must now be thought from out of the event. If it is merely a coincidence that *Contributions* arrives at a time of transition for Heidegger and likewise speaks of a transition between two beginnings of philosophy, this coincidence is very telling as to how strange beyng-historical thinking really is. Obviously not every coincidence is significant, and it would be unwise to start making connections everywhere in the vein of a paranoid conspiracy theorist, but nevertheless, it is striking that the course of Heidegger's thought and the course of the history of philosophy arrive at such a moment of indistinguishable transition, especially when what is to be thought is precisely the indistinguishability of beyng and thinking in transition. Whether or not this speculative claim holds weight, it nonetheless gives a glimpse of the strange and unfamiliar territory that one finds oneself in when trying to think the event. Furthermore, it underscores the title of this work as a *contribution* to philosophy, which is to say, it reveals why no definitive account of the event is ever possible and hence why there can only be contributions to the philosophy of the event. Where the event is defined for certain, here we can be sure that thinking has fallen back into its old ways.

Heidegger indicates throughout *Contributions* that his thinking here is not itself the kind of thinking that is of the event and hence of the other beginning. The thinking of *Contributions* is quite literally a transitional thinking between the first and the other beginning intended to prepare for the thinking that is to come—the thinking of the future ones, which takes place only in the leap. This must be kept in mind when reading *Contributions*. There are no bridges between the first and the other beginning; thus, *Contributions* does not intend to be a bridge in this way. There is only the leap. This leap, echoing Kierkegaard's leap of faith, is a complete break from the metaphysical structures that have dominated the history of philosophy up to that point. There are no structures in *Contributions*; instead, there are resonances, echoes, fissures, oscillations, etc. If the event were a structure it would still be fully within the bounds of metaphysics and thus would not point to another beginning of philosophy. Perhaps the other beginning is always in transition and this is what Heidegger is trying to indicate. It is hard to see any other way. However, this is precisely the point. We cannot *see* the other beginning in the same way that we *see* the first beginning of philosophy in which we linger at the end of its long reign over thinking. At the very least, *Contributions* subverts the usual habits of thought to always have some knowledge of what is being thought in advance. To think beyng-historically is to think the event itself *as the event*. It is to think in eventuation by being appropriated by the event as what is thought. This can never be structuralized. Hence why Heidegger is only contributing to the philosophy of the event. Heidegger is not constructing the event; he is trying to discover how to say the event. If Heidegger's statement that he is trying to say the same about the same is any indication of what is going on, it is that the event eludes any kind of structural assembly. Someone like Derrida would argue that Heidegger is still beholden to the metaphysical ways of thinking that he wishes to leave behind. Derrida would say that Heidegger's critique of presence

anchors his discourse in such a way that everything is structured around this one thought.¹ However, in *Contributions*, Heidegger is indicating something other than the mere denunciation and destruction of the metaphysics of presence. Heidegger is indicating towards the leap into *Da-sein*, which he refers to as the domain of what is proper. Through this leap into the domain of what is proper, metaphysical thinking is indeed transformed, but it is transformed into being proper to what remains to be thought, which is entirely un-metaphysical. If, like Derrida, we take the destruction of the metaphysics of presence as Heidegger's structural center, this is only because *we* find ourselves unable to make that leap. Heidegger is saved precisely because he is not trying to speak *about* the event, but is trying to speak the event itself, or at least prepare for it. Only by leaping into the domain of what is proper to this saying itself do we experience the event. This Heidegger cannot say with the same confidence of the metaphysicians.

Much of the scholarship surrounding *Contributions* has tried to clarify what Heidegger is saying in the attempt at making it more intelligible to those who have not encountered these ideas before. One of the main sources that I have used throughout this thesis is the *Companion to Heidegger's Contributions to Philosophy* published by Indiana University Press in 2001. This companion contains essays by various accomplished Heidegger scholars and is divided into two sections: approaches to reading *Contributions* and readings of specific areas of the text. While I have found this companion thoroughly helpful for clarifying Heidegger's often cryptic remarks and for giving an overview and guide to what Heidegger is generally considered to be attempting in *Contributions*, I have also found that not much has been said with regards to advancing the ideas put forth in the text. Over the course of studying *Contributions*, as well as in defending my

¹ See Derrida's essay, "Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences," collected in *Writing and Difference*.

own interpretation of Heidegger from the dismissals of those who consider him to have associated and contributed to the terrible rise of National Socialism in Germany and for that reason have refused to take him seriously, I have come to the conclusion that to read the Heidegger of *Contributions* properly is to be uniquely un-Heideggerian. This way of reading Heidegger coincides with the overall claims made in this thesis about what Heidegger is attempting to do in *Contributions*. To participate in the kind of thinking that Heidegger calls for in *Contributions* is to attempt to contribute to the philosophy of the event oneself. This does not mean to recklessly depart from the text, just as Heidegger does not recklessly depart from metaphysics. It means to think with Heidegger in such a way that one is proper to that thinking oneself. To be thoroughly Heideggerian is to say nothing more than Heidegger says himself. Thus, those who study Heidegger often obsess over Being as Heidegger did, often criticize the same targets that Heidegger criticized, etc. In short, they often try to do Heidegger. In writing this thesis I have not intended to do this; however, as a result, I feel that the approach I have taken is ultimately more faithful to what Heidegger intended, which is to try to think beyng-historically about these issues. To read Heidegger in this way is to attempt to remain within the breakdown of Heideggerianism in order to leap away from Heidegger in the most unique way. This means to enter into that same transitional moment that Heidegger found himself in when writing *Contributions* and that Heidegger himself speaks of in *Contributions* with respect to the two beginnings of philosophy. I believe that it is this encounter with Heidegger's thinking that still has a future for those to come.

To be uniquely un-Heideggerian is to be properly oneself reading Heidegger. What this means is to find the resonance of Heidegger's thinking within one's own transition. After all, the event, or *Ereignis*, is an enowning by one interpretation, an appropriation by another. The

original German itself expresses this relationship to what is ownmost in its derivation from the word, *eigen*. As mentioned above, Heidegger now interprets Da-sein as the domain of what is proper. (This is discussed in more depth in chapter one of this thesis.) To leap into this domain is to experience the appropriation of the event as being owned over to the event, but also to oneself. It is to be proper to this owning over. Heidegger makes clear, however, that this is not a matter of finding oneself experiencing the event. For the self that is proper to the event is assigned in the event itself. There is no self prior to this eventuation. So what does it mean to be properly oneself reading Heidegger if there is no self prior to eventuation? What does it mean to find the resonance of Heidegger's thinking in one's own transition? It means to enter the breakdown, or failure, of the self *as selfhood*. To be a self in the sense that is expressed in *Contributions* is to be the breakdown of the self, to be the failure to abstract a sense of selfhood from the event. As I have tried to emphasize in this thesis, breakdown, or failure, plays an important role when it comes to the event. True selfhood is here a breakdown of the self as an abstraction. If this abstract, or imagined self, has any reality, it is as this breakdown, which is proper to selfhood as assigned in the event. It is not by accident that Heidegger was unable to write division three of *Being and Time* and as a result was inspired to move in the direction of *Contributions*. The latter work is born out of that failure. Heidegger's persistence in the face of this failure is the continuity between his earlier and later thought. To read *Contributions* is to come to that same failure oneself. It is to read Heidegger from a kind of restrained breakdown in which the need to assimilate the text breaks down into the very questioning of this need, into the need to question itself. To read *Contributions* is to realize that Heidegger is not only dismantling the reign of metaphysics, but that oneself and all of one's preconceived notions are also implicated in this dismantling. Too often we read in a disinterested manner for the sake of objectivity. But if we

take Heidegger seriously, there is no objectivity. There is only the unique event of appropriation and the stale aftermath of the present in which everything has already been decided. The greatest need is the need to be; this must be experienced as the very plight that gives way to questioning. As a result, we must read *Contributions* as a work that engages with our own ideas. It does not stand on its own to be interpreted in isolation. We, ourselves, must enter into the transition if we are to prepare for a leap into the unique event of appropriation.

The thought of being uniquely un-Heideggerian brings me to the nature of this thesis, which is to examine the meaning of the unique in *Contributions*. First, however, a few more details regarding *Contributions* and the scholarship surrounding it must be taken into account. After this, I will discuss my own methodology and reasons for writing this thesis in order to situate it within the scholarship surrounding *Contributions* and the work of Heidegger in general. This will include a discussion of how I have gone about breaking down this thesis into its three chapters and of the texts that I have utilized outside of *Contributions* for the purpose of my argument.

In *Contributions*, Heidegger expressly abandons the transcendental view of philosophy, which delineates the ground of beings in terms of Being as the transcendence of beings toward the *a priori*. With this break from the transcendental comes a break from the idea of the horizon, at least as it is understood in conjunction with the transcendental. The horizontal, thought of transcendently, is that side of the openness towards beings that faces the subject in order for the subject to procure a look of those beings and thus an understanding of their Being. Because *Contributions* tries to express the event using auditory metaphors, this, in turn, means that it strays from the visual metaphors so appropriate to describing transcendence. Many scholars of *Contributions* are quick to point out the a-horizonal nature of the work in this regard. It is at this

juncture that I differentiate my own approach to reading *Contributions*. Prior to my decision to write on *Contributions*, my original intention was to explore the idea of horizons in the work of Heidegger and elsewhere. Originally my intention was to utilize the earlier Heidegger to speak about the horizontal, drawing from Heidegger's understanding of temporality as ecstatic-horizontal. For this project, the most important works would have been the three connected in the overarching project of fundamental ontology consisting of *Being and Time*, *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, and *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*. However, having read *Contributions*, I found the argument in that work to be too compelling to ignore. Furthermore, I found that it expressed much of what I was trying to say about the horizontal, but from a point of view that did not strictly utilize that term and, in fact, actively disparaged it in a certain sense. Unlike others who have written on *Contributions*, I found that this work could, in fact, be thought of in terms of the horizontal, but not in the way that this term had been traditionally deployed. Whereas many scholars have focused on Heidegger's departure from the transcendental-horizontal, nothing has been said about what that means for the horizontal itself, thought of in a non-transcendental fashion. What I was most struck by when reading *Contributions* was how closely Heidegger's emphasis on the uniqueness of the event, on the uniqueness of being, and the unique in general, expressed much of what I originally wanted to say about the horizontal. Thus, I began to read *Contributions* with the aim of understanding the horizontal in terms of the unique and vice versa. I found that *Contributions* was not a strictly a-horizontal work after all; rather, through its understanding of the unique, the horizontal took on a new meaning, which had heretofore remained unexplored, even by Heidegger himself. Following Heidegger's own way of thinking, one could say that I found this idea of the horizontal in terms

of the unique unthought in the *Contributions*. Thus, I set out to explore what this unthought might mean.

Our understanding of the unique falls short of what uniqueness is as an event. When this term is applied to a being, for example, it refers to the fact that the being is unlike any other. Yet the being, in order to be perceivable, and thus recognizable, must have at least some similarities to beings encountered in the past; it must conform to the look. Thus, even what we call the unique in terms of beings has an element of familiarity that undermines uniqueness. Thus, only what is not a being can be truly unique. This is the event. The event is unique and thus it is unprecedented. In the event, Da-sein is appropriated by being in its uniqueness, that is, in the unique coming to presence of the event. The event is not a place-marker for what takes place at a certain point in time and space in which time and space are merely containers for events, as if those events could have taken place at any other point in time and space just as easily, all things considered. The uniqueness of the event has its own horizon of eventuation and this is the horizon of the unique. The event eventuates as this horizon. Unlike the horizon of transcendence, which is the opening onto beings for procuring a representation of them, the horizon of the unique is the horizon of a failure to represent; it is the horizon of the breakdown of representation. The unique cannot be anticipated, but it can be understood in and as its uniqueness in terms of its own horizon; this horizon is itself unique and here the self plays a role. The self is the uniqueness of the horizon that is the horizon of the unique. The self, which, according to *Contributions*, is assigned out of the event, is as unique as the event itself. Thus, uniqueness is, in a certain sense, separated within itself as the uniqueness of the horizon and the horizon of the unique. This fundamental separation within itself, which is the experience of the unique, as the unique itself, makes the unique impossible to represent in the truth of its

simplicity. Any representation of this separation (and appropriation) that is the unique is already a loss of uniqueness as its reproduction. In other words, the unique cannot be separated from itself as a representation because it already is a separation within itself of what is not separated because this separation is appropriated as event. To experience the unique is to experience what is open to having a future; for the futural is that which is unique, not in the sense of *this* unique event, but in the sense of the still occurring eventuation of the uniqueness of being. Thus, it is not to have a representation of this future uniqueness, but to persist in the fathoming of uniqueness itself as the unique event of appropriation. It is to be a self, which is to persist in the breakdown of the imagined self for the uniquely unimaginable. The self is the persistence of the failure to *have* a self, which is to *be* a self in the event, as the assignment of self-concealment to what is proper to self-concealment in the withdrawal of being into future uniqueness.

This way of understanding the unique allows for a positive account of nothingness. Rather than nothingness being the negation of all beings, nothingness is here articulated in terms of the horizon of the unique. The unique is the articulation of nothingness, but not as a representation. The difference between the negative interpretation of nothingness and this positive interpretation, is that the unique is the interpretation of nothingness as an event, and thus it forces the understanding into the eventuation of what is still occurring and always occurring, but constantly being abstracted into the stability of a present, which loses all sense of decision with regards to what has not been given in advance. If metaphysics is this obsession with advancement, then the unique event is the counterthrust of stillness. In stillness, every being is proper to itself in the still occurring eventuation of the unique. Da-sein grounds the event in its grounding of the event, meaning that the ground is not abstracted from its grounding but is the still occurring grounding of the event, not through what is given in advance of this grounding,

but through this grounding itself. In other words, it is grounded by an abyss. The unique event is experienced in the abyssal grounding of Da-sein as the appropriation of beyng in its uniqueness. If Da-sein is the “between” of the ground and the grounding, then the horizon of the unique is what is opened up in this between as the still occurring eventuation of its belonging to the abyss. Da-sein grounds the event by belonging to the abyss and this abyssal belonging is proper to the horizon of the unique. The reason this horizon has been overlooked is because what is most proper to being a horizon itself has not yet been thought out. If the horizonal is only thought of in terms of representation, then the unique cannot be understood. However, if the horizonal is thought of in terms of the failure to represent, as the breakdown of representation, then the unique emerges as the articulation of nothingness. Nothingness is here taken out of the realm of logic in which it is thought of only as a negation and placed into the realm of beyng-historical thinking in which what is proper to itself has its future in the grounding of Da-sein.

Unfortunately, not much can be said with regards to the particulars of the event as a practical occurrence in history. I am apprehensive about giving examples of the event framed in this way. Others, such as Richard Polt in his book, “The Emergency of Being: On Heidegger’s ‘Contributions to Philosophy’,” have given examples of the event that are as mundane as instances of learning to see the world in a new way. However, this does not take into account the extreme strangeness and profundity of thinking in eventuation. One clue to understanding the event and, in turn, the unique, is to think about it in terms of the first and the other beginning of philosophy. The other beginning of philosophy is the first beginning of philosophy in its uniqueness. We are prone to parsing this beginning (the first beginning) into its “events” and thinking about them in isolation and in relation to the other “events” that are a part of that same history. However, what is occurring throughout this beginning is not a series of discoveries that

have been cobbled together into a neatly bound history; rather, this history is the unfolding of its own unique occurrence. If the event can be said to be anything at all, it is the experience of the uniqueness of this first beginning as the other beginning of philosophy. Whether or not we confine ourselves to the transition between these beginnings or allow for the other beginning to take over in its appropriateness to thinking, one thing is sure: that the first beginning has reached its end only where it comes to its own unique occurrence in thought as an event. It is this thought that profoundly affected Heidegger and that guides *Contributions* throughout its many variations. However, in only a select few instances have I chosen to focus on this relation between the first and the other beginning. This is not by accident. Many have written on this dichotomy when writing on *Contributions* to the point that it was not necessary to make this the main focus of this thesis. Rather, I have chosen to focus on the uniqueness of the event and, as a result, uniqueness in general, as it appears in *Contributions*. This aspect of the event and of the relationship of these two beginnings has so far been neglected. Unfortunately, the unique demands that we think without example, without image; for it is only in the uniquely unimaginable that the unique event of appropriation finds its home in thought. As I will show, it is in the breakdown, or failure, of the imagination that the uniqueness of the event transforms thinking into what is proper to history. This is what it means to think beyng-historically.

Due to the fugal nature of *Contributions*, in which its themes and ideas are explored from various angles with regard to the event, I have chosen to concentrate on the fifth chapter titled, “The Grounding.” Rather than jump throughout the text, which I have done sparingly and only where appropriate, I have focused almost exclusively on this chapter, which is one of the richest in the text. This chapter is divided into five subsections: a) Da-sein and the projection of being, b) Da-sein, c) The essence of truth, d) Time-Space as the abyssal ground, and e) The essential

occurrence of truth as a sheltering. Chapter one of this thesis draws from the first two sections; chapter two draws from the third section, and chapter three draws from the fourth section. The fifth section on the sheltering of truth is the smallest section of all and offers only a glimpse into what is explored more fully in essays like “On the Origin of the Work of Art.” I have neglected this section for its brevity and for the practical reason that it is not necessary for my overall argument and that it suggests an enquiry of its own that is beyond the scope of this thesis. My reason for choosing the chapter on the grounding in *Contributions* as opposed to the others is that this chapter offers a rich diversity amongst its sections and is thus somewhat of a microcosm within the greater text. Furthermore, grounding becomes a contentious issue within Heidegger’s thought, especially in transition from his earlier to later works. Because of this contentiousness, the grounding is a perfect stage in which to engage with an already contentious work, especially in light of the overall emphasis on strife that occurs throughout *Contributions*, but especially in this chapter. Most of all, I have chosen this chapter because the grounding of the event offers the most appropriate gateway into the idea of uniqueness as it is applied to the event. The subtle difference between the ground and the grounding is an apt expression of the unique in that here we have both an abstraction—the ground—and the breakdown of this abstraction—the grounding. Within this difference, and lack of difference, arises the strife of ground and abyss. The argument for the unique given in this thesis is inextricably bound to the idea of the abyssal ground and the abyssal belonging of ground and abyss that it implies. Thus, I have chosen to use this part of the text almost exclusively rather than try to rally all of Heidegger’s variations together. My argument is not an overall interpretation of *Contributions* as a whole, as if it could be tidied up in this way. If this were the case, then Heidegger himself would have had no need to write the text in the way that he did. However, if Heidegger was successful in his admission to

say the same about the same, then to write about the grounding in *Contributions* is to write about the book as a whole, from a certain point of view.

Chapter one of this thesis is titled, “Da-sein, Selfhood, Imagination.” In this chapter, I begin by briefly charting the history of the word, “Da-sein,” as it had been used prior to Heidegger as well as Heidegger’s own use of the word from his early work in the 1920’s to the writing of *Contributions*. I do this in order to make clear the evolution of Heidegger’s thought with regards to thinking about Da-sein, and to make clear, for those who are familiar with *Being and Time*, the differences between that work and the one currently under discussion. This is followed by a discussion of Heidegger’s engagement with and critique of metaphysics as the culmination of the first beginning of philosophy. Through this discussion, I make clear the distinction between the horizontal opening of the look as it is thought of in transcendental philosophy, specifically in Kant from the point of view of Heidegger’s own interpretation, and the horizontal with regards to the uniqueness of the event. The imagination plays an important role in Heidegger’s interpretation of Kant and it is here that I compare this interpretation with how the imagination is described in *Contributions*. Because Heidegger also challenges Kant’s understanding of the self in *Being and Time*, I use this as means to compare the metaphysical interpretation of selfhood with selfhood as it appears in *Contributions* in terms of the uniqueness of the event. Da-sein, selfhood, and imagination are all brought together to reveal a constellation of reference points for understanding the abyssal grounding of the event in its uniqueness. Through this constellation, I show that uniqueness is inextricably bound to the appropriation, or enowning, of the event. I conclude by discussing the finitude of this relationship and the role that finitude plays in terms of the unique. Here I discuss the nature of death in *Contributions* and how death allows for the uniqueness of the event to be experienced.

In chapter one, for my comparison of the earlier Heidegger with *Contributions*, I draw from the texts associated with the project of *Being and Time: Being and Time, Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, and *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*.² I have chosen these texts because they offer the most definitive account of Heidegger's early work and the progression of thinking that begins with *Being and Time*. I have also drawn from the essay, "What is Metaphysics?" written around the same time. This text is useful to understand exactly what Heidegger means by metaphysics in order to better understand what he is distancing himself from in *Contributions*. Finally, because this chapter deals with Da-sein, the self and, as a result, the nature of being human, I have also drawn from the essay, "Letter on Humanism," published in 1947, well after *Contributions* was written. This text is useful for its critique of Heidegger's past work and for its account of the maturation of some of the themes explored in *Contributions*. I use this text to illustrate where some of the ideas that are essential to *Contributions* end up with regards to Heidegger's later work, especially given the fact that *Contributions* was never formally published until after the author's death. Throughout this chapter, and the chapters that follow, I have considered *Contributions* to be a transitional work in Heidegger's oeuvre; because of this, I consider *Contributions* in the context of Heidegger's turn and thus as a pivotal moment in his thinking. As this pivot, *Contributions* draws into its orbit both the earlier and the later work, offering striking observations on the past and foreshadowing what was to come with respect to Heidegger's overall contributions to philosophy.

Chapter two of this thesis is titled, "The Essence of Truth and the Simplicity of the Unique." In this chapter I shift the focus from the uniqueness of the event as appropriated by Da-

² For a better understanding of how these three texts fit together, see Albert Hofstadter's introduction to the English translation of *Basic Problems*.

sein and assigned in selfhood to the uniqueness of the event in relation to the truth of beyng. I begin by discussing Heidegger's interpretation of the original concept of truth as it occurs to the Greeks. Here, the origination of metaphysical thinking emerges as the obsession with beings in which truth is yoked into the mode of correspondence and thus becomes concealed as to its own essence. *Contributions* recovers the question of the essence of truth in its urgency, thus responding to the entrenchment of truth as the foundation of production through the efficacy of correspondence for the endless machinations that take place at the end of the first beginning of philosophy when all metaphysical ways of thinking have become impotent to overcome the thrust of history in its obsession with power and ever-greater quantities. In contrast to this thrust towards the gigantic, the question of the essence of truth responds to the event in which it is separated from itself through the simplicity of its uniqueness as the truth of beyng (event). Beyng is its truth and yet the truth of beyng implies a separation. This separation is the essential occurrence of truth, which, in its simplicity, is the overstepping of the unique event in its eventuation, as an appropriation of the turning of truth and essence. The essential occurrence of truth as this turning is the abyssal grounding of the event, which is the belonging of ground and abyss. This abyssal belonging is revealed as what is proper to belonging itself—the belonging of what is divided and what is undivided, or, the divided belonging that belongs to the undivided belonging. Through this way of understanding the abyssally grounded event, a unique way of understanding nothingness is explored in contrast to the logical role that it plays in terms of negation. The unique, understood as the articulation of the nothing, is that which is not something without negating it. It is this lack of negation in the belonging of ground and abyss that separates it from previously metaphysical ways of understanding this relationship.

In chapter two, I draw from a range of Heidegger's texts that deal with the concept of truth. First, I utilize the work, *Basic Questions of Philosophy: Selected "Problems" of "Logic"*, written contemporaneously with *Contributions*. This work offers an in-depth study of the origin of truth for the Greeks and expands on much of what Heidegger says with regards to the essence of truth in *Contributions*. This is followed by a lengthy discussion of the essay, "On the Essence of Truth," published in 1930. This essay, along with the essay, "Plato's Doctrine of Truth," written in 1931/32, are both referenced throughout the third section (The Essence of Truth) of "The Grounding" in *Contributions*. Thus, Heidegger engages and critiques these texts with regards to his understanding of the essential occurrence of truth in *Contributions*. My use of these texts likewise engages with Heidegger's own reinterpretations and explores these themes in relation to the uniqueness of the event. Finally, I draw from the dialogue, "Conversations of a Country Path," in Heidegger's *Discourse on Thinking*, in which Heidegger explores the concept of "releasement" [*Gelassenheit*]. Releasement plays an important role in this thesis, particularly for understanding the unique in relation to nothingness. Furthermore, this mature work offers insight into Heidegger's critique of the transcendental-horizonal, giving a more articulate account of what this relationship entails. Thus, I use this text as a means of juxtaposing the horizonal-proper as it is worked out in this thesis with a direct critique of the horizonal from Heidegger's own mature perspective.

Chapter three of this thesis is titled, "Time-space and the Persistence of Fathoming." In this chapter I explore Heidegger's imperative in *Contributions* that time and space must be thought of in a radically new way, as time-space, which, in turn, must be thought of as the abyssal grounding of the event. Rather than conforming to the metaphysical way of understanding time and space as extensions, Heidegger sees time-space at the core of the

eventuation of the event in that it is the very opening up of the ground from the abyss.

Understanding time-space in a decidedly un-quantitative manner is crucial to understanding *Contributions* as a whole. Heidegger's shift away from the metaphysics of presence requires him to think of both time and space in a non-representative way, and this requires a qualitative rather than quantitative re-evaluation of these "dimensions." Drawing together the first two chapters of this thesis as well as Heidegger's understanding of time-space as the abyssal ground, I show that time-space, in terms of the abyssal grounding of the event, is none other than the persistence of fathoming the essential occurrence of truth in the failure, or breakdown, of the imagination as the unique self, assigned in the event, which opens up as the uniqueness of the horizon and the horizon of the unique. Time-space is here the very act of persisting in this breakdown in order to remain with the presencing of the event rather than succumbing to the merely present in which all decision is lost and one is given over to mere representation for the passivity of a thinking that draws only from what has already been given over to the look. Thus, I show that the event cannot be separated from thinking in the way it is throughout the history of metaphysics and that this applies not only to what eventuates, but to eventuation itself. This means a radical reinterpretation is needed from the ground up and not merely of what presents itself within time and space, which remain closed to decision.

In chapter three, I draw from another later text of Heidegger, "The Principle of Reason," for its lucid account of the relation between ground and abyss with regards to reason itself. In this text, Heidegger explores the inability of reason to penetrate what lacks all reason—the simplicity of being. The principle of reason, or ground, as it is explored in this work, offers an exploration of the themes explored in the chapter on grounding utilized throughout this thesis but in terms of the role of reason itself. Thus, the use of this text bookends this thesis, which begins

with Heidegger's engagement with Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*. All the while, *Contributions* stands at the center, prompting us not only to transform the way we think, but to draw us into the plight of thinking as an event, as a turning within being itself, such that we do not fall back on what is easy and apparent, but instead persist in what is simple and strange and thus, unique.

This thesis is written in the attempt to think the ideas put forth in *Contributions* in a beyng-historical way. Rather than situating *Contributions* within the context of its historical circumstances, I try to show how *Contributions* reveals time and thinking as they belong together in the eventuation of the event by attempting to engage with the text through the very breakdown of my own thinking as it encounters the text. Thus, this thesis is, in a certain sense, radically textual in that it uses the interpretive strategy of this breakdown in representation suggested by the text in order to reveal what is beyng-historical about thinking itself. In this way, what is unique about the event that gives rise to *Contributions* is revealed in what is unique about the event that gives rise to this interpretation. As such, it is my intention that this thesis is itself an intimation toward future uniqueness.

Chapter 1: Da-sein, Selfhood, Imagination

The shift from *Being and Time* to *Contributions* brings with it a shift in the meaning of the word, “Dasein,” or as Heidegger writes it in the latter work: “Da-sein.” With this shift from Dasein to Da-sein comes a shift in Heidegger’s understanding of selfhood as well as the imagination. In this section I examine this shift in the meaning of the word Dasein to Da-sein with respect to selfhood and the imagination. I show that in *Contributions*, the self becomes proper to the breakdown of the imagination appropriated by Da-sein as the grounding of Da-sein’s abyssal belonging to the event in the projection of the “between” of the grounding and the ground. As such, the constellation of Da-sein, selfhood, and the imagination (in its breakdown) make up the horizon for which the event of appropriation eventuates in its uniqueness and as the unique itself. This horizon opens up within uniqueness as the uniqueness of the horizon and the horizon of the unique. In this horizon is encountered the uniquely unimaginable that is abyssal belonging. The purpose of this chapter is thus to show that what remains to be thought out with respect to the event is the relation between abyssal belonging (the grounding of the abyssal ground) and the unique. To begin, abyssal belonging is situated within the relationship of Da-sein, selfhood, and the imagination, as grounding the event. In order to understand this relationship, first a brief history of these concepts is given as they appear prior to Heidegger’s thinking and within Heidegger’s own evolution of thought. This is followed by a discussion of the horizontal with respect to the unique in contrast to the traditional understanding of the horizontal in its relationship to transcendence. Finally, this characterization of horizontal uniqueness as it appears in *Contributions* is discussed in relation to what Heidegger later refers to as “ek-sistence,” in which it is shown that all ek-sistence is itself horizontal insofar as it is an encounter with the unique.

Prior to *Being and Time*, the word “Dasein” has a meaning altogether different from the way Heidegger uses it in both *Being and Time* and *Contributions*. From within the history of metaphysics, Dasein “names the way, the mode, in which beings are *actual*” (CP 233). Heidegger elaborates: “Throughout the entire history of metaphysics, however, there can be seen the not-accidental practice of taking the term that expresses the mode of the actuality of beings and carrying it over to these beings themselves and thus to use “Dasein” to mean “the Dasein,” namely, the whole actually existent being itself” (233). In other words, this word, which translates literally as, “there-being,” essentially comes to mean nothing other than the existence of present beings: “In the usual sense, this term means “having arrived” and “being present”: e.g. the chair “is there” the uncle “is there”; accordingly, *présence*” (237). The shift made in *Being and Time* brings the meaning of Dasein closer to the existence of the human being insofar as the human being, as existing, is that being “which we ourselves in each case are and which includes inquiry among the possibilities of its being” (BT 7). Here, Dasein no longer means existence as mere presence insofar as this can be applied to any such being as long as it is “there.” Instead, this word designates the existence of that being which is not only “there” but has the possibility of interrogating its “thereness” as to what it means to be “there.” Essentially, this means that Dasein understands itself as being-in-the-world. Consequently, every being that is not Dasein, insofar as it is encountered in the world, comes to receive its being accordingly through the questioning of Dasein that reveals the possibilities of “being there” and thus what it means to be.

The shift in *Contributions* to the spelling of “Da-sein” is not so much an abandonment of the meaning used in *Being and Time* as it is a clarification that tries to eliminate the misunderstandings that arise due to the still transitional nature of that work within the overall

project of Heidegger's thinking.³ Da-sein now comes to mean "the domain of what is proper" (CP 246). The proper here refers to "appropriation in the event" (231). Hence, Dasein is no longer restricted to the human being as the being who questions its being, but is now thought of from the event that first lets the human being be appropriate to its own questioning in the first place. Consequently, Da-sein is "the sovereign center of the appropriating eventuation as the assignment, of the ones who belong, to the event and at the same time to *themselves*: becoming a self" (246). Da-sein is the ground of a pre-eminent "between" that opens up as a result of being "that which *at once grounds under* the human being and *surmounts* the human being" in the event of its grounding (237). Da-sein belongs to its own grounding so abysally that this grounding is none other than Da-sein's belonging to its grounding and the appropriation of that belonging in the event. Thus, the eventuation of this belonging at once makes possible what is proper (being the ground) and this as the ground of appropriation in the event. The human being is now thought of separately from Da-sein insofar as the human being, in an ontic and ontological sense, belongs merely to beings alone and not to the appropriation of the event that gives beings in their being. Da-sein has now shifted to a very definitive possibility of the human being, which is the very possibility of being its ground.⁴

³ In his essay, "*Contributions to Philosophy and Enowning-Historical Thinking*," Friedrich-Wilhelm von Herrmann writes that *Contributions* "is the *second* major treatise after *Being and Time*, which continues to be the *basic treatise* of the thinking of the grounding question of being as such. For even *Contributions* remains retro-related, in its own way, to the pathway of thinking which is enopened for the first time in *Being and Time*. It is along this pathway that Heidegger first inquires into the truth of being and its relation to what is ownmost to humans as Dasein" (CCP 109).

⁴ In his essay, "Strategies for a Possible Reading," Dennis J. Schmidt, without dwelling on the implications of this transition, points out that "[w]hereas in *Being and Time*, Dasein is a theme for an existential analytic, here in *Contributions* it becomes that which human being must *become*" (CCP 38). Schmidt continues on to address Heidegger's need to challenge the human being's understanding of itself as a being rather than a becoming. While Schmidt does not linger on this need and therefore does not offer any deeper insight into it, I have attempted to articulate

Da-sein is to be grasped as the ground of the “between” rather than as over against the event as if over against an objectivity that is formed in an image to be represented to a subject.⁵ The rejection of this metaphysical interpretation likewise means a rejection of the *a priori* as that which comes before an experience of the objective world in order to prepare for a subject the possibility of any such experience whatsoever. This is the fundamental Kantian position in *The Critique of Pure Reason*.⁶ With regard to the essential occurrence of appropriation in the event, however, the earliest “is the essential occurrence itself” (174). Nothing is prepared in advance in order for the event to stand over and against the look formed in this preparation. As a result, the event of appropriation cannot be structured in a systematic way as is the motivation of all metaphysical thinking. Da-sein is the property of appropriation—this means that Da-sein grounds the appropriation of the event by being appropriated by the event. Da-sein, as ground, is not prepared in advance of the event, nor does the event await Da-sein. Hence, Heidegger speaks continuously of a leap into the event. This leap is a leap away from the structured ordering of

this need in terms of Da-sein’s abyssal belonging to the event with regards to its grounding. This should become more apparent in the pages that follow.

⁵ The “between” refers here to the abyssal openness in which grounding takes place. Da-sein grounds this “between” as its grounding—for the sake of being its ground and not merely for the sake of what is grounded (thus appropriating the abyss as well as the ground). The “between” is the ground of the event in which grounding *takes place as such*. Thus, the traditional perspective of transcendental philosophy, which places the subject (Dasein) over against the object, is inadequate for capturing this grounding of the event. For in the case of the traditional perspective it is the grounding of what is grounded that is to be understood and so the ground is seen only in terms of the grounded (thus in terms of the ontological difference) and not in terms of grounding as such.

⁶ Kant develops the *a priori* for the sake of uncovering the conditions for the possibility of experience. In Kant’s view, in order to ask questions of metaphysics, experience, which gives rise to metaphysical questioning, must first be secured in terms of the ground of its own truth. In other words, a firm ground must already be in place, which guarantees that experience can reveal the metaphysical truths that attempt to go beyond experience. For Kant, this ground is the *a priori*, which transcends experience and gives rise to the conditions for its possibility. By transcending experience, what is experienced becomes a representation to the transcendent *a priori*—what is grounded is represented to the ground.

beings, which, by every account, demand this causal order be justified in a way that precedes experience. It is precisely the motivation of securing this causal order that awoke Kant from his “dogmatic slumber,”⁷ ultimately allowing him to formulate his system and postulate the unity of transcendental apperception—the “I” that accompanies every thought in a unity that persists across time. Thus, despite overlooking what was most profound about his own position in Western philosophy, Kant “is still the only one since the Greeks who brings the interpretation of *beingness* (οὐσία) into a certain relation with “time” and thereby becomes a witness to the hidden reign of the connection between beingness and time” (200).⁸ This connection made by Kant is a decisive step toward the thinking of *Being and Time*, and yet even in the latter work this thinking remains transitional.

The problem that lies in the Kantian interpretation is that through this connection of beingness and time, which reveals itself in the “I think” accompanying all perception, thinking “remains primary in establishing the horizon for the interpretation of beings as such” (200). Thus, “thinking as “thinking” gains mastery, and beings themselves become on the same historical basis in each case *perceptum* (the represented). That is, they become *objects*. Therefore, a grounding of Da-sein could not be at issue here” (200). Why does thinking in this way prevent the grounding of Da-sein? Because “Da-sein is the simultaneity of time-space with what is true as a being, and it essentially occurs as the *grounding* ground, as the “between” and “middle” of beings themselves” (174). In other words, thinking, as representing, establishes the

⁷ This is Kant’s response to the philosophy of David Hume in which Hume criticizes the pretensions that secure the certainty of causal connections. See Kant’s *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics* (4:260; 10).

⁸ For a more in-depth analysis of this relationship, see Heidegger’s *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*. For further commentary on Kant’s understanding of beingness and time, especially with respect to Heidegger’s interpretation of Kant’s understanding of the imagination in *The Critique of Pure Reason*, see *Echoes After Heidegger* by John Sallis.

prior (*a priori*), which in turn gives primacy to the thought (I think) that forms the image of causal connection (time as change) held together by this unity that stands against it. On the other hand, Da-sein, in order to ground the event of appropriation, must *essentially occur* as ground—must come to its grounding precisely as the ground. Da-sein is not, therefore, a ground prior to grounding. This grounding is abyssal. Time-space is this abyssal grounding of Da-sein that occurs as the event of appropriation. It is time-space and not mere presence because this grounding does not establish the persistence of beings in advance in a look, that is, in a representation for the mere benefit of thought. Rather, it is this grounding that “first founds the presence and absence of beings” (301). Time-space occurs simultaneously with what is true as a being but this simultaneity does not establish time-space over and against beings so that beings can subsequently come to fill it in the way beings are thought to fill the empty extensions of space and time. The truth of beings cannot be read off merely from what occurs in time-space. Time-space *with*-stands the truth of beings as withstanding the event of appropriation in the grounding of the “between” as Da-sein. Time-space becomes proper to the truth of beings through this “between,” which only occurs from out of Da-sein as the domain of what is proper. Thus, only through Da-sein is time-space proper to the truth. This is discussed further in chapter three.

What then of “the self” that forms in the wake of the unity of transcendental apperception if time and space, as time-space, are no longer established from out of the unified “I think” in opposition to beings? For this we must turn to *Being and Time* to see what Heidegger says there about selfhood.

In *Being and Time*, Heidegger addresses the Kantian “I think,” but here mainly to point out how unsuitable it is for claiming genuine selfhood. Heidegger’s argument is that for Kant the

“I” of the “I think,” is constituted as a subject, which, in turn, “does *not* characterize *the selfhood of the I qua self, but the sameness and constancy of something always already objectively present*. To define the I ontologically as a *subject* means to posit it as something always already objectively present” (BT 305). While Heidegger praises Kant for not conceiving the “I” as a substance, Kant nevertheless reduces the “I” to an objectively present subject, which, along with substance, fails to account for the full structural wholeness of care as “being-ahead-of-oneself-already-being-in (a world) as being-together-with (innerworldly beings encountered)” (302). Furthermore, care, as the ontological structure of Dasein, is grounded in the full ecstatic-horizonal constitution of temporality. It is obvious that the Kantian interpretation, on the other hand, restricts itself to the poverty of constant presence as that which is constantly present in the look given in advance. Ultimately, this restriction eliminates the possibility of attaching any content to the “I think” as “I think something,” for this already implies the worldliness of the “I” as “I-am-in-a-world” such that this “something” is an innerworldly being that is encounterable (307). In other words, “Kant did not see the phenomenon of world” and this prevented him from realizing the full temporal manifoldness of the “I” in its relationship to care and thus, selfhood. (307).

Heidegger addresses Kant in *Being and Time* to emphasize that it is unnecessary to posit the “I” when expressing one’s thoughts (“I think”) in order to ground care in the constancy of the self and its expression. For care “*does not need a foundation in a self. Rather, existentiality as a constituent of care provides the ontological constitution of the self-constancy of Dasein*” (308). Because of this, Heidegger can differentiate between the authentic and inauthentic ways of saying “I” and thus differentiate between what gives rise to self-constancy, but also to unself-constancy, from within the structural constitution of Dasein. Hence, it is entirely superfluous to

say “I” as an indication of selfhood for this saying can be entirely without the constancy, or steadfastness, that supports selfhood. By saying “I” in an everyday fashion, one speaks ontically and thus entirely unaware that by saying this, “*Dasein expresses itself as being-in-the-world*” (307). Rather, one forgets oneself in “*what one takes care of*” and loses oneself in the generic “they-self” (307). But this forgetting of oneself already implies that Dasein has the possibility of its own self-constancy (in the anticipation of its resolve to remain steadfast in unforgetfulness) without first having to express this by constantly reiterating it to itself in its self-presence. On the contrary, the resolution by which Dasein takes over itself authentically remains disclosed in the full ecstatic-horizonal nature of temporal (finite) existence. Furthermore, Dasein, in the authenticity of its anticipatory resolution, is reticent; for “authentic *being-a-self* does not [have to] keep on saying “I,” but rather “is” in reticence the thrown being that it can authentically be” (308). In other words, care, as the ontological structure of Dasein, is selfhood in its existentiality—care is selfhood in that care exists. The saying of “I” to oneself as in “I think” becomes unnecessary as, authentically, Dasein already *is* this self in its authentic existence. The self of selfhood thus shifts from an objectively present subject devoid of worldhood to the full existential constitution of Dasein as care in being-in-the-world.

The shift in the meaning of Dasein in *Being and Time* to Da-sein in *Contributions* likewise brings about a shift in the meaning of selfhood. For if selfhood is determined from out of the ontological constitution of Dasein as care in *Being and Time*, this determination is then no longer adequate to the determination of Da-sein as “the domain of what is proper” in *Contributions*. To understand this shift, it is necessary to examine what Heidegger says of the imagination in *Contributions*. Along with this it will also help to examine what Heidegger says, through Kant, of the imagination, in *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*. It is important to note

that in this latter book, while in many respects Heidegger shifts Kant's emphasis in order to move Kant in the direction of his own philosophy, primarily justifying his move to *Being and Time*, still, what will be spoken of below is essentially Kant's view, albeit adapted to Heidegger's imperative of showing the history of metaphysics to be, in its essence, ontology. The approach taken in this thesis likewise does to Heidegger what Heidegger does to Kant, but with respect to the unique. It is my belief that this is the best way to remain faithful to Heidegger's thinking and thus to penetrate the obfuscated language of the event.

According to Heidegger in *Contributions*, Da-sein, when thought of metaphysically, is merely "imagined." In turn, Da-sein is made into a "nonbeing" when compared to beings (247). This is so because what falls in the domain of the imagination is not part of actually existing beings, but is, rather, part of "a unity forming medium" with respect to the encountering of beings themselves (K 62). This interpretation of the imagination, however, comes from *The Critique of Pure Reason*, via *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, wherein the faculty of the imagination is a "faculty of forming" in which its formative power is that of "providing the image (or look)" (91). The pure power of the imagination is the medium that holds together the transcendence of the subject over against objects by connecting pure intuition and pure thinking. According to this interpretation, because the being in question is finite, that is, because it exists "in the midst of beings that already are, beings to which it has been delivered over," it must therefore "necessarily take this already existing being in stride, that is to say, it must offer it the possibility of announcing itself" (19). This taking in stride, in turn, must have the character of a "turning-toward" such that the being can offer itself in an encounter. As such, this "turning-toward must in itself be a preparatory bearing-in-mind of what is offerable in general" (63). Offering, therefore, "needs a certain perceivability" and so the horizon of this offering "must

present itself in a preliminary way and constantly as a pure look” (63). The subject must form “the look of the offering from out of itself” and it is the pure power of the imagination that carries out this task (64). As a result, the horizon formed in the “letting-stand-against” of what offers itself must, in the end, be a “making-sensible” of that horizon itself. Because the pure power of the imagination brings together pure intuition, which in its finitude is called sensibility, and pure thinking, which is the creation of pure concepts, and because this bringing together of pure intuition and pure thinking forms transcendence itself, it can therefore be said that “transcendence is formed in the making-sensible of pure concepts” (64). Here we see that what is formed in the imagination is not the content of the look (beings) but is the look itself that comes between the intuiting of the object and the thinking of the subject as the forming of the horizon of objectivity (transcendence). The structure of transcendence must therefore be in place before any being can be encountered whatsoever. Hence, the pure power of the imagination is never dependent on the presence of a being and the content of the imagination is never itself a being but is the formation of the horizon of the look for which beings can be encountered. This look, or image, is, as a result, a nonbeing. And since the content of the imagination is the formation of the look rather than what is held within the look, it can be said that what arises within the domain of the imagination alone is a nonbeing.

The pure horizon of objectivity (transcendence), which is formed into the look by the imagination, has as its object, the transcendental object (X) that lies behind every appearance. This transcendental object is the unity of appearances as correlate of the unity of transcendental apperception in terms of what in advance of all appearances stands against the unity of apperception. According to Kant, the transcendental object is necessary because of the dependency of appearances, as representations, on the necessity of an already established

standing against needed for the original relationship of transcendental subjectivity to its corresponding objectivity to occur. As representations, these manifold appearances are products of the intuition and therefore cannot account for the original standing against that first allows appearances to be given over to the subject in the first place. Hence, Kant postulates the transcendental object as that which gives these appearances from the original opposing position of a standing against. The transcendental object, however, cannot itself be brought into the look; it is nothing and so can never be made into an object of knowledge. It is referred to as an “object in general.” Heidegger clarifies that “this expression refers to that which makes up in advance the rough sizing up of all possible objects as standing-against, the horizon of a standing against. This horizon is indeed not object but rather a Nothing, if by object we mean a being which is apprehended thematically” (87). In these terms, we can say that the imagination, which forms the look of the horizon, thus forms the look of nothing.

The look *of* nothing is more precisely the look that *is* nothing insofar as it is given over to the experience of beings in their Being. Thus, this horizon (of the look) is the “between” of the ontological knowledge that forms transcendence—the going beyond beings towards Being—and, furthermore, this ontological knowledge “is nothing other than the holding-open of the horizon within which the Being of the being becomes discernable in a preliminary way” (87). In this way, the pure horizon, as nothing, comes between the totality of beings and the Being of beings, which, as differentiated from beings, makes up the ontological difference. The ontological difference, therefore, is sustained by the power of the imagination that forms the horizon (transcendence) held open by ontological knowledge, connecting intuition and thinking in the forming of this look—a look that is nothing as far as beings are concerned, but which nonetheless allows the Being of beings to come into view. The horizon of this look is held open

by ontological knowledge because ontological knowledge is the realm for which the look is appropriate. Ontological knowledge is knowledge because it attains what Kant refers to as “transcendental truth.” This truth “consists in the general relation to the same” (87). As such, ontological knowledge is knowledge of this general relation to the same and thus, by thinking this sameness, ontological knowledge holds open the horizon of the look as that which makes possible the standing-against of what can be referred to in sameness. Thinking, then, while still beholden to beings, achieves ontological knowledge by thinking the Being of beings from the vantage point of the look established by the power of the imagination.

It is now easier to understand the nature of selfhood in Kant and the transition that takes place to *Being and Time*, which Kant was unable to make. In the preceding account, time was briefly alluded to as what makes up pure intuition. This is such “to the extent that it prepares the look of succession from out of itself, and it *clutches* this as such *to itself* as the formative taking-in-stride” (132). Because this occurs “without the aid of experience,” this means that in its essence, “time is pure affection of itself” and “as pure it forms the essence of something like self-activating” (132). Only the “finite subject” holds the possibility of this self-activation; therefore, “time as pure self-affection forms the essential structure of subjectivity” (132). The finite subject, in its finitude has both finite knowledge and finite intuition. Heidegger explains the full structural relation of this finitude as self-affecting: “The finitude of knowledge rests on the finitude of intuiting, i.e., on taking-in-stride. Consequently, pure knowledge, i.e., the knowing of what stands-against in general, the pure concept, is grounded in an intuition which takes [things] in stride. Pure taking-in-stride, however, means: becoming affected in the absence of experience, i.e., self-affecting” (133). On these terms, it can be said that pure self-affection provides the “primal structure of the finite self” (134). As a result, Heidegger makes explicit the relationship

of time to the pure apperception of the “I think” in showing that “time as pure self-affection is not found “in the mind” “along with” pure apperception. Rather, as the ground for the possibility of selfhood, time already lies within pure apperception, and so it first makes the mind into a mind” (134). In conclusion, “[t]ime and the “I think” no longer stand incompatibly and incomparably at odds; they are the same” (134). At this point, Heidegger can say of Kant that he interpreted both time and the “I think” as in each respect “for itself” but without making this connection explicit to himself. Thus, Kant remains marred by the constant presence of the “I think” *within* time as the ground of the “for itself,” without expressly recognizing that this “for itself” is already accomplished by time, which in the first instance is what makes the mind, which gives rise to the “I think,” into a mind. In other words, the “I think” is the constant presence of the “for itself” within what is already “for itself.” Hence, the transition to Heidegger’s interpretation of selfhood in *Being and Time* eliminates this superfluous self-positing that limits the self to constant present within what is already “for itself” as the structural grounding of care in the full ecstatic-horizonal constitution of temporality.

Although the focus so far has been on the horizon of the look with regard to the power of the imagination, and in turn, on an interpretation of the self that arises in structural dependency on the look, this focus has once again become absorbed in metaphysics. It is important to understand what is implied by the imagination in this regard, but attention must soon return to the problem at hand, which demands an account of the imagination from the point of view of *Contributions*—a work that speaks from the overcoming of metaphysics. However, this preliminary interpretation of the imagination will once again become important when discerning what Heidegger says in *Contributions*. Therefore, it is important to show more determinately the inadequacy of the foundations of this interpretation in order to see the distinction more clearly.

In *Contributions*, not only does Heidegger interpret the imagination differently than in *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*, he also explicitly rejects this interpretation, but for reasons that are more directly related to his rejection of transcendence. Heidegger's rejection of transcendence comes from his overall rejection of the metaphysical way of thinking in which the idea of transcendence arises. It is in the work, "What is Metaphysics?" that Heidegger "grasps transcendence, the realization of the ontological difference, as the heart of metaphysics" (PT 74). *Meta-physics* is a stepping beyond beings and thus a being held out into the Nothing. The question of the Nothing, first arises when we take seriously what is always casually asserted when limiting the domain of science to the study of beings alone: that only beings are to be interrogated "and beyond that—nothing" (BW 95). Heidegger asks, "What about this nothing?" (95). In contrast to science, metaphysics here finds itself at home in the question of the nothing for the first time. However, to question the nothing, "it must be given beforehand" (98). Because the nothing "is the complete negation of the totality of beings," (98) and because "we can never comprehend absolutely the whole of beings in themselves," an alternative way must be found to get at the nothing (99). We cannot comprehend beings as a whole but we can be amidst beings as a whole. This happens through the fundamental mood of anxiety. In anxiety, beings as a whole slip away, which includes ourselves; thus, only "pure Dasein" remains as the being there of the nothing. The nothing repels in nihilation, which is neither annihilation nor negation, each of which derive their meaning from beings and so cannot relate to the nothing. Nihilation discloses beings "in their full but heretofore concealed strangeness as what is radically other—with respect to nothing" (103). This strangeness is precisely "the original openness of beings," which reveals "that they are beings—and not nothing" (103). If by the nihilation of the nothing, beings are revealed *as beings* and not nothing, then what this nihilation actually does to beings is reveal

them in their Being. The Nothing thus reveals that what is most strange about beings is that they are. Heidegger now gives the definition of Dasein: “being held out into the nothing” (103). This is precisely what Heidegger says of Dasein in *Being and Time*, except there Dasein is posed in relation to the questioning of its being. Heidegger now reveals this questioning in its essence as the questioning of the being who is held out into the nothing that nihilates. This nihilation, in turn, reveals beings in their Being. Therefore, Dasein is the being that questions Being, and transcendence is thus revealed as the metaphysical way of questioning that goes beyond beings to Being itself.

We now turn to Heidegger’s attempt at an overcoming of metaphysics in order to understand the fundamental arguments of *Contributions* in which we are now situated. To understand this overcoming, I am indebted to the work of prominent Heidegger scholar, Otto Pöggeler, specifically, *Martin Heidegger’s Path of Thinking*, for its lucid account of this fundamental transition. While Heidegger’s own work should always remain primary when trying to understand him, Pöggeler’s book undertakes the extraordinary task of arranging the path of Heidegger’s thinking into a compelling account of its essential moves.

The overcoming of metaphysics as Heidegger sees it is essentially the overcoming of the need to have truth at one’s disposal. This, in turn, is to set up “one’s abode in the truth of [beyng]” whereby the truth of beyng calls Da-sein forth into thinking this truth without offering itself up as the ultimate ground of that thinking (Pöggeler 145). Heidegger thus spells this word beyng [Seyn] “to distinguish Being itself from Being as the mere truth of beings,” which is to say, to distinguish it from an ultimate ground by which to read off the truth of every being (115). The abode of this truth is therefore the thinking that abandons every ground in favor of the abyssal staying away of the ground. To arrive at this abyssally grounded truth of Being,

Heidegger first experiences metaphysics “as a history whose ground remains concealed and obscured” (115). The uncovering of this ground as “the metaphysics of metaphysics,” or the grounding of the need to ground, reveals itself in its absurdity, viciously circling around itself, eventually motivating Heidegger to break from metaphysics altogether. In the overcoming of metaphysics “thinking renounces that metaphysical approach which takes Being self-evidently as constant presencing and which does not ask about the truth of [beyng]. In order to be able to overcome the metaphysical approach, thinking must turn toward what is unthought in that which metaphysics thinks, toward the temporal character of presence and thereby to the temporalness of the sense or the truth of [beyng]” (115). What Heidegger calls “the event” is precisely the truth of beyng borne out by the temporal character of presence as “the current history not at one’s disposal” (116). More specifically, “Event refers to [beyng] as the current occurrence of a truth which is not at one’s command, a truth which needs man’s thinking and is thus “identical” with him, which lets beings be seen in their Being historically, and which therefore tears open the “difference” between Being and beings” (116). The event is thus one of appropriation: truth is appropriated to thinking and thinking is appropriated to truth all of which is grounded in the occurrence of Da-sein as the “there” as the domain of what is proper. Da-sein, however, gives way to the abyssal grounding of its occurrence in time-space; for the “thereness” of Da-sein is never ultimate as if it were constantly present to this appropriation now and forever. On the contrary, it is only the “there” of this appropriation by leaping into the event, by becoming dislodged from out of its forgetfulness of beyng as the ground of constant presence, thereby revealing the coming to presence of the event in its full temporalness.

Abiding in the truth of beyng can no longer be thought of in relation to the transcendence of Being toward beings, but rather as being open to the “clearing for self-concealing” as the truth

of beyng. This is to say that insofar as Being is no longer thought of as ground, then openness to beings can likewise no longer be thought of in their constant presence to Being as if secured by that ground. Instead, this openness is now openness to the clearing for self-concealment, that is, it is now openness to that which reveals itself while at the same time concealing the ground of its revelation. Here the ground is not merely hidden within the openness; for that would only be to present beings in the obscurity of their ground as if the ground were merely in need of being uncovered. Rather, the ground itself withdraws into concealment and so can never be secured beyond the temporal revelation of its withdrawal. In fact, the revealing of this withdrawal into concealment is precisely the truth of beyng itself. To demand anything above and beyond this withdrawal would be to demand something above and beyond the truth of beyng. Hence, the inappropriateness of transcendence can be seen more fully:

one thinks of the ascent beyond objects in the transcendental of the transcendental horizon, in the horizon of the field of vision which encompasses the outlook (the Being of beings as idea or condition for a possibility), and in this way reaches beyond appearance. However, the transcendental horizon is that side of the truth of [beyng] which is turned toward us and thus apparently at our disposal. The concealment which belongs to the unconcealment of Being appears to transcendental knowledge as an empty nothing (as the X of the thing in itself). If this concealment is thought as the innermost core of truth, then the truth of [beyng] can no longer be grasped as transcendental horizon. (141)

Transcendental knowledge, as ontological knowledge, secures for itself its own certainty in the going beyond beings in their totality. It therefore takes as the horizon of this going beyond the Nothing for which all beings are nihilated. But if this nothing is now undermined by a withdrawal into concealment, it can no longer be secured for the purposes of a truth that assumes

all is given in its totality. Transcendence, as opening the horizon of truth for ontological knowledge, is plagued by the ambiguity of what escapes it. This concealment is precisely the temporal character of presence itself, no longer constant in its identity with the ground of Being. Rather than a constant transcendence of beings toward Being, what takes place is a leap into the clearing for the self-concealing of being, a leap that overcomes the ground of its own certainty so that it can establish the “there” of what is most proper to its disposition.

The leap into the clearing for the self-concealing of being is a leap in the way of questioning itself. This leap is made from the disposition of restraint [*Verhaltenheit*], which is the disposition that stays away from grounding the way of questioning in the constancy of any ground. Every question asked from the constancy of a ground that would secure the certainty of an answer asks from out of a lack of a sense of plight for questioning anew. Dispelling the kind of questioning that merely questions to advance upon the ground of its certainty, Heidegger says of the questioning that leaps into the event, that what resides in it is “the tempestuous advance that says “yes” to what has not been mastered and the broadening out into ponderable, yet unexplored realms. What reigns here is a self-surpassing into something above ourselves. To question is to be liberated for what, while remaining concealed, is compelling” (CP 10). In this way, “questioning must be carried out in an originary way,” thus turning from everything already given over to questioning in order to “think about its own plight” (11). It is a questioning that makes questioning itself into the plight of what it questions. For this it is without the security of a ground possessed in advance. And yet what occurs in this questioning is that it reveals itself as “my question and [as] my *unique* question, for at issue in it is indeed what is *most unique*” (11). Here we find the first intimation of selfhood in the assignment of the event. Da-sein is assigned to both the event and to itself, the latter giving rise to the self. This dual assignment can be seen

more clearly in the uniqueness of this questioning, which in its uniqueness is, on the one hand, a leap into the unsecured clearing of what withdraws into concealment and is thus without comparison to what has already been grounded in the clearing and so does not withdraw, and, on the other hand, the uniqueness of being *my* question—the question that becomes questionable for the first time only in the leap and so belongs to the carrying out of what is proper to questioning itself in the unique self-concealment of the question. This questioning grounds itself in being proper to itself as both question and event: Da-sein. A leap into the event of appropriation is a leap into the grounding of Da-sein as the domain of what is proper.⁹

What makes this question *my* unique question is that in the disposition of restraint, which prepares for the leap—a leap that assigns the domain of what is proper to itself as question and to the event as becoming questionable—identity and difference are no longer secured in their ground; instead they become historical in the eventuating determination of their belonging. They are placed up for de-cision. This de-cision simultaneously belongs to the self and to its remaining

⁹ In her essay, “Reading Heidegger’s *Contributions to Philosophy: An Orientation*,” Susan M. Schoenbohm describes this questioning in terms of the dimensionality of being: “The dimension of be-ing that is its *question*, then, remains distinct, although not separate from, whatever determinations of be-ing, whatever meanings, arise through it. This dimension of question, we will see, is linked with be-ing’s “not-character,” that is, with be-ing’s not-being *a* being, with be-ing’s difference from any determinate being. In be-ing as eventuation (en-owning, *Er-eignis*) the occurrence of this question-dimension of be-ing occurs, we might say provisionally, as the withdrawal-dimension of be-ing from beings, as be-ing’s withdrawal from beings, as abyss” (CCP 18). I have chosen to refer to what Schoenbohm calls the “question-dimension” in the first-person possessive as “*my* unique question” to highlight that this dimensionality is grounded in the domain of what is proper (Da-sein) and to emphasize that this appropriation of questioning occurs in an intimate relationship with the assignment of the self in the eventuation of the event. Schoenbohm understands this intimate relationship when she says: “The transition from metaphysical thinking to be-ing-historical thinking enfolds a change in this thinking of humans—that is, in our being—from thinking and experiencing ourselves in terms of some permanent essence *toward* a thinking of “self” as having whatever character or meaning it has only in virtue of be-ing-t/here in the world. *We* are now implicated in the *question* of the very determination of this, our da-sein” (19).

in eventuation.¹⁰ The questioning of this unique question becomes the ground of the future human being (the human being that is futural—that has a future) and as such carries out the thinking that is proper to history. History “is a style of *Da-sein*,” determined and disposed by the basic disposition of restraint, which allows for a future that is not lost to the present (29). Heidegger distinguishes between “what now seems to be taken as history: the dreary hunt for self-devouring incidents which allow themselves to be seized, fleetingly, only by means of the loudest clamor” and “the concealed history of the great stillness” (29). The concealed history is the history of the leap into the clearing for the self-concealing of *beyng*. The concealed history is thus the history of self-concealment and as such it is the history of the great stillness of restraint that prepares for the leap out of constancy. Nothing is more still than the restraint of *Da-sein* asking *my* unique question. This questioning grasps the essence of *beyng* from the “full essential occurrence of the temporal-spatial abyss” of the concealed (28). As such, it is unique, not only because it has not yet been asked, but because it grounds a future history that inherits the uniqueness of the question as its futurity. This future history is the question being asked again in a unique way and so this history must itself belong to uniqueness. History is only historical when it is the history of unique questioning. The de-cision about identity and difference is the uniqueness of the question. This question puts even what is human into question and makes questioning into what is properly human. Heidegger refers to “*Da-sein* as the ground of a

¹⁰ In his essay, “The Event of Entinking the Event,” Richard Polt contrasts decision and choice, with the latter relating to an already established self, the former relating to the very event that assigns selfhood. Polt writes: “The *leap* that opens up de-cision for us is neither an arbitrary choice nor a necessity that is forced upon us but a free venture in response to distress (*Not*). Instead of surveying a set of given options and choosing one, we are motivated by an urgent plight that impels us to risk our own identity in a leap into the happening of *be-ing*, into a de-cision that will transform us and reveal beings in a new way” (CCP 91). I have taken this characterization of the decision even further by explicitly stating that this decision concerns identity and difference themselves by placing them in opposition in a unique way.

determinate future being of the human being, not the ground of “the” human being as such” (237). *The* human being is without a future because it has *the* ground at its disposal in its relation to the Being of beings. Its thinking no longer belongs together with Being in the uniqueness of the event. It already knows what it knows in its identity with Being and its difference from beings (which are identical to themselves). Its future is therefore always the expectation of a presence, which is no future at all. But in the leap, Da-sein must make a de-cision about what identity and difference are.¹¹ This de-cision determines future uniqueness. Future uniqueness is the projection of the question and the event upon the ground of what is proper and so the uniqueness of the question is appropriated as “mine.”

The leap into the clearing for the self-concealing of beyng is a leap from the ground of *the* human being to the grounding of the future human being in Da-sein. What is unique about this future human being comes to Da-sein as the horizon of uniqueness. Da-sein grounds this horizon by leaping into the appropriation of its own abyssal belonging to the event. Since the grounding of this horizon is also the grounding of the future human being, Da-sein appropriates its belonging to the event as the projection of its appropriation upon the horizon of uniqueness that remains unique with this future human being who also belongs to the event as Da-sein. This projection is the transfigured and transfiguring “between” of its own unique question and the

¹¹ In his essay, “Da-sein and the Leap of Being,” Walter A. Brogan writes: “The leap is an original juncture that both joins *and* parts. The leap is so close that there is nothing between its occurrence and that from which it departs. And yet the departure is so radical that everything is set aside and everything is too remote to be accessed. The leap occurs in the juxtaposition of these opposites, in the sameness of opposition that Heidegger calls an originary strife” (CCP 176). The de-cision, which takes place in the leap, occurs in the strife of identity and difference—world and earth, as Heidegger would say—in which the identical and the different must be de-cided without the security of a ground, which means without the security of any being that would determine this de-cision always in advance. Hence, it is also always a de-cision about the uniqueness of the event; for what is de-cided is not something about beings, but about the event itself, which is placed up for de-cision only in the event and as the event.

unique questioning of the event, which, as a transfigured and transfiguring “between,” transfigures what was once thought of as “the “between” in whose openness beings become distinguishable from beingness such that initially only beings *themselves* (i.e., precisely concealed as such and thus concealed with respect to their beingness) can be experienced” (257). In this transfigured “between” of the unique question is encountered selfhood as the property of the imagination. Let us now look at what Heidegger says of the imagination in *Contributions* more closely.

Heidegger, in his rejection of transcendence, rejects the Kantian interpretation of the imagination as the horizon opened up between Being and beings in the metaphysical way of thinking that allows for ontological knowledge. The horizon of this “between” in *Contributions* is Da-sein itself—the domain of what is proper. But here, Da-sein, rather than the “between” of Being and beings, is the “between” of this ground (the Being of beings) and the grounding of this ground itself as the being there of the clearing for the self-concealing of being. Da-sein is therefore that which holds this clearing open by being there to both the clearedness of the clearing (ground) and the withdrawing of the self-concealed that is opened up in the clearing (the grounding of the ground) through its understanding of being as “the projection of the open realm” in order to stand in this openness (239). What is most proper to the ground is thus the grounding of the ground from the openness of the clearing for which it grounds. Da-sein is therefore what, in terms of beings, would be considered the imagined insofar as Da-sein leaps into grounding this horizon that opens between Being and beings. Because the horizon of this clearing is Da-sein itself as the grounding ground, the imagination occurs, as Heidegger says, in its highest reality: “*Da-sein as the projecting-thrown grounding, is the highest reality in the domain of imagination*, assuming we understand the latter not simply as a faculty of the soul and

not simply as something transcendental (cf. Kant book),¹² but as the *event* itself, wherein all *transfiguration* oscillates” (247). By “highest reality,” Heidegger is referring to the leap that Da-sein makes into the horizon itself, appropriating this horizon such that it comes to oscillate with what escapes all imagination. This is not the horizon of a standing-against for what transcends it and thus the making-sensible of a conceptualization that stands opposed to the hidden unity of what it conceptualizes (the Nothing as transcendental object), but the horizon of the thrown-projected ground that enters into grounding itself from out of the abyss. Da-sein, as the “between” of the ground and the grounding, is the highest reality in the domain of the imagination because by leaping into this horizon, Da-sein appropriates and is appropriated by what is uniquely unimaginable—the truth of being as event. The uniquely unimaginable is not encountered from the horizon of a sameness in difference (the sameness of the unity of apperception to the unity of the transcendental object that stands against it), but from the horizon of what sameness and differentiation are in their eventuation. In other words, the uniquely unimaginable is encountered from the horizon of uniqueness.¹³ This horizon is not the transcendence of an objectivity, but what is most proper to being a horizon. The highest reality in the domain of the imagination is the being there of the imagined—Da-sein—to the uniquely

¹² *Kant and the Problem of Metaphysics*.

¹³ In her essay, “Poietic Saying,” Daniela Vallega-Neu, draws a correlation between the problems besetting the project of *Being and Time* and the thinking of the ontological difference in terms of its need for the language of metaphysics. She points out that Heidegger suggests “leaping over” this difference (thus leaping over transcendence) to experience the truth of being from out of the event itself (CP §132). Vallega-Neu writes: “The leap over transcendence is a leap into what in *Being and Time* is called the temporal horizon of being; in *Contributions* this temporal horizon is rethought as the truth of being. The leap into the horizon overcomes the very notion of horizon” (CCP 68). I have chosen to characterize this leap into the horizon in terms of the horizon of uniqueness. As is demonstrated throughout this thesis, the horizon of uniqueness is related to the very breakdown of this horizon in terms of the uniquely unimaginable. It is the horizon of the unique precisely as this breakdown and thus its own breakdown is proper to itself.

unimaginable. Hence, this horizon does not give a representation; for Da-sein is not opposed to anything. Rather, Da-sein appropriates its own unique propriety to the unimaginable—the grounding of its being the ground—as ground of the event of this grounding—the event of appropriation. Da-sein asks *my* unique question about the uniqueness of the event and so belongs to the questioning that escapes it in being utterly unique and so not at its disposal.

The appropriation of being proper to the uniquely unimaginable, as the being there of the imagined (Da-sein), is the event wherein all transfiguration takes place, or as Heidegger says, oscillates. It is only in the event that the uniquely unimaginable transfigures Da-sein in its being there as this highest domain. Following the passages quoted above, Heidegger continues:

“Imagination” [“*Einbildung*”] as an occurrence of the *clearing* itself. Yet “imagination,” *imaginatio*, is a name that names from the viewpoint of the immediate apprehending of [that which is] and of beings. Calculated in those terms, all being and its opening constitute a *formed image* that is added to what supposedly stands on its own. But all this is inverted: what is “imagined” in the usual sense is always the so-called “really” present at hand, for that is what is brought to an image, i.e., brought into the clearing, into the “there,” so as to appear. (247).

Calculated from the viewpoint of constant presence, transfiguration (in terms of being as event) is itself already determined according to the formed image and is thus added to what already stands on its own and is available in that image. It thus becomes transfiguration within the already formed image of what stands against. Thought of in these terms, transfiguration takes place only amongst beings. This is change in the classical sense. What appears has already been formed into an image—it already has its ground and so is identical to itself in an already determined way according to the difference opened up in advance by the horizon of the look.

What is real is only real because of being secured in the constancy of the same image of a standing-against as presence. Yet what Heidegger says is that all of this is inverted.

Transfiguration, if it is an occurrence of the clearing itself as imagined, is an occurrence not of what changes, but a change in what is thought of as occurrence—a change in the way of the imagination itself and an appropriation of this change as event.¹⁴ Instead of “the real” being what is brought into the formed image, that is, what stands on its own and is subsequently seen by the look, “the real” is the transfiguration of the imagination with the uniquely unimaginable.

Imagination becomes an experience of the unique—not an expanding of what is placed in the image for the first time, but a transfiguration of the imagination itself in its oscillation with what escapes all imagination. What remains constant, if that word can still be used, is the uniqueness of this event. Da-sein is the being there of the imagination (in selfhood) to this uniqueness as the imagination’s highest reality.

The human being is as such only by being put into question, but this questioning must likewise acknowledge its relationship to the event for it could not come from the human being alone and still put the human being into question. What puts the human being into question is the need to be one’s own (to belong to oneself), and as such, the need to belong to the appropriation that is “mine” from the event of appropriation. This need is the need to ask *my* unique question, not because the individual human being must stand apart from the rest, but because only by searching for the kind of question that could even be proper to me at all does the human being

¹⁴ In his essay, “The Event of Enthinking the Event,” Richard Polt characterizes this in terms of the *taking place* of the event of appropriation as the taking place of time itself. In other words, “not as an ordinary process within time but as the inceptual happening of time itself” (CCP 94). He continues: “We can think of time itself as “happening” only if we manage to separate the notion of happening from the notion of change within the framework of a timeline. Heidegger thinks of primordial happening not in terms of change but in terms of the play of belonging and estrangement, uniqueness and reproducibility” (94).

dislodge itself from the already established essence of the human being to participate in what is unique about being human. *My* unique question begins with the question of what is proper to appropriation: “Is this me?”¹⁵ This question is not one of self-reflection; it is a question about the domain of what is proper. To ask *my* unique question is to ask how I belong to this domain—how I belong to being proper to myself.¹⁶ But what is proper escapes me, otherwise I would not belong to it (belonging is always abyssal in this way). Even if “I” am “myself,” this owning of a self is itself not at my disposal, but is available only by being there to the domain of what is proper and thus as grounding the event of appropriation. To be a self is not to be an “I” or “myself,” but to ground the “between” of selfhood as the “between” of the event. Heidegger says of selfhood that it is “the path and the realm of the assigning appropriation-to and of the origin of the “to” and the “self”: the ground of the belonging to being, a belonging that includes the (steadfast) consigning appropriation. Consigning appropriation only where in advance and constantly the assigning appropriation; but both out of the ap-propiation proper to the event”

¹⁵ For Heidegger, the basic question is, “*how does being essentially occur?*” (CP 62). I have chosen to render this question in a more intimate relation to selfhood as, “Is this me?” such that the question brings out the assignment of the self in the event. It is my belief that the two questions differ only in form while in fact pointing in the same direction. If the self is assigned in the event, then to question the self is to question this assignment, which is ultimately to question the essential occurrence of being. As Richard Polt writes, Heidegger’s “own question... asks about how “be-ing” (*Seyn*) happens—that is, how the being of beings *is given to us* as an issue” (CCP 90). This giving is always a matter of how the self comes to be assigned in the event in terms of its own unique questioning as eventuation itself.

¹⁶ In his essay, “The Event of Enthinking the Event,” Richard Polt writes: “Through enowning, the being of beings becomes our own, and at the same time, we are allowed to come into our own by entering Dasein” (CCP 82). “Enowning” is a translation of *Ereignis*, which is translated throughout this thesis as “event of appropriation.” Essentially, Polt is clarifying the relationship of the self and the event with respect to being and the Being of beings. Being gives the Being of beings over to the human being as an appropriation of the meaning of being, which is, at the same time, an appropriation of being proper to oneself in selfhood. In other words, this appropriation, or enowning, is not merely a giving over to the self that appropriates, but an appropriation into being proper itself, that is, an appropriation into selfhood as what belongs to appropriation in that it can appropriate.

(251). The question of the self does not reflect inward, but asks about belonging to what is there as the being there of belonging. This question asks about how being there is proper to me as well as to appropriation itself; hence, it is a question about both the self and the event. Likewise, it is a question about how the future human being can be this self, can leap into Da-sein as grounding the event, and thus participate in this uniqueness as what has yet to come by grounding what is unique about this ground. What is unique about this ground is that the future human being is *me* in the being there of Da-sein as grounding the event. Belonging to the event “essentially occurs only because being, in its uniqueness, needs Da-sein and also needs what is therein both grounded and grounding, namely the human being” (251). Da-sein is the horizon of the “between” of the ground and the grounding of the (future) human being as the highest reality in the domain of the imagination: the horizon of uniqueness. Belonging to the event is to ground this horizon in Da-sein’s appropriation to the event as assignment to both the self and the event in selfhood. To ground this horizon is to project this “between” of the ground and the grounding upon the horizon of uniqueness: to be the grounding of the ground. Selfhood is the projection of what is futural (the future human being) as what is “mine” but also not at my disposal. The self is this thrown-projection (Da-sein) that carries out the unique, which means it carries out what is not at its disposal as the ground of the future human being. *My* unique question is the unique questioning of the future human being from the perspective of what grounds this future human being in *its* unique grounding of the question as Da-sein. This means that being assigns the self its thrown-projection *as* selfhood, which is more than just the self, but the to-itself that escapes it in its own coming to be within the domain of what is proper. The future of the self is therefore the future human being that escapes it in its own futurity.

The self is the uniqueness of the horizon assigned to itself in the being there of the horizon of uniqueness. The self is appropriated from selfhood; this includes assignment to the event as what is proper to appropriation. In the appropriation of the event, the domain of what is proper (Da-sein) finds “itself” as a “self” by relating back to its grounding of the event as ground: “The *relation back* which is named in the terms “self,” to “itself,” with “itself” and for “itself” has its essence in *appropriation*” (253). Da-sein grounds the event as the domain of what is proper, but it is the appropriation of the event that gives to this domain its relation back to itself as what is most proper to the domain of what is proper in the event: being a self. Heidegger says, “Da-sein itself, as *ap-propriated*, becomes *more proper to itself* and becomes the self-opening ground of the self” (236). This being proper to the domain of what is proper is the horizon of being proper uniquely assigned to itself in the event. The self is the uniqueness of the horizon as what is proper to the horizon of uniqueness. It is therefore not selfsameness, but the uniquely proper imagination of selfhood. The self as assigned in the event is entirely different from the self that identifies with itself in the self-same, as in the subjectivity of the subject. The subject can be without a genuine self and still think of itself as a self:

Now, inasmuch as the human being, even in the abandonment by being, still stands in the open realm of the distorted essence of beings, the possibility is always given to be for “oneself,” to come back to “oneself.” But the “oneself” and the self which is thereby determined as merely something self-same remain empty and are filled only out of what is objectively present and lying there and at the moment dealt with by the human being. The to-oneself has no decisional character and is without knowledge of the bond to the occurrence of Da-sein. (253).

The to-oneself has no decisional character because it is already decided in opposition to the away-from-oneself which stands against it as the constant presence of beings (in their Being). Appropriation is distorted and therefore this “relation back” takes its cue from the presence of beings rather than the domain of what is proper (Da-sein). The knowledge of the bond to the occurrence of Da-sein is knowledge of the self-concealment of what reveals itself as the self in the to-itself that escapes it in its assignment to the self and its assignment to the event, both of which together constitute genuine selfhood. The self that fills itself out with what is objectively present is the self that finds the “I” as itself among beings and so clutches this “I” to “itself” while letting this “to-itself” remain unquestioned. However, selfhood “is more originary than any I or thou or we” (253). Selfhood escapes the self and so the relation back to itself is not at its disposal but achieved only in the leap that grounds the event as Da-sein. This relation that escapes the self, reveals itself as escaping the self in the occurrence of Da-sein as the clearing for the self-concealing of being as event. Here the decisional character of the to-oneself resides.

The decisional character of the to-oneself is the de-cision¹⁷ about identity and difference—the uniqueness of the question that is appropriated as “mine” from out of the abandonment of being toward what is thought of as “me.”¹⁸ This de-cision arises because Da-sein is assigned to itself as the uniqueness of the horizon. What occurs in this unique horizon is uniqueness itself, which belongs to “me,” while at the same time belonging to the event as what

¹⁷ Heidegger writes the word “de-cision” [“*Ent-Scheidung*”] in hyphenation to emphasize the de-separation that results from it [“*Scheidung*” translates as “separation” or “divorce”]. The de-cision about identity and difference is their de-separation in the event in that both the self and the event are separated for their appropriation to each other and yet this appropriation is precisely their de-separation.

¹⁸ Being abandons the self and its self-identity when the self becomes an object and is knowable as such. To experience this abandonment is to ask *my* unique question, which is to leap into the event of appropriation for the de-cision.

escapes “me,” and thus becomes future uniqueness by remaining unique. The uniqueness of the horizon puts into question what the self is with respect to the horizon of uniqueness, which Dasein recognizes as its proper projection of the unique—as its unique questioning of the event from the domain of what is proper. The de-cision about identity and difference is the uniqueness of the question appropriated as “mine.” For the uniqueness of the question first puts into question whether or not this question is available to a self and so is about “me” as much as the event. No longer in possession of the ground that separates itself from what is not itself (Being from beings), the self is no longer capable of securing the character of the to-itself in relation to any being. This horizon, being no longer transcendent but unique, reveals that uniqueness itself is the same as *this* uniqueness and yet different from this uniqueness as the future of the unique. The de-cision about identity and difference is thus the de-cision to be there as *this* unique horizon (self), without ground, yet grounding future uniqueness (the future human being). The self is the unique horizon that is appropriated to-itself in the horizon of the unique and so de-cides how uniqueness is “there” in the de-cision about identity and difference, which is the asking of *my* unique question from the unique event of appropriation.

The event of appropriation eventuates. It is unique. The eventuation of this unique event is the grounding of the event in the domain of what is proper for the reigning of appropriation. The domain of what is proper is “there” by asking the unique question. Asking the unique question is the leap into the horizon of uniqueness that oscillates with the uniquely unimaginable. The horizon of this uniqueness is the uniqueness of the horizon. For the uniquely unimaginable is appropriated in its uniqueness as the de-cision about the identity and difference of the unique in

its separation into the uniqueness of the horizon and the horizon of the unique.¹⁹ The horizon of uniqueness is proper to itself as the self-concealment of the event and the uniqueness of the horizon is proper to itself as the self-concealment of the self. The thrown-projection of Da-sein is its openness to the horizon of uniqueness as the uniqueness of the horizon. The self is not what is self-same but what is proper to itself as reigning over what escapes it. It reigns over asking *my* unique question. This question de-cides identity and difference with respect to the unique. *My* question always escapes me. It grounds the unique questioning of the future human being. For the future human being is only futural by asking *my* unique question. History is the carrying out of this unique questioning. Every event grounds the future human being. The domain of what is proper is the “between” of the grounding and the ground. It is proper to no “single” event. It is properly historical. It persists in time-space as the abyssal ground.

Regarding the relationship between the human being, Da-sein, and the self, it can be said that the human being leaps into Da-sein, gaining selfhood, and, in turn, the event is steadfastly held open by Da-sein as the “between” of the self and the event as the domain of what is proper. Da-sein is not the human being and the human being is not Da-sein, but “Da-sein and [the]

¹⁹ Heidegger writes: “The *uniqueness* of beyng grounds its *solitude*, in accord with which beyng casts round about itself only nothingness, whose neighborhood remains the most genuine one and the most faithful guardian of the solitude” (CP 371). Beyng is the uniquely unimaginable. It is *uniquely* unimaginable and so is *solitary* in its unimaginableness. But its solitude includes everything imaginable; for this is the horizon of its uniqueness. This horizon is itself unique in being appropriated to the uniquely unimaginable in its solitude. The unique is separated in itself as the uniqueness of the horizon and the horizon of uniqueness such that the uniquely unimaginable is appropriated to its uniqueness (by Da-sein) without being other than the unique itself. Hence, Heidegger continues: “Event always means event as ap-propriation, de-cision, encounter, un-settling, withdrawal, simplicity, uniqueness, solitude. The unity of this essential occurrence is non-objective and can be known only in that thinking which must venture the unusual—not as the peculiarity of something odd, but as the necessity of that which is most inconspicuous and in which are opened up the abyssal ground of the ground-lessness of the gods and the grounding condition of humans and in which, furthermore, something is assigned to beyng that metaphysics can never know, namely, *Da-sein*” (371).

human being are essentially related, inasmuch as Da-sein signifies the ground of the possibility of [the] future human being” (234). And yet Da-sein is itself a being in distinction from the human being: “Da-*sein* is not the mode of actuality of just any being: instead, it is itself the being of the “there” [...]. Da-sein is a way to be which “*is*” the “there” (taking “*is*” in an active-transitive sense, so to speak) such that in accord with *this* preeminent being, and as this being itself, Dasein is a unique being (that which essentially occurs in the essential occurrence of being)” (234). The characterization of Da-sein as the being of the “there” is reminiscent of what Heidegger says in *Being and Time* with respect to the self as the authentic existence of care. In the latter case, it is the fact that care exists—existentiality being a constituent of care—that provides the ontological constitution of the self-constancy of Dasein. In the case of the Da-sein of *Contributions*, however, which cannot be entirely equated with the human being as it is in *Being and Time*, the self is acquired only in the steadfast enduring of this unique being, which “*is*” the “there” of the unique event of appropriation encountered in the leap. In *Being and Time*, the steadfastness of Dasein is the steadfastness of the human being authentically existing as care in the anticipatory resolution of its unforgetfulness. In *Contributions*, steadfastness is “the domain of the human being who is grounded in Da-sein,” which is the “enduring of the clearing of self-concealment... taken up in the seeking, preserving, and stewardship carried out by *that* human being who has self-knowledge as one appropriated to being and belonging to the event” (235). Belonging to the event “essentially occurs only because being, in its uniqueness, needs Da-sein and also needs what is therein both grounded and grounding, namely the human being” (251). The human being provides the steadfastness that holds open the clearing in self-knowledge. Without the human being, Da-sein cannot remain steadfast to self-concealment by grounding self-concealment in the self of the ground. Self-knowledge is only for the sake of the

human being as grounded and grounding—the human being grounds the being of the future human being by determining the self-concealment of the human being and remaining steadfast to this self-concealment in belonging to the event. The human being enters the event in the leap, which “is the opening-up *self*-projection “into” Da-sein. Da-sein is grounded in the leap. Grounded through the leap is that to which the leap leaps as opening up” (240). Da-sein is “the sovereign center of the appropriating eventuation as the assignment, of the ones who belong, to the event and at the same time to *themselves*: becoming a self” (246). Being can withdraw in self-concealment only because those who belong to the event also belong to themselves in selfhood. The assignment to the event of this withdrawal into self-concealment is simultaneously the assignment to the self that remains to what withdraws—being a self is being there to self-concealment. Da-sein is the unique “there” of the clearing for self-concealment as the “between” of the self and the concealment, each of which belongs to the other. The self, in its self-knowledge, is the unique horizon of the being there of the horizon of uniqueness that withdraws into concealment.

Heidegger later speaks of the essence of the human being as ek-sistence, such as in “Letter on Humanism,” which offers a retrospective on Heidegger’s early work, specifically *Being and Time*. The question of ek-sistence is an elaboration of the question of existence. The question of existence is necessary for the question of ek-sistence to later be asked on the grounds of this earlier questioning. In *Contributions*, Heidegger is already beginning to shift from the meaning of existence as it appears in *Being and Time* to this newly worked out question of ek-sistence.²⁰ The parallel of this shift can be found in the shift from Dasein to Da-sein. In a passage

²⁰ In his essay, “Forgetfulness of God: Concerning the Center of Heidegger’s *Contributions to Philosophy*,” Günter Figal makes an important point about *Contributions* place in both the early and later thinking of Heidegger. He writes: “*Contributions* is not only a summary and

in *Contributions* specifically aimed at *Being and Time*, Heidegger makes this shift more explicit. In *Being and Time*, Dasein is the expression of being in that “the term “Dasein,” which we use to designate this being [the being whose essence lies in its existence], does not express its what—as in the case of table, house, tree—but rather being” (BT 41). It does not express what it is in terms of objective attributes, as is the case with an objectively present being, but rather it expresses “possible ways for it to be” in terms of the fact that it “is” (41). Dasein is that being which is concerned with being and this as concern for its own being—as concern for “itself.” Da-sein, on the other hand, as *ex-sistere*, is “insertion into, and standing out into, the openness of beyng. From here alone is determined the “what” (i.e., the “*who*” and the selfhood) of Da-sein” (239). Rather than being this “who” by default as the being that is concerned with its being, and thus as the *existence* of care, Da-sein is instead “the enduring of the truth of beyng” and this only “as an ex-sisting *self* which steadfastly withstands exposedness” (238). Ex-sistence here means “for the sake of Da-sein, i.e., for the sake of grounding the truth of beyng” (239). The difference lies in the meaning of the “for the sake of itself.” In *Being and Time*, this concern “for the sake of itself” is care, and the existence of care is by default that which gives the “itself” for the sake of which it exists. In *Contributions*, the “for the sake of itself” now means “preservation and stewardship of being, provided what is fundamentally essential is indeed the understanding of being” (239). The understanding of being is the steadfast withstanding of exposedness to beyng—exposedness to the grounding of the ground, which, in its grounding is unsecured by any ground and so is abyssal. Da-sein grounds this grounding as the “there” of this exposedness for

concentration of what Heidegger philosophically worked out in the thirties but also the anticipation of his later philosophy. Indeed, viewed this way, *Contributions* is the center of Heidegger’s thinking after *Being and Time*” (CCP 199). Similarly, this thesis treats *Contributions* as a sort of fulcrum within Heidegger’s work, thus drawing his earlier work into meditations that directly anticipate his later work.

the sake of what is exposed and for the sake of itself as withstanding exposure. Where Dasein is exposed to beings in their being, Da-sein is exposed to beyng as the giving of being and beings in the identity and difference of what it gives. The steadfast withstanding of exposure to that which gives (beyng) is what reveals the essence of the human being as ek-sistence.

The ek-sistence of the human being is the non-conceptualized essence of the human being in its relation to the clearing for the self-concealment of beyng as Da-sein. Ek-sistence means “standing out into the truth of [beyng]” (BW 230). In contrast to *existentia*, “Ek-sistence identifies the determination of what man is in the destiny of truth. *Existentia* is the name for the realization of something that is as it appears in its Idea” (230). This differentiation makes clear that we are not trying to understand the essence of the human being as the human being appears “from the outside,” as if we were trying to understand the essence of an objectively present being. If that were the case, then the essence of the human being would already be determined in advance of the question—as the objectively present subject who identifies with the being of beings in that this subject transcends beings and in transcendence gives beings over to their being. Here, as well, truth is determined in advance through the correspondence between being and beings. The truth of beyng, however, is not preceded by any definition of truth, but is the essence of truth itself. By asking about the truth of beyng, we are asking about the truth of the essence of truth, and as such, we are asking about the very nature of identity and difference. Hence, a representation of truth is here impossible for that would imply the truth of the representation in the way mentioned above. The principles of logic cannot hold sway where identity and difference are themselves at stake and so up for de-cision. For logic “understands thinking to be the representation of beings in their being, which representation proposes to itself in the generality of the concept” (250). This generality of the concept implies that truth stands

outside the world for which things are true—that truth is held in the eternal form of the Idea. Alternatively, Heidegger speaks of the “destiny of truth” in contrast to what “appears in the Idea.” The destiny of truth is the destiny of the human being as the one who stands out into that truth—as this standing out itself, that is, Ek-sistence. Truth cannot be separated from its exposure and so cannot be separated from the one who is exposed to it. Ek-sistence is the destiny of truth as the essence of the human being. And since the truth of being itself cannot be represented in the generality of the concept and thus removed from its destiny (which does not imply that representation is not true *within* the destiny of truth), it is therefore unique in its occurrence. The essence of the human being, as Ek-sistence, is the standing out into the unique event, which is the clearing for the self-concealing of being—the truth of being.

Ek-sistence is horizontal as the standing out into the unique. This is similar to what Heidegger says of temporality as being ecstatic and horizontal in its constitution. Heidegger explains the ecstatic-horizontal constitution of temporality in *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology* as such:

Within itself, original time is outside itself; that is the nature of its temporalizing. It is this outside itself itself. That is to say, it is not something that might first be extant as a thing and thereafter outside itself, so that it would be leaving itself behind itself. Instead, within its own self, intrinsically, it is nothing but the outside-itself pure and simple. As this ecstatic character is distinctive of temporality, each ecstasis, which temporalizes only in temporalizing unity with the others, contains within its own nature a *carrying-away toward something* in a formal sense. Every such remotion is intrinsically *open*. A peculiar *openness*, which is given with the outside-itself, belongs to ecstasis. That toward which each ecstasis is intrinsically open in a specific way we call the *horizon of the ecstasis*.

The horizon is the *open expanse* toward which remotion as such is outside itself. *The carrying-off opens up this horizon and keeps it open.* As ecstatic unity of future, past, and present, temporality has a horizon determined by the ecstases. Temporality, as the original unity of future, past, and present, is *ecstatically-horizonal* intrinsically.

“Horizontal” means “characterized by a horizon given with the ecstasis itself.” Ecstatic-horizonal temporality makes ontologically possible not only the constitution of the Dasein’s being, but also the temporalizing of the only time of which the common understanding of time is aware and which we designate generally as the irreversible sequence of nows. (BPP 267)

Dasein (and not Da-sein), in being constituted existentially by care, which is grounded in the ecstatic-horizonal constitution of temporality, is thrown-projected being-in-the-world. The worldhood of the world is the being-there of being to the being for which being is a question. Dasein is as such only as a being-in-the-world. Temporality is here a given. Dasein is therefore always a temporal being. In this analysis, Dasein is confined to the existential understanding of *Being and Time* rather than the ek-sistence of the later Heidegger that begins to show itself in *Contributions*. As such, Dasein is understood only in its relation to being and not beyng. How then does beyng relate to ek-sistence? As follows:

[Beyng] itself is the relation to the extent that It, as the location of the truth of Being amid beings, gathers to itself and embraces ek-sistence in its existential, that is, ecstatic, essence. Because man as the one who ek-sists comes to stand in this relation that [beyng] destines for itself, in that he ecstatically sustains it, that is, in care takes it upon himself, he at first fails to recognize the nearest and attaches himself to the next nearest. He even thinks that this is the nearest. But nearer than the nearest and at the same time for

ordinary thinking farther than the farthest is nearness itself: the truth of [beyng]. (BW 235).

Care, grounded in the ecstatic-horizonal constitution of temporality, holds fast to the nearest of the near in forgetfulness to the withdrawal of nearness as such. Care is the holding fast to *what* is revealed as unique (the uniqueness of the horizon) while uniqueness itself withdraws.

Temporality is not the unique event, but rather what allows the unique to be cared for as being-in-the-world. Care is the temporalization of being in ecstatic-horizonal nearness to the givenness of the unique, that is, how, as in what way, it has given itself (as the being of beings). Thus, care is a matter of being-in-the-world such that the world has already been given and thus has already withdrawn from what is unique about *how* it has been given.²¹ The ek-static-horizonal essence of the human being to the truth of beyng, however, is nearness to the giving as such, that is, uniqueness itself as the event. Heidegger says that the human being “attaches himself to the next nearest” and “thinks that this is the nearest.” The next nearest is the givenness of the unique as the being of beings, but the nearest is uniqueness itself in the giving as the truth of beyng. The human being “makes time” for the unique in this way, that is, cares for it in the thrown-projection of its understanding. But the temporalization of the unique has already brought nearness into the opposition between being and beings and thus reduces it to being mastered by the understanding as what transcends beings. Dasein, as care, “masters” the unique by understanding it in a temporal and spatial way, that is, in terms of its machinations. However, by

²¹ Through care, Dasein is concerned with its thrown-projected being-in-the-world. The uniqueness of beyng as event, however, appropriates this thrown-projection to itself such that Da-sein grounds the event. The difference is one of temporality in terms of being-in-the-world versus eventuation in terms of the unique event. The former is still too centered on Dasein’s own being (in terms of the being of beings) whereas the latter places Da-sein only in relation to beyng itself.

understanding it, Dasein also has the potential of preparing itself for a leap into the unique event by leaping away from everything that it gives itself in advance in terms of this understanding. Thus, Dasein has the potential of leaping into the very projection itself as a leap into the event.²² For the event eventuates, but it is not temporal in the same way as care. It is not outside of time either as an eternal essence or Idea. The questioning of being (Dasein) and the asking of the unique question (Da-sein) are intrinsically related. Dasein is outside itself as Da-sein.²³ Temporality is outside itself as event. Both of these are related as the preparation and care for the unprecedented (the essential occurrence of beyng), that is, the unique. Ek-sistence is existential only from within, where it is ecstatic and horizontal as care for the givenness of beyng. But ek-sistence is itself horizontal as openness to beyng as such in its giving, even if this giving is experienced only as withdrawal into concealment. If it is absurd to say that temporality is outside itself when it is already the outside itself itself, that is only because it is outside itself in the unique event, which is in no way outside of time as if it were a being; instead it is outside itself as the uniqueness of the temporal that withdraws into the concealment of unfolding and therefore has the uniqueness of temporality as its horizon (the moment). Thus, even being outside itself has its uniqueness, which is always lost by unfolding. Hence, in the event, even unfolding withdraws into concealment (which is the unfolding of concealment in the persistence of fathoming). As such, it can be said that the unique “outside itself” is the unique horizon as the horizon of uniqueness in the concealment of unfolding.

²² In *Being and Time*, the understanding is projection.

²³ Heidegger himself would most likely not put these terms in opposition; for Dasein and Da-sein do not indicate two separate beings. The reason I have put them in opposition is to emphasize that the clarification of Dasein, as questioning, is, in a sense, always outside of itself in *our* questioning of Dasein. In other words, to think the uniqueness of this questioning is to think Dasein in a unique way, even if this questioning is already inherent in the meaning of Dasein.

Da-sein, by grounding the event, also has the essential possibility of being-away from this grounding. The human being leaps into the clearing and grounds the event as Da-sein. Da-sein grounds the event by steadfastly standing in this clearing and *with-standing* the exposure to beyng. By with-standing the exposure to beyng, Da-sein likewise with-stands the withdrawal of beyng into self-concealment. However, although beyng withdraws into self-concealment, it can only withdraw because it gives itself in the event. Thus, it is the *self-concealment* of what gives it-*self*. In “Letter on Humanism,” Heidegger asks, “What is [beyng]?” He responds to this question, “It is it itself” (234). Further on, he elaborates on this “It”: “For the “it” that here “gives” is [beyng] itself. The “gives” names the essence of [beyng] that is giving, granting its truth. The self-giving into the open, along with the open region itself, is [beyng] itself” (238). Da-sein, by grounding this open region as the ground of the event, is, as a result, the ground of this self-giving, which is also a self-concealing. For the first time, Da-sein experiences the truth of what is most proper to itself: that being a self, as what is most proper to the domain of what is proper, is likewise the self-concealment of what is proper to this domain—being-away from itself as grounding the event. Beyng is self-giving and self-concealing. Da-sein grounds this self-giving and self-concealing and is thus given over to itself as well as to its concealment: Da-sein is given the possibility of being-away as what is most proper to selfhood. This being-away was originally distorted in the away-from-oneself that opposed the to-oneself in the subject/object relation. Giving and concealing were likewise distorted as the self-giving of beings to the self-concealment of being (i.e. the *a priori* conditions for the possibility of experience). But here, this being-away from oneself is revealed in its truth as the utter adherence to the ground, which means that it is no longer a grounding ground but a ground that moves away from all *grounding*. Adherence to the ground alone is adherence to beings only for themselves. “*Being-away*:

pressing on with *the closedness of the mystery and of being*; forgottenness of being. And this happens in *being-away* according to this sense: *to be infatuated with things, smitten with them, lost in them*" (CP 238). "Being-away: the manner of *bustling about* with objectively present things; this manner is conceived on the basis of the "there" and belongs to the "there"" (256). Being-away, as what is most proper to selfhood, and thus most proper to the event, means to be away from the self-giving and self-concealing of being. This means to belong to the most extreme possibilities of what is most proper to self-giving and self-concealing: to have a self and to be concealed to it, i.e. to no longer be "there." The human being is no longer "there" to self-giving by being infatuated with the already given and thus it takes itself in the same way as the given, that is, as an objectively present being and nothing more. The human being is no longer "there" to self-concealment by being utterly concealed to concealment itself, that is, to be blind to the possibility of its own death.²⁴ What is most proper to selfhood is thus to be lost in the self by being lost to the selfhood that assigns the self from the event.

In being-away, the human being understands possibility and actuality only from the vantage point of objectively present beings. But if possibility and actuality are thought of from the event, then being-away becomes actual as the possibility of being "there." Da-sein grounds

²⁴ In his essay, "Strategies for a Possible Reading," Dennis J. Schmidt draws out the connection between machination and death: "Demonstrating that the roots of machination are found in the simple human capacity for making—and so linking this to the analyses of *techne* and *poiesis*—Heidegger rapidly moves to argue that in the modern age these capacities have come to be governed by the logics of calculability, speed, and enormity. Machination is the form which the abandonment of being now takes, as the effort to secure a constant presence—ultimately as the effort to stave off death" (CCP 40). Machination, arising from the need for mastery mentioned earlier, acts as a bulwark against death by concealing being-away in the illusion that being-away can be overcome by maintaining the ground, that is, by extending its reign and by mastering it, thus having the ground in its full extension and reign always at one's disposal. If the self is thought of only in relation to this mastery then it is concealed to its own self-concealment, which, if it were experienced, would reveal this self-identification with the ground as identification only with the idea of the self.

the event only in the possibility of staying away from this grounding by adhering to the ground that it is, i.e. as an abyssal ground. As the highest reality in the domain of the imagination, the possible is here the actual and the actual is here the possible; for the possibility of the unique horizon is the actuality of the horizon of uniqueness. The ground that grounds by staying away from the ground (abyssal ground) is the actuality of the ground *as* the possibility of the ground where possibility is not annulled by actuality nor actuality withheld in possibility. In this sense, possibility and actuality cease to have meaning and are properly relegated to the metaphysical way of thinking in which they arise. Only in this way, as Da-sein, is the human being properly historical. For history is not the actualization of possibilities, but the unique transformation of the ground in its grounding—the grounding of the abyssal ground. Da-sein grounds the event by grounding the abyss, which is to ground by staying away from every ground. The “there” is neither ground nor grounding but the “between” opened up by this abyssal ground. The human being is historical by being the “there,” which, from the perspective of being human, is to belong to one’s own possibility of being-away in death. For belonging to one’s own death is what is most unique about being human. Thus, uniqueness, from the perspective of being human, is the authenticity of care, which is authentic only in being-toward-death as described in *Being and Time*. But from the perspective of the event, where it is uniqueness itself that is in question, “being-away is the completely other of the “there” entirely concealed to us, but *in this* concealment essentially belonging to the “there” and to be co-endured in the steadfastness of Da-sein” (257). From the event, being-away is the completely other of both possibility and actuality (in the sense that they are the same) as the remaining unique of uniqueness. The unique is neither possible nor actual; it is nothing.

Uniqueness and nothingness are essentially related.²⁵ The uniqueness of the horizon is the horizon of uniqueness, grounded in Da-sein as the “between” of the abyssal grounding of the ground. As this “between,” Da-sein appropriates the truth of beyng, and “[t]he more originally being is experienced in its truth, the deeper is the *nothingness* as the abyss at the edge of the ground” (257). The deepening of this nothing is the articulation of its uniqueness as the truth of beyng. The statement, “the uniqueness of the horizon is the horizon of uniqueness” can thus be translated, “the unique is nothing and nothing is unique.” The unique is not mere authenticity as described in *Being and Time*, and yet authenticity is essentially related to the unique as the taking over of one’s ownmost possibility in being-toward-death. Being-toward-death is the actualization of nothing, the reality of nothing. Being-toward-death brings nothing into the world in the actualization of the possibility of this impossibility. Thus, the actualization of nothing is not nihilism in the sense of willing the nothingness of death or willing the end of existence. The actualization of nothing is authentic futurity as being-toward-death. Nothingness is actualized as the possibility that always remains possible—it is futural as this actual possibility and *gives*

²⁵ In his essay, ““Beyng-Historical Thinking” in Heidegger’s *Contributions to Philosophy*,” Alejandro Vallega tries to make sense of Heidegger’s understanding of nothingness in contrast to appearances. Vallega writes that Heidegger cannot mean that there is something eternal and unchanging behind appearances if the structures of the metaphysics of presence are rejected. Thus, nothingness cannot be posed simply as what is not present. Vallega writes: “It would then be a question of a certain “nothingness”—neither empty, as it might be understood in contrast to things present at hand, nor senseless, as understood in contrast to the logic or reason of metaphysics and transcendental philosophies. In other words... the question would be one of thinking a way of being utterly other: other to objective presence and fact, other to the conceptual configurations of presence, and other to the sufficient reason that sustains the logic of presence” (CCP 49). It is the attempt of this thesis to articulate nothingness as Heidegger sees it in terms of uniqueness. Vallega rightly points out that nothingness cannot be thought of merely in terms of negation if it is to overcome its opposition to being in terms of the presence of beings. Once this opposition has been overcome, the task becomes one of understanding what is completely other about nothingness without making that otherness into yet another form of negation.

futurity in the *concealment* of the futural. Being-toward-death is the *existential* horizon of the unique (nothing) as the uniqueness of the horizon held open (near) in anticipatory resoluteness. Authentic being-toward-death allows Dasein to care for the unique by preparing for the event of future uniqueness. The abyss of death deepens as this future uniqueness. However, nothing actual is ever itself unique except as this possibility of future uniqueness. For the unique is measureless and so its existence is impossible except as the horizon for which its impossibility is its future possibility. Da-sein grounds the future human being as those who take over future uniqueness in its futurity by experiencing this future uniqueness that Da-sein shelters for the human being to come.

The truth of being, as the clearing for self-concealment, first shows itself in being-toward-death so that anticipatory resoluteness of this measureless impossibility can reveal future uniqueness beyond all anticipation and yet ground this uniqueness in its sharpest negation. Heidegger writes: “being-toward-death conceals the essential belonging of the “not” to being as such, *which here*, in the Da-sein that is distinctive as grounding the truth of being, shows itself only in a unique sharpness” (222). Being-toward-death conceals this essential belonging of the “not” to being because its concern is to emphasize the finitude of Dasein in order to bring Dasein into the unique sharpness of its own horizon that opens onto the truth of being. It is concerned with the authenticity of Dasein as a being and not the uniqueness of the event for which meditation on this finitude is preparation for the leap. The “not” is here understood as the nullity of Dasein, which Dasein embraces in anticipatory resolution of its own coming to an end. But the “not” has an even more essential relation to the truth of being, which the finitude of Dasein testifies to in authentic being-toward-death as the running ahead of itself in order to anticipate this relationship:

The uniqueness of death in human Da-sein belongs to the most original determination of Da-sein, namely, to be ap-propriated by beyng itself in order to ground this latter in its truth (openness of self-concealing). In the unusualness and uniqueness of death, what opens up is the most unusual amid all beings, beyng itself, which essentially occurs as estrangement. Yet in order to surmise anything at all of this most original nexus, on the basis of the trite standpoint of common opinion and calculation, what had to be made visible first and in all sharpness and uniqueness is the relation of Da-sein to death itself, i.e., the connection between resoluteness (openness) and death, i.e., the running-ahead. Yet this running ahead toward death is not to be made visible for the sake of attaining mere “nothingness,” but just the opposite, so that openness for beyng might be disclosed—fully and out of what is most extreme. (CP 222)

A thinking that merely tries to obtain the eternal essence, or concept, of a being moves in the direction of a familiar clarity towards the object of thought. However, beyng is not to be made familiar in this way. In fact, beyng shows itself as the unusual and estrangement. Beyng is unique and so escapes the familiarity of every being. Being-toward-death is the anticipatory resolve to remain close to the estrangement of beyng as the unique. Being-toward-death belongs to appropriation because it grounds beyng in its truth—that the uniqueness of beyng is not to be obtained, but rather set free in the disclosedness of the most extreme possibility of Da-sein as the failure to be grasped once and for all. Death is Da-sein’s most extreme possibility and as such it opens the clearing for this impossibility to be true in its appropriation. Thus, being-toward-death is the sharpest negation of uniqueness as the “mirror image” of the “there”—the grounding of the truth of beyng in the impossibility of having this truth at the disposal of the ground. As the

“there,” however, death is what is most unique and makes this impossibility “mine” as the question of what is possible, which is future uniqueness.

Beyng is the unique and the truth of beyng is the clearing for which the unique conceals itself. The unique does not yield to the disposal of the human being; yet the unique is made available in its truth to Da-sein, who is appropriated by the unique and grounds this event of appropriation as the “between” of the grounding and the ground—the uniqueness of beyng and the appropriation of the unique from the domain of what is proper. The self is the one for whom selfhood is the unique strangeness of what is given as being-in-the-world. The self is the unique horizon of the horizon of uniqueness from the highest reality in the domain of the imagination. In authentic being-toward-death, the self remains near to the extreme limits of the “there” of Da-sein and in anticipatory resoluteness, holds open the clearing for what exceeds all limitations. What is strange is that this projection (understanding) of the unique reaches the impossible and that this impossibility becomes the horizon for which Da-sein appropriates its abyssal belonging to the unique event of appropriation. In this unique event, Da-sein is estranged from all beings and yet this estrangement is the nearest nearness to itself in its belonging to the uniqueness of beyng. The giving of this self is the strangest of all and is the asking of *my* unique question, which grounds the future human being in the questioning of the unique. Only in this way is there the historical at all as future uniqueness. And yet the unique is nothing and nothing is unique. History becomes lost in the presence of this mystery, which throws the human being into the “truth” of what presents itself and remains constantly present for the sake of mastery. Truth becomes separated from its essence and the human being defines its world as this being-away from the essence of truth. But only in this way does the separation of truth and essence become

known as a refusal that beckons Da-sein to ground the unique event for which this refusal is appropriated as the truth of beyng.

So far this thesis has examined the unique event of appropriation with a focus on the selfhood of Da-sein as assigned in the event. This has yielded an understanding of the event from within the constellation of Da-sein, selfhood, and the imagination. Within this constellation, the unique event has been characterized in terms of the abyssal grounding of Da-sein as the “between” of the ground and the grounding, of the uniqueness of the horizon and the horizon of unique. This horizontal thinking is differentiated from the point of view that thinks the horizontal only in conjunction with the transcendental. In the latter case, it is always a transcendental horizon. However, the horizontal can be thought otherwise, and indeed is thought otherwise, with respect to the unique event of appropriation. In this way, it is the horizon of the unique that opens up in the event and it opens as a separation within uniqueness itself as the uniqueness of the horizon and the horizon of the unique. This separation within uniqueness is its simplicity. To understand this simplicity, it is necessary to investigate how truth, throughout the history of metaphysics, distorts this separation through its entrenchment into a relationship with beings and beings alone. In this relationship, the simplicity of the unique—the separation within uniqueness itself—becomes a separation between truth and essence such that truth is found only in the transcendence of beings toward the correct thinking of their essence. Here, the essence of truth does not turn about the truth of essence as the essential occurrence of truth itself such that this essential occurrence—the truth of beyng—is experienced in and as its uniqueness. Thus, it now becomes necessary to examine the essence of truth with respect to the simplicity of the unique. This will further illuminate the uniqueness of the event in its eventuation and draw the

understanding of Da-sein in its selfhood nearer to the appropriating circumstances, which, in their uniqueness, can only be intimated towards without ever being brought to our disposal.

Chapter 2: The Essence of Truth and the Simplicity of the Unique

The question of the essence of truth is for Heidegger the grounding question of philosophy. According to Heidegger, the question of the essence of truth has remained concealed since the time of the Greeks by the obviousness of the interpretation of truth as correctness with respect to beings. For the Greeks, the essence of truth opens up the question of the truth of beings and it is this question that has occupied philosophy up until Heidegger communicates the need to question the essence of truth for its own sake rather than for the sake of beings alone. Heidegger determines that this history—the history of philosophy as metaphysics—has come to an end. For Heidegger, a new beginning is necessary in order for the question of the essence of truth to once again place those who would think back into the domain of what is proper to thinking, which means to encounter the abyssally grounded essence of truth as the truth of the unique event in which uniqueness itself is experienced in its truth and truth is the simplicity of the passing by of the unique.

According to Heidegger, in the beginning of Western philosophy the Greeks first established the essence of truth as the unconcealment (ἀλήθεια) of beings (φύσις) for the sake of knowledge (τέχνη). Heidegger discusses this in *Basic Questions of Philosophy: Selected "Problems" of "Logic"*—a lecture course given contemporaneously with *Contributions* that explores and enriches the themes of the latter work. In *Basic Questions*, Heidegger gives a thorough description of the beginning of philosophy from the need to question that “arises from the distress of not knowing the way out or the way in” when first coming to stand before the unconcealment of beings, in which “it has not yet been determined what being is or what non-being is” (BQP 132). This distress gives rise to the basic disposition of wonder, which transforms the most usual into the most unusual whereby everything usual becomes unusual “in

this one respect: that it is what it is” (144). The unconcealment of beings held open in wonder determines that human beings are “to be distinguished from it, but in a way that accords with it, i.e., in a way that adheres to its measure (adheres to φύσις), comports itself accordingly, and orders this comportment” (154). That which orders the comportment towards φύσις is τέχνη, which means “knowledge: know-how in processes against beings (and in the encounter with beings) i.e., against φύσις” (154). Thus, Heidegger says: “τέχνη is a mode of proceeding *against* φύσις...to retain the holding sway of φύσις in unconcealedness. Therefore, because the pure acknowledgment of beings as such, the perception of φύσις in its ἀλήθεια, is the disposing need in the basic disposition of wonder, τέχνη and its carrying out become necessary as what is wholly other than φύσις—wholly other yet belonging to φύσις in the most essential way” (155). From here, τέχνη becomes the ground in which ἀλήθεια (unconcealedness) is transformed into correctness. τέχνη, as much as it is required by φύσις to maintain the unconcealedness of beings, nevertheless contains within it the “possibility of *arbitrariness*, of an unbridled positing of goals and thereby the possibility of escape out of the necessity of the primordial need” (155). The ideas that τέχνη brings into view seduce one into pursuing them for their own sake rather than for the sake of beings: “While the grasping of beings, the acknowledgement of them in their unconcealedness, unfolds into τέχνη, inevitably and increasingly the aspects of beings, the “ideas,” which are brought into view in such grasping, become the only standard. The grasping becomes a sort of know-how with regard to the ideas, and that requires a constant assimilation to them” (156). This results in “the loss of the basic disposition, the absence of the original need and necessity, a process linked to the loss of the original essence of ἀλήθεια” (156). Beings, in turn, become representations, and all interrogation of beings, that is, all enquiry into the nature of ἀλήθεια, becomes oriented towards these representations rather than towards beings themselves.

Thus, truth is secured in its obviousness; for the human being possesses both the object of truth in representations as well as the standard of truth in τέχνη as the correctness of representations.

In *Contributions*, Heidegger elaborates on the consequences of this entrenchment of truth in the correctness of representations and the certainty that comes with this possession. By eliminating the need to question beings themselves, “what remains to *ratio* (representation) is only the *relatedness to itself* for the sake of possessing itself in its own way. This representation of the “*I represent*” is *certainty*, the knowledge that is *known* to itself as such” (CP 266). Truth is a validation of the already known—that which is already secured as an object of knowledge on the basis of the knowledge pertaining to self-certainty. *Self-certainty*, as self-knowledge, becomes the foundation of truth for the increase of knowledge. But here “*ratio* itself *degrades itself below itself*” and in this way “becomes more graspable to itself, so much so that it now completely draws from this result the paradigm for understandability and insightfulness. Such insightfulness then becomes the measure for what is valid and can be valid, i.e., now, for what is allowed to be and may be said to be” (266). Being is no longer strange. It cannot be strange. For nothing is questionable that is not already grasped as a possible object of knowledge for a certainty that takes knowing itself as its standard. This self-certain knowing confines itself to the representations that it secures in τέχνη as the beingness of beings. According to Heidegger, Plato intensified the interpretation of beingness as τέχνη and thus “created the basic condition for a human era in which “technology” (the *priority* of what is machinational, of regulations and procedures over *that which* is affected by these and taken up into them) necessarily assumes the mastery. Being, and truth as certainty, now become self-evident without limit” (266). After Plato, ideas take on a life of their own. Beings are replaced by ideas as objects of knowledge and the world becomes entirely interpretable in this regard. Because the ideas are eternal, truth itself

takes on the quality of eternity and is no longer questioned. But this is completely contrary to the original experience of truth (with Heraclitus and Parmenides, for example), which was an *essential occurrence* that took place in the basic disposition of wonder.²⁶ Originally, truth essentially occurred in relation to τέχνη only in that τέχνη held open this essential occurrence and was not taken to be the essence itself. As an essential occurrence, truth is historical. However, once certainty takes over, “[t]he disavowal of all history rises up as the shifting of every occurrence into what can be *made* and arranged” (267). Truth is no longer questioned, which means truth no longer essentially occurs, but instead remains always within the realm of knowledge for the understanding and execution of ideas.

The question of the essence of truth is the plight of questioning that is opened up in the need to question anew, that is, the need to question the ground of truth by staying away from the security of every already established ground. This is the plight of questioning, which becomes *my* unique question. *My* unique question must be understood as the essential occurrence of the question from out of the “necessity of the *plight*” (CP 260). Heidegger asks, “Plight of what?” to which he gives the answer: “Of beyng itself, which must bring into the open, and thus overcome, its first beginning through the other beginning” (260). This plight must bring into the open the

²⁶ In his essay, “The Event of Entinking the Event,” Richard Polt clarifies Heidegger’s position on the pre-Socratics: “According to Heidegger, thinking and being were united in the pre-Socratics: these thinkers were not trying to represent being but were participating in a reciprocal relation between the self-manifestation of present entities (being as presencing) and the articulation of this manifestation (thinking). With Plato and Aristotle, however, thinking as the establishment of correct judgements seizes power and attempts to *determine* being” (CCP 83). Heidegger is not himself advocating for a return to the way of thinking of the pre-Socratics; rather, it is that the pre-Socratics experienced the truth of beyng as an essential occurrence, that is, as an occurrence that had not yet been yoked into a determinate relationship between thinking and being. Heidegger’s call for another beginning to philosophy is a call to experience this essential occurrence in *its* uniqueness, which is not merely to experience what the pre-Socratics experienced for a second time, but for the first time in *another* way.

necessity of the question in order to overcome the obviousness of truth, as correctness, from out of the first beginning. The obviousness of this ground prevents the question of truth from becoming questionable by providing the readiness and availability of the answer to this question in the idea of correctness. Thus, the ground of truth as correctness prevents the grounding of truth itself from arising out of the need to question the essence of truth anew.²⁷ Seen from this ground, the question of truth appears arbitrary. It appears as the question of the truth of truth, which yields the truth of this truth and so on and so forth. But in this way of thinking, “truth is taken as an object of calculation and computation, and ultimate intelligibility by an everyday

²⁷ Furthermore, the overcoming of truth as correctness is not an abandonment of this way of understanding truth. Rather, it is a return to the grounding of truth as an essential occurrence—the essential occurrence of the truth of *beyng*. Heidegger writes: “The question of beings must be brought to its proper ground, i.e., to the question of the truth of *beyng*. And thinking (representing), which previously constituted the guideline and the horizontal structure of every interpretation of beings, is to be taken back into the grounding of the truth of *beyng*, i.e. back into *Da-sein*. “Logic,” as the theory of correct thinking, then becomes meditation on the essence of *language* as the naming that founds the truth of *beyng*. And as for *beyng*, hitherto understood in the form of beingness as the most general and most familiar, it now becomes as event the most unique and most alienating” (CP 139). The other beginning of philosophy remains always that—*other* to the first beginning. *Da-sein* is the “between” of these beginnings as the “between” of the ground and the grounding, the former having established itself as the first beginning, the latter is this other beginning. *Da-sein* asks *my* unique question using the language of the first beginning—the language of metaphysics—but in a unique way, that is, from the uniqueness of the other beginning, in which the meaning of this language becomes questionable in terms of the naming of this essential occurrence. Representation, which is the horizontal structure of the first beginning, is taken back into *Da-sein*, which grounds the truth of *beyng* in its uniqueness, which is the horizontal structure of the other beginning—the horizon of uniqueness. Through *Da-sein*, this first beginning itself becomes experienced in its uniqueness as the uniqueness of this horizon. In other words, it does not itself participate in the horizon of uniqueness, but is itself unique by being taken back into *Da-sein*. Hence, Heidegger writes: “What is divided is so decisively set apart that it is altogether impossible for there to exist any common sphere of division” (139). Between the uniqueness of the horizon and the horizon of uniqueness, there is no common sphere of division, but only *Da-sein*. *Da-sein* thus leaps into the “between” and never across from the first to the other beginning. The first beginning here remains unique and the other beginning remains always other to this uniqueness, as the unique itself—the horizon of uniqueness. The self is likewise this first beginning *in its uniqueness*, whereas the event is the other beginning as the horizon of the unique.

machinational understanding is claimed as the measure. In fact, arbitrariness now shows itself, for this claim has no necessity—it lacks the plight since it derives its apparent justification from the lack of a sense of plight in what is self-evident” (260). The self-evidence of this lack of a sense of plight arises by assuming the possession of the answer to the question. The truth of truth is already measured according to the determination of truth as correctness. But this is precisely what is in question. The asking of *my* unique question is the plight of questioning that overcomes the assumption of this possession. For to overcome the assumption of possessing the truth, this possession can only be the asking of the question itself from the basic disposition for which it is *my* unique question. The asking of *my* unique question is not simply the asking of a question that is unique to each individual who asks and is thus relative to each individual’s whims. *My* unique question belongs to *me* because it is without a ground to designate it as anything other than *my* asking it. It is *my* unique question because in order to ask this question, the asking itself must enter into the truth as the ground of its questionability—as *Da-sein*. The ground is *my* need to pursue the question, which cannot refer to any other measure than being proper to this need by belonging to it in the event. By asking this question even the one who asks is put into question and so this ground is abyssal in its giving of what belongs to the question in selfhood.

The one who asks the question of the essence of truth, and therefore *my* unique question, must overcome the mere curiosity that philosophy has become in order to experience what is most essential about this question.²⁸ Philosophy is no longer an enquiry into the essential but has

²⁸ In his essay, “Strategies for a Possible Reading,” Dennis J. Schmidt draws a correlation between this unique questioning and the language of metaphysics. Interpreting Heidegger, Schmidt says that “it is the capacity of metaphysics, as a way of thinking and speaking, to cover over by ossifying the original event of the truth of *beyng*” (CCP 35). In other words, in speaking and thinking the language of philosophy, as metaphysics, one conforms to a way of using language that inherently runs counter to the uniqueness of the event. As Schmidt points out, it is Heidegger’s strategy to use language in a unique way to prevent this all-too-easy way of drawing

instead become only that which enriches the “lived experiences” of the ones who engage in it as a discipline. Philosophy is most often used as a tool to better one’s life. But here nothing is at stake philosophically. The question itself is not important, only the betterment of the one who asks. Contrary to this, the most essential kind of questioning is the asking of *my* unique question—the question of which the need to ask becomes essential to the very selfhood of the one who asks from the assignment of the self in the event grounded in Da-sein. This is not the betterment of the self, but the very assignment of the self to the question so that this question is a matter of belonging to the need to ask it. Everything must be borne out of the event of questioning for the question to be the essential questioning of another beginning rather than an end. The wonder of the Greeks is no longer possible as the basic disposition of this essential questioning. The need to question beings in their being is no longer an essential need for us. Heidegger sums up the situation that we find ourselves in now:

Once philosophy was the most strange, the most rare, and the most unique; now it is the same, but only in the form of a curiosity. Once, in the beginning of Occidental thinking, truth was unquestioned, beyond questioning, but was so in virtue of the highest need and

conclusions. Hence, why *Contributions* is considered so impenetrable. Furthermore, this justifies the use of the first-person possessive in that there is a sense in *Contributions* that even language is “owned” and that this “owning” encourages a sense of nearness to the word, making apparent the need that must be felt when questioning in the event. As Schmidt says: “All of this is part of an extended effort to demand that the reader think about what it is that the language of this text is saying. It is also part of the effort to articulate a way of speaking and thinking which does not submit itself in advance to the logic and presumptions of the language of the idea. The difficulty we have in reading *Contributions* is the difficulty of following along in a language which does not abide by the logic of our own expectations” (36). As much as possible, Heidegger is trying to speak the uniqueness of the event; but this attempt would utterly fail if it were to submit completely to this uniqueness, for then no communication would be possible. Thus, *Contributions* is considered by Heidegger to be a work of transition. It can be said that all contributions to the philosophy of the event are transitional in this way. The word transition is important here because it further emphasizes the need for a language “that does not calcify time” (36).

necessity of questioning beings. Now the essence of truth is also unquestioned, the most unquestioned, but only as what is of the highest indifference within the age of the complete questionlessness of the essential. The question of truth is without necessity.

(BQP 158)

Everything remains secure upon the ground that is grounded in this first beginning, which lets the question of beings be opened up from that ground in the disposition of wonder towards the fact that the ground is a grounding ground and so allows beings to be as a result of this grounding. This ground—the being of beings—is no longer strange or unusual to us. It no longer thrusts us into the midst of beings so that the fact that they *are* becomes for us a matter of the most pressing concern. Instead we are thrust toward *self*-certainty in knowing all that we can know about what is no longer strange to anyone. Knowledge becomes that of competitive advantage between people and the correctness of their representations. As such, “[a]ll goals beyond men and peoples are gone, and, above all, what is lacking is the creative power to create something beyond oneself. The epoch of the highest abandonment of beings by [beyng] is the age of the total questionlessness of [beyng]” (160). We must experience this abandonment if we are to prepare for another beginning, one that retrieves the uniqueness of the question of the essence of truth. To create something beyond ourselves—to ground the uniqueness of the horizon (the self) in the grounding of the horizon of the unique (the event) that is futural because the unique is not exhausted by the truth opened up by *my* unique question. On the contrary, it is by asking *my* unique question that the future is seized. For only then does what is questioned lead toward something greater than the possession of truth for the self-certainty of the one who questions.

Heidegger's most decisive interpretation of the essence of truth comes from the essay, "On the Essence of Truth." In this essay, written in 1930, Heidegger defines the essence of truth as freedom, which "reveals itself as letting beings be" (BW 125). This determination of the essence of truth is developed from a more primordial understanding of the openness for which truth as correctness takes its ground, i.e., the clearing for self-concealment in which truth as correctness loses sight of self-concealment in the mastery of ideas for the sake of themselves. In this open region, the human being is related to beings through an open comportment towards them. This open comportment allows for statements to correspond to beings and thus to be correct. Correctness becomes "the standard for the presentative correspondence" of beings and the open comportment, in turn, "let[s] itself be assigned this standard" (122). However, "if the correctness (truth) of statements becomes possible only through this openness of comportment, then what first makes correctness possible must with more original right be taken as the essence of truth" (122). This is so because the "binding directedness" of this correspondence between the correct statement and beings themselves "is possible only by *being free* for what is opened up in an open region" (123). Hence, the essence of truth is freedom. Essence, here, is "the ground of the inner possibility of what is initially and generally admitted as known" (123). Freedom is the inner possibility of truth as correctness; however, this determination of truth is not the sole consequence of freedom, but one that is binding only in the forgetfulness of this essence in which what is known takes its standard from the obviousness of its presentation. Thus, "freedom is the ground of the inner possibility of correctness only because it receives its own essence from the more original essence of uniquely essential truth" (125). Freedom "lets beings be the beings they are" and as such it is "to engage oneself with beings," that is, "to engage oneself with the open region and its openness into which every being comes to stand, bringing that openness, as it

were, along with itself” (125). In freedom, the human being is outside itself in the disclosure of beings, maintaining itself in the openness of exposure. Freedom is ek-sistent—being outside in exposure to the disclosedness of beings. Only as ek-sistent is the human being historical. For nature, as Heidegger says, has no history. History occurs only in the disclosure of beings and “truth is disclosure of beings through which an openness essentially unfolds” (127). History is the bringing along of the openness in the disclosure of beings and thus the unfolding of this openness as history. Furthermore, freedom is a kind of restraint, which Heidegger will later say is the basic disposition of Da-sein in the event of appropriation. Restraint reveals itself here as that which gives the human being over to “its essential possibilities,” which are “conserved in the disclosure of beings as a whole” (127). For freedom is always a relation to beings as a whole in that it is fundamentally related to the openness to beings for which they are disclosed. Thus, the historical unfolding of openness to the ek-sistent human being occurs only in those decisions related not to the standard of truth as such, but to the essence of truth understood in this fundamental relationship. “The rare and the simple decisions of history arise from the way the original essence of truth essentially unfolds” (127). The human being is historical only by returning to the essence of truth in order to ground this essence as what is true for the future human being. To remain with the truth without questioning its essence is to remain with the familiar and not with the unique, and thus it is to be without history.

Because the human being can remain with the truth it can thus be concealed to the essence of truth and this as a possibility arising from the essence of truth itself in that truth belongs to its non-essence as untruth. Heidegger makes clear in a way that is all too easily distorted by the domination of correctness that “untruth must derive from the essence of truth” (128). He continues: “Only because truth and untruth are, *in essence, not* irrelevant to one

another, but rather belong together, is it possible for a true proposition to enter into pointed opposition to the corresponding untrue proposition” (128). Because the essence of truth, as freedom, is related to beings as a whole, and “because letting be always lets beings be in a particular comportment that relates to them and thus discloses them, it [therefore] conceals beings as a whole. Letting-be is intrinsically at the same time a concealing” (130). Concealment is not a privation, however, but rather what is most proper to unconcealment. In turn, concealment, as undisclosedness, is “the untruth that is most proper to the essence of truth” (130). Da-sein, as the ek-sistent human being, “conserves the first and broadest undisclosedness, untruth proper. The proper nonessence of truth is the mystery” (130). The human being forgets the essence of truth by forgetting the non-essence that essentially belongs to this essence when the human being forgets that to be open to the truth is likewise to be open to the mystery of truth that compels one to question its essence. In this way, the unique essence of truth is forgotten in favor of the truth that secures self-certainty and discards anything that does not present the possibility of conforming to the standard of this self-certainty as the truth. Here, concealment becomes the limit of what can possibly be true rather than the horizon of the essence of truth in relation to what is unconcealed in truth. Openness is restricted to unconcealment alone and, as a result, concealment is itself forgotten. In turn, “the mystery leaves historical man in the sphere of what is readily available to him, leaves him to his own resources” (132). The counterpart to ek-sistence is in-sistence: the human being insists on pursuing what is already available and forgets everything that does not present itself in this possibility.

The human being, as ek-sistent, is likewise in-sistent, and, as a result, is in errancy, not on occasion, but insofar as the human being is at all. Turning toward what is available and turning away from the mystery belong together. This is how the human being errs. Heidegger writes:

“Man errs. Man does not merely stray into errancy. He is always astray in errancy, because as ek-sistent he in-sists and so already is caught in errancy” (133). Errancy, as such, is “the free space for that turning in which insistent ek-sistence adroitly forgets and mistakes itself constantly anew” (133). Here, errancy might seem like a fault if it wasn’t itself the possibility of bringing the human being to the need to question the essence of truth. For if the human being were not in errancy, truth would in no way point to its essence as standing out, and thus belonging, to its non-essence. In fact, without errancy, truth would not have an essence at all for it would not essentially occur in any way, but would itself be entirely concealed. Heidegger writes: “The full essence of truth, including its most proper nonessence, keeps Dasein in need by this perpetual turning to and fro. Dasein is a turning into need. From man’s Dasein and from it alone arises the disclosure of necessity and, as a result, the possibility of being transposed into what is inevitable” (134). Through errancy, the human being glimpses the mystery and makes it questionable “in the sense of that unique question of what being as such is as a whole” (135). In this way, the mystery is articulated in words: “In the thinking of Being the liberation of man for ek-sistence, the liberation that grounds history, is put into words. These are not merely the “expression” of an opinion but always already the ably conserved articulation of the truth of being as a whole” (135). In conclusion, Heidegger sums up this enquiry into the essence of truth:

In tracing the inner possibility of the correctness of statements back to the ek-sistent freedom of letting-be as its “ground,” likewise in pointing to the essential commencement of this ground in concealing and in errancy, we want to show that the essence of truth is not the empty “generality” of an “abstract” universality but rather that which, self-concealing, is unique in the unremitting history of the disclosure of the “meaning” of

what we call Being—what we for a long time have been accustomed to considering only as being as a whole. (137)

This enquiry into the essence of truth, oriented as it is towards beings in a metaphysical way, ultimately comes to reveal what is most essential to this discussion—that the essence of truth is the unique that escapes every determination of truth in the disclosure of beings. The essence of truth is freedom in letting beings be, but this essence is itself unique in that beings are always disclosed in truth—a truth that is grounded in its own essence and yet is separated from its essence—and thus the essence of truth always escapes what is true. The essence of truth escapes every determination of truth because it belongs to its non-essence, which in turn points to the mystery of what remains always beyond the disposal of the one who questions truth. And yet this remaining always out of grasp ignites the need to question anew, not in order to gain mastery, but to remain open to what conceals itself by always becoming obvious and familiar. Freedom withdraws with every determination of truth; it in no way brings the essence of truth into a secure grasp. Freedom means that truth “is” always in error and the disclosedness of this errancy is essential to remaining near to being and thus to the unique.

The essay, “On the Essence of Truth” speaks of the ground of the possibility of correctness. Heidegger will later say in *Contributions* that it is unconvincing “because it is difficult to discard the notion of the human being as a thing (subject, person, etc.) and because all matters are construed as “lived experiences” of a human being and these in turn as incidents *in that being*” (CP 269). The question of the essence of truth as it appears in *Contributions* can be understood not as counter to what is said in “On the Essence of Truth,” but rather as a further attempt to eliminate the misconceptions arising there such that truth is always a matter of the human being and is never thought of in its essential occurrence. This does not mean that the

human being, as Da-sein, is not essential to the essence of truth, but rather that truth is not a matter for the human being alone. The essence of truth is a matter of beyng; however, beyng needs the human being as what is grounded and grounding. Thus, the question of the essence of truth does not abolish all relations to the human being, but is nonetheless not a matter simply for the human being. What is required is a more penetrating understanding of the openness for which the human being finds itself ek-sisting among beings and the event of this openness towards the clearing for the self-concealing of beyng, which is, according to this thesis, an encounter with the unique. *Contributions* seeks to understand this essence as an essential occurrence, and as such, takes its orientation from the event. Thus, while the essay, “On the Essence of Truth” overcomes the distortion of truth as correctness in order to understand the essence of truth in relation to the ground of this possibility, it nevertheless remains oriented toward beings and does not reach a more primordial understanding of truth as the clearing for self-concealment grounded in Da-sein through the leap into the event.

Appended to the essay, “On the Essence of Truth” is a note added in a later addition. This note states: “The question of the essence of truth finds its answer in the proposition *the essence of truth is the truth of essence*” (BW 137). “The answer to the question of the essence of truth is the saying of a turning within the history of Being” (137). This is not a statement about beings and does not furnish the truth of beings. It is related to the essence of truth as the essential occurrence of truth. It says that truth essentially occurs and that the saying of the essence of truth is a saying that turns toward this essential occurrence itself and not toward beings as they are in truth. “The course of the questioning is intrinsically the way of a thinking which, instead of furnishing representations and concepts, experiences and tests itself as a transformation of its relatedness to Being” (138). The essential occurrence of truth is this relatedness to Being

experienced as the truth of essence, which is a fathoming of the essential in the grounding of the abyss. Da-sein is this grounding and thus, the essential occurrence of truth is experienced as a leap into Da-sein as grounding the event of appropriation. An account of the openness as it relates to the event must here be given.

The opening opens onto the clearing for self-concealing, which is the essence of truth. The essence of truth essentially occurs; thus, an understanding of the essence of truth does not procure for itself a concept or representation of this essence. Instead, it is a leap into the clearing for self-concealing in which truth essentially occurs as the turning relation between the essence of truth and the truth of essence.²⁹ Truth is its own essence, but this relationship is so abyssal that truth and essence can only turn about each other in the essential occurrence of truth that grounds the abyss.³⁰ Da-sein is this ground—the ground of the event of appropriation. As the domain of what is proper, Da-sein appropriates this turning and so experiences the essential occurrence of truth. Da-sein experiences this essential occurrence as its own abyssal grounding of the event. In Da-sein, truth is proper to its essence and so can be true and essence is proper to truth and so can essentially occur. Da-sein withstands the simplicity of this relationship as being there to the truth in its essential occurrence by grounding the event. Da-sein is the openness of the clearing for self-concealing, which is the essence of truth. The clearing essentially occurs, and “truth “*is*” as grounding the “there” and as *Da-sein*” (CP 261). Da-sein grounds the event as the truth of this

²⁹ The turning relation between the essence of truth and the truth of essence is likewise the turning relation between being and truth. The essence of truth is being itself, whereas the truth of essence is the truth of being. Truth is likewise the essence of being; hence, the turning relation about being and truth as the essence of truth and the truth of essence.

³⁰ Heidegger writes: “This truth of being is indeed nothing distinct from being but rather is the most proper essence of being. Therefore it depends on the history of being as to whether being bestows or refuses this truth and itself and thus genuinely brings into its history for the first time the abyssal” (CP 74).

essential occurrence, as the being there of truth to its essence. If truth is as Da-sein, then truth is the simplicity of the essential occurrence of Da-sein fathoming the abyssal ground of its essence. That truth is its own essence—this is the uniqueness of *beyng*, the unique itself. The essential occurrence of this truth, the truth of *beyng*, “can be experienced only if this cleared “amidst,” which grounds itself and determines time-space, is reached in a leap as that *from which* and for which it is the clearing, namely for *self-concealing*...Self-concealing is an essential character of *beyng* and is so indeed precisely insofar as *beyng* needs truth and thus ap-propriates Da-sein and in that way is in itself and originally the event” (262). Truth is the clearing for which the self-concealing of *beyng* can be self-concealed. *Beyng* needs truth in order to withdraw from the truth as the essential occurrence of truth in the event. *Beyng* needs truth as “the simplicity of the unique as what is essential in each case” (262). *Beyng*, as the unique, needs the simplicity of truth in order to fathom the ground (Da-sein) as a return to its simplicity for the proper “overstepping” in the withdrawal of self-concealment. The event is the separation of truth and essence in their simultaneous turning for the fathoming of the ground as the clearing for the withdrawal of self-concealment.

Truth essentially occurs in the grounding of the event. The essence of truth is a matter of the openness of the clearing. Truth, however, comes to be *what is true* amidst the danger of beings. In the essay, “On the Essence of Truth,” the essence of truth is the freedom of letting beings be. This, in turn, is the ground of the possibility of correctness. But truth only becomes correctness as a distortion of its essence. This essence is distorted by relating to beings alone and not to the event in which truth essentially occurs as the truth of its own essence—as the passing by of the uniqueness of *beyng* in its truth. The separation of truth and its essence occurs amidst the danger of beings and hence this separation gets distorted in this relation. This is the danger

that beings present. In *Contributions*, Heidegger characterizes the open in its relation to beings as the separation of the “free domain over and against beings” and the “unprotected through beings” (260). These belong together as the clearing for self-concealment. Here it is easier to see how truth gets distorted. Truth is inherently separated from its essence in the essential occurrence of truth as the truth of being in the event. Truth is opposed to its essence in the way that what is unconcealed is opposed to what withdraws into concealment for the sake of revealing.

Concealment withdraws amidst the danger that the seduction of beings pose in their constant presence that causes the fact that they *are* to no longer be strange. In this way, being abandons beings. The withdrawal of this abandonment into concealment passes through beings unprotected and so this passing through succumbs to the danger of beings and truth becomes what is true, over and against beings, instead of in separation to the self-concealment of being as it passes through beings (as the passing by of the unique). The withdrawal of self-concealment becomes the absence of beings and truth becomes the judgment of correctness corresponding to the presence and absence of beings. The free domain of truth becomes the freedom of the subject over against the object rather than truth in its separation from essence (untruth) in the event for which being passes by in its uniqueness as the simplicity of the essential occurrence of truth. Herein lies the ambiguity of “On the Essence of Truth.” Heidegger describes how this ambiguity leads to a misunderstanding: “With regard to determinations such as “Da-sein is simultaneously in the truth and in the untruth,” they were at once taken in terms of morals and worldviews, and what is decisive in this philosophical meditation, namely, the essential occurrence of the “simultaneously” as the basic essence of truth, was not grasped, nor was untruth grasped originally in the sense of *concealment* (rather than some sort of falsehood)” (278). The danger of beings is that they distort truth by seducing it to be in opposition *to them*. The simultaneity of

the separation of truth and its essence (untruth) is lost and so the separation is taken as an overcoming of concealment into unconcealment as the measure of truth.³¹ Truth is here the rooting out of untruth. Truth no longer essentially occurs and so the uniqueness of being is no longer experienced. What is experienced is the constant proliferation of what is true—the constant proliferation of correct findings in the ever-widening sphere of ideas and the ordering of beings to correspond to those ideas.

The event of appropriation—the essential occurrence of truth—eventuates by belonging to itself in the separation of being and truth.³² Being, as the unique, needs truth and is thus separated from truth for its essential occurrence to occur. The separation of truth and being—the separation of the standing against to the passing by—needs Da-sein as the “between” amidst the danger of beings so that truth can essentially occur in the simplicity of the passing by of the unique.³³ Being needs truth in order to belong to itself in its uniqueness. In this way, it needs the separation of its belonging as the over against to the passing by. Da-sein, however, is not over against being. Da-sein is the “between,” which relates to truth as a self that belongs to the event of this essential occurrence by belonging to being as the unsettling of this truth in being thrown back from the unique amidst the danger of beings. In being thrown amidst the danger of beings,

³¹ The separation itself is likewise simultaneous with the de-cision [*Ent-scheidung*] in the event. This relationship too is distorted in that the separation always comes before the de-cision about *what* is true given the circumstances of the judgement.

³² Truth is the abyssal belonging of being as event. Truth is the eventuation of being. Being does not eventuate as other than itself, but as this otherness in appropriation. That being belongs to itself abyssally means that the separation of truth and being is not a separation that is outside of being. Instead, it is a separation for the sake of the essential occurrence of being. This separation always *shows itself* as the being of beings. The separation, however, is being itself.

³³ In his essay, “Grounders of the Abyss,” John Sallis writes: “Under the requirement that it be grounded, the truth of being—being in its very happening—makes its own those who are capable of such grounding; it appropriates those who, precisely by enacting Da-sein, can ground the truth of being. As appropriating those needed, being happens...as *Ereignis*” (CCP 186).

Da-sein is the “between” of beings, in which beings are experienced as true. In this case, truth, “as the event of what is true, is the abyssal fissure in which beings are divided and must stand in the strife” of their division (262). “The fissure” is what Heidegger calls the separation of truth and beyng in which the event belongs to itself as the clearing for self-concealment. Heidegger writes:

truth is never merely clearing; it essentially occurs as concealment just as originally and intimately along with the clearing. These, clearing and concealment, are not two; instead, they constitute the essential occurrence of the one truth itself. Inasmuch as truth essentially occurs, *comes to be*, the event becomes truth. The event eventuates, which means nothing else but that it and only it *becomes* truth, becomes that which belongs to the event, so that truth is precisely and essentially the truth of beyng. (276)

Beyng separates itself from its truth in order that it may belong to itself as the event of the passing by of its uniqueness: that it is, in fact, unique. This belonging to itself is the essential occurrence of truth. Truth opposes beyng and in truth beings are divided in their belonging—Da-sein is the “between” of beings grounded in truth. Beings stand in truth in the uniqueness of the horizon, which is the unique as true (the self of Da-sein). This is the belonging of truth to the unique. In the unique, however, beings are undivided in their belonging. This is the horizon of the unique—the belonging of the unique to truth. The unique is “nothing” in how it belongs whereas truth is “the truth of beings” in how it belongs. Both constitute the belonging of the event to itself as one. In the case of truth, this belonging shows itself as the unconcealment of the clearing; in the case of beyng, as the unique, this belonging shows itself as the self-concealment of withdrawing uniqueness. The unique is separated in itself as truth and beyng—as the uniqueness of the horizon and the horizon of the unique. The separation of the unique is the

separation of the divided and the undivided belonging—the belonging to itself (the appropriation of belonging in the event as the event of what is proper to belonging).³⁴ For truth, nothing is unique; for beyng, the unique is nothing. Amidst this separation is the danger of beings for which the appropriation of the truth of beyng, in the essential occurrence of truth, is lost to the non-essential untruth that opposes beings in its loss of simultaneity with the truth. In this loss, nothing opposes beings as their negation and absence instead of as the abyssal belonging to the unique as the event of appropriation.

The uniqueness of beyng is what is “not” something else without negating it.³⁵ It is the unique and as such it will always “be” other than what can be formed in an image. It is the uniquely unimaginable. Truth is the simplicity of the unique as it passes by in the essential occurrence. The truth of this essential occurrence—the essential occurrence of truth—cannot be formed into an image because of its simplicity, because the unique is already separated from itself in the truth of its essential occurrence so that *this* separation cannot be captured in an image

³⁴ In his essay, “Da-sein and the Leap of Being,” Walter A. Brogan writes: “*Ereignis* is an originary enowning and belonging (*Zugehörigkeit*) that cannot be possessed or owned or “gotten.” It is in this sense belonging itself, and never something that belongs” (CCP 171). Never *something* that belongs, but what is proper to belonging in *eventuation*. Hence, belonging itself must eventuate somehow in the event. In the sense that the event is grounded abyssally, belonging too is an abyssal belonging; in eventuation, belonging *belongs* to the abyss and as such is both divided and undivided within itself. This also sheds light on the precarious relationship between thinking and *Ereignis* in the subtitle “*Vom Ereignis*,” which, as Brogan points out, is difficult to translate in the sense that what is said of *Ereignis* is appropriated to *Ereignis* itself and so it is not simply something that is said *about Ereignis*. Language only corresponds to its object as a description where it is motivated by the metaphysical impulse. But as Heidegger makes explicit, this language cannot be abandoned for yet another language. Language itself must speak a “telling silence.”

³⁵ Charles E. Scott writes in the introduction to the companion to *Contributions* that in this work, “[w]e find an extremely intense, utterly determined process of thinking that is moved—and I repeat this for emphasis—by ‘something’ that Heidegger finds he cannot make or control, ‘something’ that is not a thing in any sense, ‘something’ that is neither human nor god, that ungrounds grounds while enabling them” (CCP 2).

without first separating the truth *from this separation* so that it stands on its own in its self-evidence as occurs when truth is “yoked under the idea” and becomes correctness.³⁶ When this is the case, as it has been for us since Plato, “[t]ruth is no longer, as it was qua [unconcealment], the fundamental trait of being itself. Instead, as a consequence of getting yoked under the idea, truth has become correctness, and henceforth it will be a characteristic of the knowing of beings” (PM 179). Correctness is truth as a trait of knowing rather than as being itself. As being it is the simplicity of its uniqueness—the simplicity of the fact that being *is* without being represented as an object of knowing and yet without negating what can be known.³⁷ Thus, it is not presence and absence in knowing; rather it is the essence and non-essence of what is known. Truth “is what *is* most eminently” (CP 272). “What *is* most eminently “is” no longer but, instead, essentially

³⁶ A separation that cannot be represented is experienced only as an appropriation. This is the simplicity of the unique. The separation of this separation as a representation is already too complicated to capture this simplicity. Hence, it can only be experienced as a unique event in which what is experienced is not the coming to representation, but the uniquely un-representable simplicity of the truth of being.

³⁷ Heidegger writes that what is excluded from the ordinary understanding of negation is “the thought of the possibility that negation could be of an even deeper essence than the “yes,” especially since the yes is readily taken in the sense of any kind of consent, as superficially as the no” (CP 140). He goes on to question whether “the domain of representation,” where “consent and rejection” arise, is the uniquely essential one, or whether there is a more original truth to the yes and no. He continues:

How is that possible, however, unless the essential form of the “no” (and of the yes) resided in the *Da-sein* which is needed by being? The no is the great leap *away from*, in which the “there” [*Da-*] in *Da-sein* is leaped into. This leaping-away-from “affirms” that from which it leaps but also possesses nothing negative as a leap. Of itself, the leaping-away-from first takes on the leaping of the leap, and thus here the no surpasses the yes. Accordingly, however, this no as seen from the outside is the setting of the first beginning out in relief against the other one but is never “negation” in the usual sense of rejection and disparagement. Instead, this original negation is the same in kind as that refusal which deprives itself of any accompanying and does so out of a knowledge and recognition of the uniqueness of what, in the end, demands the other beginning (140).

The uniqueness of being demands its own horizon—the horizon of the unique—such that what is unique about this first beginning—the uniqueness of the horizon—might experience its own essential occurrence in the other beginning. Nothing here is negated; the unique is a refusal in a positive sense in that it brings the comparable to its incomparability.

occurs as the essential occurrence itself (event)” (272). *Beyng* is what *is* most eminently. But here the essential occurrence of what *is* most eminently is itself the essential occurrence. To abstract from the essential occurrence what the essential occurrence “is” is already to withdraw from the essential occurrence into what is non-essential. The essential occurrence of truth, as the clearing for the self-concealing of the uniqueness of *beyng*, grounded in *Da-sein*, is the simplicity of overstepping the essential occurrence into the essential occurrence as the essential occurrence itself. It is the occurring of the essential occurrence, which, if it were not this overstepping itself, could not occur essentially. Heidegger says that “we “have” nothing more “given” which could be what is true by way of rendering and forming an image” (281). The essential occurrence of truth does not offer itself up to be imagined—it is too simple. But this is what is most proper to the imagination—that the imagination enters into turning about with what cannot be imagined, i.e., the uniquely unimaginable—uniqueness itself. The essence of truth and the truth of essence turn about each other in the essential occurrence of truth; this is likewise the being there of the uniqueness of the horizon to the horizon of the unique—the grappling with nothing that is the uniqueness of *beyng* in its belonging to the event. The divided belonging and the undivided belonging are one in belonging to the event. The problem is that we cannot know the undivided in its belonging. We can only belong to it. We belong to it as *its* uniqueness—as the uniqueness of the horizon. The horizon of uniqueness is the proper belonging, in its simplicity, to the escape of the unique (the uniqueness of the unique) as it withdraws into concealment as future uniqueness. This horizon is what opens onto the unique. Essential knowledge is abiding in the failure to know, in the failure to say what is too simple for saying

and yet makes every saying and knowing possible.³⁸ “Essential knowing is an *abiding* in the essence. What is supposed to be expressed thereby is the fact that such knowledge is not a mere representation of an encounter; it is persistence within the bursting forth of a projection which, in the very opening up, comes to know the abyss that bears it” (291). To know the abyss is to know what escapes knowing and yet belongs to it. It is to know the unique and yet to have no idea of its uniqueness. It is to persist in the failure to know, the breakdown of knowing, as the most essential knowing and to abide in the separation of truth and uniqueness by persisting in the imagination of the uniquely unimaginable abyss.

When Heidegger refers to the deficiency of the image, he is referring to the loss of the abyssal grounding of the event that cannot be seen for it cannot be formed into an image. However, we cannot reach this abyss unless we prepare ourselves for this failure to see by persisting in the imagination of this failure. The event is the transfiguration of the imagination in its failure to imagine the unique *as* the uniquely unimaginable—as the unique horizon of the horizon of uniqueness. By leaping into the event, one must project oneself upon the failure to imagine the abyss, to be this failure, and thus to appropriate one’s abyssal belonging as the unique horizon of this failure—the horizon of the unique. If ἀλήθεια (unconcealedness) is understood only in terms of τέχνη (knowing), then “[w]hat is taken into account is only, so to

³⁸ In her essay, “Poietic Saying,” Daniela Vallega-Neu addresses the failure of language in *Being and Time* with respect to the attempted saying in *Contributions* as follows: “Precisely this failure of language lets appear in a new and radical way the occurrence of beyng not just as a presencing but more originally as a withdrawal from and in presencing” (CCP 70). She continues: “It is not a coincidence that the German word *Versagen*, which is commonly translated as “failing,” appears in *Contributions* with respect to beyng itself: beyng occurs as “refusal,” in German *Versagung*. Heidegger was certainly aware that the root meaning of *Versagen* is *Sagen*, “saying.” All this supports the interpretation of the *Versagen* (“failure”) of language in *Being and Time* as indicating an incapacity of saying beyng that arises out of beyng’s own occurrence as refusal (or withdrawal)” (70). It should be noted that *Versagen* can also be translated as “breakdown,” which I have also used throughout this thesis.

speak, the “positive” aspects of unconcealedness, what is freely accessible and the bestowal of access; and therefore ἀλήθεια in this regard as well loses its original depth and its abyssal character” (263). Only the divided belonging and not the undivided belonging is taken into account. It is no longer the horizon of the unique. Instead it is the common and familiar horizon only. It is the horizon of what shows itself as the idea (representation). What remains uninterrogated “is *openness as such*” (264). For this, Da-sein must ground the abyss by fathoming the ground—by experiencing the essential occurrence of truth as the simplicity of this fathoming (ἀλήθεια without being interpreted in terms of τέχνη). The simplicity of this fathoming is the fathoming of the “ground as abyss” (273). It is the fathoming of what belongs abyssally. Only if we stand in the clearing, as Da-sein, does the ground show itself as the self-concealing abyss. Only if we are in the truth does its essence show that it conceals itself. The essence is not truth, but the standing in the truth. The essence is concealed in order to stand in the truth. The essential occurrence of truth is the return to the simplicity of the truth (the turning of essence and truth—beyng and the truth of beyng) for the proper overstepping of the essential occurrence into the essential occurrence as the passing by of the unique. The unique passes by as it withdraws into the obviousness of the simple and so is concealed.

The standing against of the truth to the passing by of the unique is that standing out in the openness whereby self-concealment withdraws, which gets distorted into the standing against of a subject to an object whereby truth gets co-opted into correctness regarding the correspondence between the two. This is because the openness occurs amidst the danger of beings and their captivating presence. At times, Heidegger speaks of truth in terms of the ripeness of a fruit, such as when he calls truth “the clearing for self-concealing (i.e., the event; hesitant self-withholding as ripeness, fruit, bestowal)” (273). The ripening of truth is its readiness for the turning that

occurs between truth and essence where the essence of truth ripens and is finally plucked and bestowed as the truth of essence. This is the essential occurrence of truth. Truth is distorted when the ripened fruit is not plucked, but instead yoked into an everlasting form as it is with correctness. The transfiguration of the standing against and the passing by are left arrested before the rotting fruit that ripens beyond the point of nourishment. This is what Heidegger means in his interpretation of the cave allegory in the essay, "Plato's Doctrine of Truth," written in 1931/32. In this essay Heidegger interprets the cave allegory as the place where ἀλήθεια (unconcealedness) becomes bound to correct vision because truth is interpreted solely within the metaphor of light. In the cave allegory, the shadows of objects, carried past the light of a fire, mystify those tied and bound, who are forced to face only the shadows, which they take as reality. When someone is freed and able to turn around, this person sees the fire and realizes that what was seen before was just the shadows of the objects carried passed the fire. Finally, this person exits the cave and realizes that even the fire was not the truth of reality, but rather it is the sun that shines over the world that truly illuminates things. In each stage, vision becomes more correct to its corresponding object. Truth is thought of as the ever more unconcealed reality of what shines forth. Here, many of the aspects of Heidegger's understanding of truth can be found such as freedom of letting beings be in their true shining forth, turning towards the essence of what shines forth, and so on. But while Plato's allegory assumes the unconcealment of truth from out of its concealment, this is never explicitly taken into account. Instead, truth becomes bound to the luminosity of the thing for the correct vision. Each step along the way is an establishment of a more correct way of seeing. Truth is experienced, but only in a certain way, in terms of the idea, and hence, "the essence of truth does not, as the essence of [unconcealment], unfold from its proper and essential fullness but rather shifts to the essence of the [idea]. The essence of truth

gives up its fundamental trait of [unconcealment]” (PM 176). Every move along the way remains bound to the horizon of correctness—the ripening fruit of truth. This truth binds a particular kind of standing against of truth to the passing by of the unique. The horizon itself is not transfigured in the fathoming of its essential ground as what exceeds the horizon in its unique simplicity—the truth of uniqueness. Thus, every attempt to ground the truth must fail:

As Plato conceives it, [unconcealment] remains harnessed in a relation to looking, apprehending, thinking, asserting. To follow this relation means to relinquish the essence of [unconcealment]. No attempt to ground the essence of [unconcealment] in “reason,” “spirit,” “thinking,” “*logos*,” or in any kind of “subjectivity,” can ever rescue the essence of [unconcealment]. In all such attempts, what is to be grounded—the essence of [unconcealment] itself—is not yet adequately sought out. What always gets “clarified” is merely some essential consequence of the uncomprehended essence of [unconcealment].

(182)

To follow the movements through the cave is, at every point, to remain bound to each determination of truth within an already interpreted essence of truth such that each new determination is a further ripening of the same fruit of truth rather than the plucking of this fruit in a turn towards the essence itself, for which a new fruit can rise out of the abyss. Heidegger ends the essay with this: “What is first required is an appreciation of the “positive” in the “privative” essence of ἀλήθεια. The positive must first be experienced as the fundamental trait of being itself. First of all what must break in upon us is that exigency whereby we are compelled to question not just beings in their being but first of all being itself (that is, the difference). Because this exigency stands before us, the original essence of truth still lies in its hidden origin” (182). To appreciate the “positive” in the “privative” is to appreciate that undivided belonging, which is

concealed in its belonging to the divided belonging of the unconcealed. It is to experience the unique as nothing, which surges up from the ground in the fathoming of its simplicity as an abyssal ground. This is to leap into the essential occurrence of truth as the turning between truth and essence, which is the ek-sistent overstepping *horizontally*. The horizontal is what is most essential in the essential occurrence of truth and thus it is the fathoming of the simplicity of the abyssal ground for the proper overstepping into the uniqueness of being.

In a later work called, “Conversations on a Country Path,” Heidegger uses a conversation between a teacher, a scholar, and a scientist to determine the nature of thinking as releasement [*Gelassenheit*]. In this work, we find further clarification of the themes explored here so far. It is also critical of key terms that have been used up to this point, thus broadening them in an essential way. Through this dialogue, Heidegger indicates that the nature of thinking “can only be determined by looking away from thinking” (DT 58). This is so because “thinking is something other than willing” (59). It involves non-willing, which means “willingly to renounce willing” as well as that which “remains absolutely outside any kind of will” (59). Willing, here, means the will to represent. Heidegger determines the previous form of thinking as “transcendental-horizontal re-presenting” (63). The horizon is that which “encircles the view of a thing” and “goes beyond the appearance of the objects” toward the idea represented in the appearance (63). Transcendence is therefore that which “passes beyond the perception of objects” (63). But here, horizon and transcendence “are experienced and determined only relative to objects and our representing them” (64). The horizon “is but the side facing us of an openness which surrounds us” (64). The openness itself is “something like a *region*, an enchanted region where everything belonging there returns to that in which it rests” (65). Furthermore, Heidegger says that the “region gathers, just as if nothing were happening, each to each and each to all into

an abiding, while resting in itself” (66). Here, things “rest in the return to the abiding of the expanse of their self-belonging” (67). Thus, thinking, instead of a representing, is a kind of waiting, which means “to release oneself into the openness of that-which-regions” (72).

Heidegger elaborates: “Insofar as we as thinking beings (that is, beings who at the same time re-present transcendently) stay within the horizon of transcendence, we are not and never could be outside that-which-regions. Yet the horizon is but the side of that-which-regions turned toward our re-presenting. That-which-regions surrounds us and reveals itself to us as the horizon” (73).

We are thus “in that-which-regions when, re-presenting transcendently, we step out into the horizon. And yet again we are still not in it, so far as we have not released ourselves for that-which regions, as such,” which happens only in waiting, where “we are released from our transcendental relation to the horizon” (73). However, authentic releasement does not need this prior state of re-presenting transcendently. Releasement, in its authentic sense, “comes out of that-which-regions because in releasement man stays released to that-which-regions and, indeed, through this itself. He is released to it in his being, insofar as he originally belongs to it. He belongs to it insofar as he is *appropriated* initially to that-which-regions, and, indeed, through this itself” (73). Thus, the human being is released from transcendence into belonging, which is “a relinquishing of the willing of a horizon” (79). The relinquishment of this willing is likewise “a resolve for the coming forth of truth’s nature” (81). The nature of truth is “to be what is independent of man” (84). In the end, Heidegger determines the nature of thinking by a word from Heraclitus, which is translated as “moving-into-nearness” (89). Thinking moves into the nearness of what is released by that-which-regions by patiently waiting for what is independent of the human being.

This work is important for its critique of the horizontal and for its discussion of the relation to truth. The determination of the horizontal that is being critiqued is the horizontal thought of in relation to the transcendental and not in its own proper sense of being a horizon. Thought of transcendently, the horizontal is always that which goes beyond in order to represent. But it can also be thought of in its proper sense, which might be called the horizontal-horizontal if only to illustrate the separation that it abides in. This is the horizon as it is proper to itself in the being there of Da-sein as the domain of what is proper. It is what is *uniquely* horizontal. This sense of the horizontal is its openness to what essentially occurs—the essential occurrence of truth. This is openness to that which is independent of the human being—the simplicity of the unique in its passing by. In releasement, the human being is released into belonging. This belonging, however, has two sides: the divided belonging, which is turned towards the human being and is the transcendental-horizontal representation of beings, and the undivided belonging, which cannot be represented, but which is that other side of the horizontal that makes it proper to itself and is where all beings rest in themselves. The horizon of uniqueness does not give a representation of the unique, but rather it is a belonging to the failure to represent it, which is an abiding in this failure by neither affirming nor denying what is eminent in this failure—the simplicity of the passing by of the unique. The horizontal is the moving into nearness to this simplicity as the truth, which shows itself as belonging to the truth of beings, but also belonging to the simplicity of what rests in itself in that it abides in the expanse of its self-belonging (the essence of truth that grounds the abyss). The uniqueness of the horizon is the self-belonging that is proper to this failure by uniquely failing to imagine the truth as the simplicity of the passing by of the unique. Thus, in order to think what is released into belonging, we must fail to think and then think this failure by belonging to it uniquely. We do

not escape the horizon. The uniqueness of the horizon is the horizon of uniqueness—this is an opening within the unique. Abiding in this opening is the appropriation of the uniquely unimaginable, which is unique in that it is “not” what is imagined without negating it. To renounce the will is to bind it to this failure. To imagine the unique as nothing (unimaginable) is to rest in this failure. When we think by belonging to failure, we wait for what does not demand success. Waiting is what is distorted in the standing against as transcendence. Waiting is stability without permanence, resting in its readiness to be transfigured. Thus, in waiting, the standing against can still be swept up into the passing by, moving into nearness to it, playing off and taking part in it.³⁹ In waiting, thinking belongs to simplicity without demanding that this simplicity be represented.

³⁹ In his essay, “Turnings in Essential Swaying and the Leap,” Kenneth Maly addresses Heidegger’s use of the word *Auseinandersetzung* with relation to the first and the other beginning of philosophy. He writes: “*Auseinandersetzung* is to be thought and understood in its hermeneutic-phenomenological import. Thus and first of all it has nothing to do with a normal meaning of “discussion” or “debate.” Second, it goes deeper than a mere “putting into perspective” or the “coming to grips with” that humans might do. Rather, and with the phenomenological thinking that enacts and engages with the essential swaying of being as enowning (what *Contributions* turns toward and into), this word *Auseinandersetzung* says: encounter (the two beginnings coming to each other), setting out (the two beginnings being set apart and set out in their relation to each other), joining issue with each other—playing off, taking part in, lending to each other” (CCP 152). While little attention has been paid in this thesis to Heidegger’s interplay between the first and other beginning of philosophy, this interplay can, nevertheless, be understood in terms of the standing against of truth to the passing by of the unique. The ossification of truth as correctness is the first beginning of philosophy in which the standing against is no longer in interplay with the passing by of the unique, which is the other beginning of philosophy. The first beginning employs truth as the correctness of representations and thus it is the correctness of what can be brought into an image (imagined). The other beginning is precisely that—what is *other* to this first beginning. It is other in that it cannot be imagined and, in fact, it is *uniquely* unimaginable because it is the *uniquely* other of truth as representation. As Heidegger says, this other beginning does not come after the end of the first beginning, but has always been in constant interplay with this first beginning. In other words, the unique has always passed by the standing against of truth. To experience this other beginning is to experience the essential occurrence of truth in which the unique is experienced in the simplicity of its passing by.

Truth is the unique separation of the unique. The essence of truth is the abyssal ground of this separation, which unfolds as time-space. Truth is separated from the unique in order to remain with the same for the passing by of the unique, which is the unique event itself. Truth is the simplicity of remaining in the separation of the standing against to the passing by. Da-sein belongs to both by grounding the belonging of the event, which is both divided and undivided. To experience the unique is to ek-sist horizontally. The horizontal is not the transcendental for a representing. It is the fathoming of a return to the simplicity of the ground for the proper overstepping in the passing by of the unique. It is a moving into nearness to this passing by. The unique is what is “not” something else without negating it. It is both identity and difference. It is experienced in the failure to imagine as what is most proper to the imagination. The overstepping that is the passing by of the unique does not negate what it oversteps in the passing by. The passing by is concealed to the unconcealment of the return to the simplicity of the ground that remains by grounding the separation of the standing against to the passing by. To ek-sist is to belong horizontally to the event by thinking the truth as the failure to imagine the unique as the uniquely unimaginable. It is to belong to the separation by grounding it as Da-sein in the event of appropriation. It is to leap into time-space as the abyssally grounding essence of truth.

To leap into the time-space of the abyssally grounding essence of truth—the essential occurrence of truth, which is the truth of beyng itself—is to persist in the fathoming of the simplicity of the overstepping that is this essential occurrence. In the same way that the event in its eventuation is not the same as the mundane events of everyday life in that it is completely unanticipated and unfamiliar, likewise, the time-space that is opened up in the event as the abyssal grounding itself is not the same as the space and time that have been thought only as extensions for the representation of beings within the metaphysical thinking that has dominated

the West throughout its history. To overcome this way of thinking, it is necessary to think the hidden ground of space and time more primordially as time-space in order to express the assumptions that have gone into thinking space and time only in terms of the enabling of representation. The unique eventuation of the event does not “enter” the space and time of beings; rather, it is the abyssally grounding time-space itself that grounds this unique eventuation. This does not mean that a unique time-space occurs within the space and time of the mundane world, but that this time-space is radically other than any spatial or temporal intrusion if by this what is thought of is yet another representation of space and time in terms of extension. Instead, this time-space that abyssally grounds the event is the persistence of fathoming the ground itself in its grounding. It is a fathoming that cannot be expressed outside of the time-space that opens up as this persistence itself. It is thus related to *my* unique question as the dimensionality of this questioning, which is asked only from the assignment of the self to the event as the grappling with the simplicity of the unique in its passing by. The third chapter of this thesis thus examines the time-space of the event as the persistence of this fathoming of the ground.

Chapter 3: Time-space and the Persistence of Fathoming

In *Contributions*, Heidegger presents the need to understand the nature of space and time more originarily. Space and time have remained, throughout the history of their interrogation, entirely undetermined with respect to the fact that they are constantly thought of together, whether in the same breath, as in space *and* time, such as with Kant, who considers them as forms of intuition, or operationally, as in physics, in which time is yet another dimension added onto the three dimensions of space for which processes are analyzed. In either case, space and time are thought of as calculable extensions for the experience of beings. But Heidegger now asks how this relationship comes to be and in what essential sense space and time are unified such that each is thought of together and in its own right. For Heidegger, this is time-space. Time-space is not a mere coupling of time and space; instead, it is radically different than both space and time and yet brings each to its own essence and to the essence of their belonging together. For Heidegger, time-space is the abyssal ground of the event and, as such, is related to the essential occurrence of truth. Thus, it is related to the uniqueness of being as event. Insofar as time-space is thought of in relation to beings, it is thought of in terms of extension. Even in the absence of beings, this extension takes on the characteristics of an emptiness. However, time-space thought of in terms of the abyssal grounding of the event, and thus of the uniqueness of being, must be thought of in terms of what is most essential to the eventuation of the event, which is not how beings are to be encountered, but how the uniqueness of being eventuates despite the danger posed by beings in which time-space is distorted into the space and time of what is merely brought into presence. In this way, time-space is essentially related to the uniqueness of the event grounded in Da-sein. The grounding of the unique event in Da-sein is not the representation of this ground for the sake of Da-sein having it within its grasp; rather, it is

the persistence of fathoming the ground as its essential occurrence and thus it is the essential occurrence of truth. Time-space, as the abyssal ground, is the persistence of this fathoming, which occurs only as the unique event in which the uniqueness of being passes by in truth for which is opened up the clearing for self-concealment.

Heidegger's preliminary question centers on the uninterrogated relationship between space and time in which he asks "how is the "and" related to space, how to time? Has that ever been asked? Can it be asked at all?" (CP 296). Regardless of how the relationship is handled from the prevailing point of view, which takes space and time as calculable extensions, the fact that they belong together will always remain obscured by the already established ways of representing them if the need for this kind of representation is not overcome. Space and time are thought of only in terms of presence; for that is how they are represented in extension. If presence, which is only one modality of this relationship, dominates the understanding of space and time, then space and time will never be thought of in terms of a more originary essential occurrence. One might think this search for an origin to the relationship of space and time to be absurd; after all, how can there be an origin to what constitutes the very realm and possibility of origination? But this is not to think the relationship in a more essential way. The originary essential occurrence of space and time is neither spatial nor temporal. It does not come "ahead" of space nor "before" time. Instead, it is to enter into a certain kind of relationship to what grounds the essence of space and the essence of time. Heidegger determines the ground of "space and time" as the "and": "The "and" is in truth the ground of the essence of both space and time, the dislodging into the encompassing open realm which forms presencing and constancy but which could not itself be experienced or grounded" (296). He continues: "For the experiencing projection does not occur here as the representation of a general essence... but in an original-

historical entrance into Da-sein's site of the moment" (296). It is an entrance into "the site of the moment" and not simply "the moment" itself. The site of the moment is the topology of momentousness—how the moment "unfolds." Heidegger wants to know how Da-sein, who is the "there" that grounds the event as the domain of what is proper, enters into this momentousness and thus joins the spatiality and temporality of the "there" in the grounding of the ground. The essence of space and time is not something that is abstracted from the experience of space and time in terms of a knowing; it is an entering into momentousness by grounding the moment in the fathoming of this momentousness. Furthermore, the moment is not a "now" as if to enter into the site of the moment were simply to experience the present more essentially. The site of the moment is

the uniqueness and the intrusion of the most luminous transposal into the domain of the intimation out of the gentle captivation by what is self-withholding and hesitant, nearness and remoteness in the decision, the where and when of the history of being as self-clearing and self-concealing out of the appropriation of the basic disposition of *restraint*.

This and the basic experience of the "there" and thus of time-space. (296)

While this definition is, even at this point, quite obscure, it nevertheless highlights that this site is not to be thought of in terms of the calculated extensions of the classical representations of space and time. Rather, it is to be thought of in terms of the unique event and the appropriation of Da-sein in grounding the event. It also indicates that the basic experience of the "there" is related to time-space, which, as will be shown, is the origin of space and time that gives rise to the spatialization and temporalization of the moment in its momentousness.

Heidegger opens the section on time-space in *Contributions* by situating the question of time-space within the question of the essence of truth. The unity of space and time as time-space

is that of an origin. Heidegger lays out the criteria of tracing this origin. He says that only if (1) “the essence of each is clarified as properly its own, and” (2) “each essence in itself is exhibited in its extreme separateness to the other, and” (3) “each essence in itself is grasped as arising from something originary; and” (4) “this that is originary, the common root of both, is grasped as other than they and yet such that, as a root, it needs both of them as “shoots” in order to be a root-grounding ground (= the essence of truth)” (298). The question of the essence of truth is the question of the truth of essence. Truth essentially occurs in the turning relation of essence and truth, which is experienced in the fathoming of the ground as being there (Da-sein) to the simplicity of this turning. Heidegger determines time-space “as arising out of, and belonging to, the essence of truth and as the thereby grounded structure (joining) of the “there,” a structure of transport-captivation” (293). The “there” is Da-sein as the “between” of this turning. The turning is joined in the “there” and, as such, the “there” grounds the turning in the fathoming of the ground—the fathoming of the essence of truth. Time-space is the joining of the “there,” which is the “there” of the turning. This turning is thus related to time-space as what is joined in the “there,” and what is joined in the “there” is what allows this turning to turn. As more originary than space and time, it cannot be said that this turning is spatial or temporal; rather, it must be said that the spatial and temporal arise because of the turning, grounded in time-space as what joins the turning in the “there.” Da-sein, as the “there,” is this simple joining in order to be there for the simplicity of truth. The joining of the “there” is essentially related to the simplicity of truth—to the most essential “moves” of the turning. To fathom the essence of truth is to “be” time-space as the “there”—the turning of truth and essence as the essential occurrence of the truth of being.

Time-space is joined in the “there” as disposition, which is disposed for the fathoming of the ground as the essence of truth. As disposition, this joining is likewise related to the selfhood of Da-sein. Addressing the nature of time-space to facticity—the fact that Da-sein is as being there—Heidegger indicates that this relationship is characterized by “[t]he “between” of the turning and indeed as explicitly steadfast in a historical way! Determines itself as the here and now! The *uniqueness* of *Da-sein*. Accordingly, uniqueness of knowingly enduring what is assigned *and* bestowed” (293). The steadfastness of enduring the “between” of the turning is the persistence of fathoming this turning as the essential occurrence of truth. Heidegger says that this persistence is historical because in the persistence of fathoming the ground, Da-sein appropriates this persistence as its own uniqueness.⁴⁰ The fathoming of the essential occurrence of truth is the experience of the simplicity of the passing by of the unique. This uniqueness is Da-sein insofar as Da-sein steadfastly persists in the fathoming of the ground. Da-sein is unique but does not lay claim to uniqueness as such. Only in the persistence of fathoming the simplicity of the turning is Da-sein “there” for uniqueness, which passes by in the simplicity of the truth. Being there persists and this persistence is proper to what persists. Because Da-sein persists in fathoming the simplicity of truth as the passing by of the unique, this persistence, being nothing other than this fathoming, appropriates itself uniquely. It is assigned to itself as the self: Da-sein is a unique self as the appropriated assignment of its persistence in the fathoming of the ground as the essence of truth—the simplicity of the passing by of the unique—in steadfastness to the turning of truth and

⁴⁰ In his essay, ““Beyng-Historical Thinking” in Heidegger’s *Contributions to Philosophy*,” Alejandro Vallega draws attention to the fact that Heidegger explicitly avoids the use of the word *historisches* in favor of the word *geschichtliches*. *Historisches* has its English cognate in the word “historical,” whereas *geschichtliches* “refers not to the measurable and factual time of objective presence and its historiography (*Historie*). Rather, the word attempts to sound out the very occurrence (*Ereignis*) of appearing as such, the essential swaying of beyng as such” (CCP 52). As Vallega points out, this distinction is originally drawn from the hermeneutic tradition.

essence as the “between” of this turning. This turning is joined in Da-sein as disposition. The nature of selfhood is to be disposed. This is how Da-sein appropriates the simplicity of this turning. This turning is not yet separated in the categories of space and time, which are determinations that are much less essential than the “between” itself. Disposition is proper to this “between” because it joins what is not yet determinately separated.⁴¹ And because Da-sein is assigned itself in selfhood, disposition is what is proper to being a self. The self is likewise unique in its persistence in which this persistence is the knowing endurance of the self to the uniquely fathomed simplicity of truth. Persistence is joined disposal. Because persistence of the joining is disposal to the joined, it is determined as a here and now—the here and now of being disposed. This is the uniqueness of Da-sein as being the “there.” The unique is not a determination of *what* is there or *that* it is there, but the knowingly endured self-concealment (of self and event) in the turning of *what* (essence) and *that* (truth): self-concealment passing through the turning of *what* and *that* amidst the unsecured danger of beings. The unique being a kind of “not” without negation, negation is therefore reserved for the transformation of *what* in opposition to *that* as a broadening out of the turning in the determination of space and time with regard to the present.

The unique, in its relation to time-space, is what is often thought of as the eternal. This accounts for the seemingly disconnected and rare occurrence of the event. If the event is not

⁴¹ As the “between,” Da-sein is “there” to the separation that is inherent in the truth of being that gives rise to the turning of truth and essence. Disposition grounds this separation without making it determinate. As a result, such determinations as time and space can occur within this turning, that is, in its presence, but only Da-sein is historical [*geschichtliches*]. However, in the unique event Da-sein does determine itself as a self that is assigned to itself in the event. This determination belongs to the history of metaphysics as a determination; however, it belongs to the history of metaphysics as *its* uniqueness—as the uniqueness of the horizon—that is “there” to the horizon of uniqueness—the essential occurrence of the truth of being in the unique event of appropriation.

continuous, it naturally becomes questionable how the event is to be thought of in relation to the everyday unfolding of space and time. Heidegger says this about the eternal: “The eternal is not the incessant; it is instead that which can withdraw in a moment so as to recur later. What can recur: not as the *identical* but as the newly transforming, the one and unique, i.e., being, such that it is not immediately recognized, in this manifestation, as the same!” (293). The unique does not withdraw so as to be elsewhere. It is that transformation which is related to the persistence of fathoming the simplicity of the passing by. It is the transformation of and as this fathoming, which, in turn, is not brought into a relation of being identical to itself. For even the nature of identity and difference are transformed in this fathoming. The eternal and the unique: this is the essential concealment of identity and difference that belongs to the unconcealment of the clearing. The unique is not recognized as the same because it passes by sameness, is “there” in the sameness of the self-concealment of the event (of self and event) where it withdraws as passing by. It is not recognized as difference either for it belongs without difference to what it is “different from” in withdrawal (the divided and undivided belonging of the event). Confounding identity and difference, the unique event is not subject to being ordered along these lines. One might say that it *is* continuous, in that it is still occurring, always occurring, but that it is distorted by the prevalence of a truth that maintains itself in a particular understanding of the identical and the different.⁴² This remaining broadens out in the negation of beings without regard for

⁴² In her essay, “Reading Heidegger’s *Contributions to Philosophy: An Orientation*,” Susan M. Schoenbohm characterizes the “still occurring” event in terms of the fact that “[t]hings are still happening, in spite of their appearing without metaphysical grounds” (CCP 20). She continues: “This is indeed strange: even in their utter questionability, even though there is no available accounting either for ‘human’ being or for the being of beings, things persist nevertheless” (21). Schoenbohm here intimates to the uniqueness of the event when she points to the questioning that takes place in the abyssally grounded event “that calls thinking into an entirely unprecedented, unique, singular (*einzig*) disclosure” (21). If what is “still occurring” does so without ground, this can only mean that what is “still occurring” is unique and therefore cannot

uniqueness and so accounts for the unfolding of space and time which are thought of as either empty or filled with beings. Herein also lies the difference between the new and the unique. The new does not arise in the persistence of fathoming. It is related to this broadening out, which gathers the new in the inventory of experience. The new is only ever new in the similarity of what it means to be new. The unique, however, is never merely new. To experience the unique is always to return to the simple transformation of truth, which is always “newly” transforming and so is the transformation of newness. If the new is the transforming, newness loses its comparative power and so it cannot be said to stand for anything other than the fathoming that persists as transforming and so can only ever be designated as the “there” of this fathoming and thus as Da-sein. Therefore, the common understanding of space and time is related to the event as the new is related to the unique. The former conforms to a criterion for comparison; the latter is without comparison and is experienced only by returning to a fathoming that is itself unique.

In the unique event belonging itself occurs. Belonging occurs as the stillness of occurring. This is the difference between time-space and space and time. Here is how Heidegger describes time-space:

Time-space is the appropriated sundering of the turning paths of the event, the sundering of the turning between belonging and call, between abandonment by being and beckoning intimation (the trembling in the oscillation of being itself!). Nearness and remoteness, emptiness and bestowal, verve and hesitation—in these the hidden essence of time-space resides, and so they cannot be grasped temporally and spatially on the basis of the usual representations of time and space (294).

be identified with any ground nor differentiated from any ground. Hence, the unique is related to the abyssal ground, which is neither ground nor not ground; instead, it is event.

The appropriated sundering is the persistence of fathoming: time-space is the sundering into persistence appropriated as fathoming. This is the fathoming of occurrence itself—the essential occurrence of the ground (as abyssal ground)—in that it occurs and is still occurring. Fathoming is the origination of occurrence—the occurring of occurrence grounded by the abyss. Heidegger says that “time-space belongs to truth in the sense of the originating essential occurrence of being as event” (294). The fathoming of truth is belonging to what is true and is the truth of belonging and this as the originary essential occurrence, which is the truth of occurrence itself—that being occurs. The persistence of fathoming is the still occurring of this occurrence. The word “still” can be taken here in its dual meaning as “at rest” and “persistence.”⁴³ What is at rest in itself is what occurs in the undivided belonging of the event, which belongs to the divided belonging of space and time. This is the persistence of fathoming the abyssal ground. The abyss belongs, as the undivided belonging, to the ground, as the divided belonging. As the abyssal ground, time-space is the appropriated sundering that belongs—as ground and abyss—to the event. Time-space is the essential occurrence of truth as the essential occurrence of this abyssal ground. Space and time, however, as they are thought of in the usual sense, are bound to the divided belonging in that they are separated by the “and.” The “and” of space and time forces divided belonging, i.e., presence. The “and” is the ground of dividing, ordering, and juxtaposition. Persistence, as the divided belonging proper to the undivided belonging, is distorted and categorized by the “and,” and thus becomes a matter of ordering. The persistence of fathoming, however, does not succumb to this distortion, and so persists in fathoming the stillness of belonging to the event. The veiling of time-space by the naming of time and space together means the undivided belonging of the abyss is veiled by the divided belonging of space

⁴³ This play on the word, “still” [*Stille*] is possible only in English.

and time, which grounds the divided belonging of beings. The conjoining of this “and” is always done from the already represented presence of the two. Thus, Heidegger points out that in the original Greek experience of the present, the “limit” and “that which encloses” are also posited. Hence, for Aristotle, the “where” and the “when” become categories, “determinations of beingness” (297). The “where” and the “when” are “the placing beside each other” as limits. The limit disregards the abyss. It encloses the here and now. But the enclosed here and now are not abyssal. The abyss makes every limit into a horizon; thus, it makes every limit questionable. The horizon is the questionability of the limit—the persistence of fathoming that belongs to the event by belonging to the undivided belonging of the abyss and the divided belonging of the ground.⁴⁴ “Time and space, as belonging to the essence of truth, are originally united in time-space and are the abyssal grounding of the “there”; through the “there,” selfhood and what is true of beings first come to be grounded” (297). Space and time also face the abyss—belong to it—by belonging to the undivided belonging of the abyss. The abyss is “there” as grounding the event in the fathoming of the ground. The abyss is “there” as the uniqueness of the event. Thus, the “origin of time-space corresponds to the uniqueness of being as event” (296). The unique is not a category of beings. The unique is the *persistence* of fathoming the abyss—that the fathoming is *still* occurring, does not stop occurring, and that the limit of this occurrence is only in the dividing. Time-space is the undivided belonging that belongs to the divided belonging of space and time.

One of the longest passages in *Contributions* is a sustained meditation on the nature of time-space as the abyssal ground. In this passage, Heidegger unfolds how time-space relates to

⁴⁴ This recalls what Susan M. Schoenbohm calls the “question-dimension,” which opens up as time-space only where the ground is experienced as belonging to the abyss as the abyssal ground.

the essence of truth and gives an account of space and time from this origin without resorting to the common understanding of space and time in terms of extension. In this meditation, Heidegger sets out to describe the nature of both time-space and the abyssal ground. In doing so, he tries to describe time-space following the criteria set out at the beginning of this chapter—as both radically different from each other, and radically other than their origin.

Heidegger opens with a passage describing the relationship of the ground and the abyss with respect to the essence of truth: “The abyssal ground [*Ab-grund*] is the originary essential occurrence of the ground [*Grund*]. The ground is the essence of truth. If time-space is thus grasped as abyssal ground, and, reciprocally, if the abyssal ground is grasped more determinately by way of time-space, then the turning relation and the belonging of time-space to the essence of truth are thereby opened up” (299). Heidegger situates the abyssal ground as the originary essential occurrence of the essence of truth and says that if the abyssal ground is determined as time-space then this opens up the accessibility of understanding the turning relation between truth and essence and the belonging of ground and abyss. Following this passage, Heidegger states that the abyss itself “is the *originary unity* of space and time” while the abyssal ground is primarily “the originary essence of the ground, of its grounding, *of the essence of truth*” (299). The mode of grounding of the abyssal ground “is the staying away of the ground” (299). The originary essential occurrence of the ground is therefore the staying away of the ground. Staying away is a part of essential occurrence. Heidegger says not only that it is the originary essence of the ground, but also of its grounding. The ground grounds in the staying away of every ground. Its grounding is radically other than how and what it grounds and thus radically other than already being a ground. The ground is the essence of truth and so the essence of truth essentially occurs by staying away from what it grounds—the truth. If time-space is thought of as the

abyssal ground, then the staying away of the truth from its essence is brought into a relationship with time-space and thus the originary unity of space and time. Furthermore, Heidegger says of the abyss that it is the “unifying unity [of space and time] which first allows them to diverge in their separateness” (299). The grounding of the ground is a leap into the abyss. The grounding is a leap into the originary unity of what it grounds—space and time. The abyssal *ground*, however, is the staying away of the ground. It is the abyss taken up by the ground in its staying away as ground and in its grounding. In their unity, space and time are undivided; they belong together in the undivided belonging of the abyss. The abyssal ground brings together this undivided belonging with the divided belonging of the ground, which stays away as abyssal ground. In staying away, the undivided belonging of the abyss belongs to the divided belonging of space and time as the joining of time-space. Thus, staying away opens up belonging as an occurrence. As completely other to the ground, the abyss is completely other to the essence of truth. It is non-essence. The non-essence is essential, however, as a ground—as abyssal ground—and so the non-essence belongs to the essence in the essential occurrence of the ground. The staying away of the ground is the staying away of the separation of space and time. This staying away is the grounding of the abyssal ground as time-space—the essence of space and time. Time-space is the belonging of the essential to the non-essential—the abyssal grounding of the ground that calls the ground into its grounding. The belonging of the abyssal ground is the belonging of essence to non-essence in the essential occurrence. The essence of truth essentially occurs by staying away from the truth in its belonging to its non-essence as what is without truth and so cannot be grounded in the essential. Only by belonging to what cannot be grounded in the essential does the ground enter into the turning relation with its grounding and so the essence of truth essentially occurs.

The abyssal ground grounds in the fathoming of the ground, which is the counterthrust to the ground in its relation to the grounded. In contrast to the abyssal ground, which is the staying away of the ground, the ground “is that which veils itself and also takes up, because it bears and does so as the protruding of what is to be grounded. Ground: self-concealing in a protruding that bears” (300). The ground bears the grounded, allowing it to protrude. In this protrusion, the ground is concealed. Space and time, as grounded by the “and,” allow beings to protrude in their unfolding. Space and time bear the unfolding of beings and are themselves veiled in this unfolding in which only beings reveal themselves and not space and time as time-space. In this way, space and time are predictably calculable—they are always thought of as remaining the same for what unfolds within them. The fathoming of the ground in the grounding of the abyssal ground, however, is the fathoming of the staying away of the ground. Heidegger writes: “Abyssal ground: staying away; as ground in self-concealing, a self-concealing in the mode of the withholding of the ground. Yet withholding is not nothing; instead it is a preeminent and originary kind of leaving unfulfilled, leaving empty. It is thereby a preeminent kind of opening up” (300). For the abyssal ground, what protrudes is the withholding of the ground—its staying away. The protrusion of withholding is the preeminent openness—it opens up what withholds itself and as this withholding. In other words, it is “the protruding of the event” (300). The withholding of the ground is the abyssal ground’s way of grounding. But the abyssal ground is itself ground and abyss. As such, it grounds and yet does not properly ground. Thus, “it abides in hesitancy” (300). The abyssal ground is therefore “the hesitant self-withholding of the ground. In this withholding, the originary emptiness opens up and the originary *clearing* occurs, but this clearing is such that, at the same time, hesitation is manifest in it” (300). Fathoming is being there to this abyssal grounding that opens up as the emptiness of the originary clearing.

Fathoming occurs because “the hesitant self-withholding... beckons *Da-sein*, and this latter is precisely the constancy of clearing concealment” (300). *Da-sein* is the persistence of fathoming the ground as the constancy of clearing concealment. *Da-sein* persists because it is called by the self-withholding and fathoms because it belongs to self-withholding in its hesitancy. The occurrence of *Da-sein* is thus “the oscillation of the turning between call and belonging; it is *appropriation*, *beyng* itself” (300). In the persistence of fathoming, the unique event eventuates. In this eventuation *Da-sein* persists in fathoming the ground as abyssal ground and thus experiences the essence of truth as the simplicity of the passing by of the unique. *Da-sein* fathoms itself as this ground and thus hesitates to ground as the ground is withheld in the grounding.

The persistence of fathoming is appropriated eventuation. *Da-sein* as this persistence grounds the unique event. Since the event is the grounding of the abyssal ground, *Da-sein* grounds the event as time-space. Hence, *Da-sein* is the joining of time-space as the abyssal ground. The constancy of *Da-sein* is different than the constancy of presence. It is the constancy of time-space as the persistence of fathoming the ground, which is not presence but presencing: “the essential occurrence of what first founds the presence and absence of beings” (301). Truth requires this ground in which truth itself “*grounds as the truth of the event*” (300). Truth grounds in its turning with essence and the essence of truth occurs only as an essential occurrence of the clearing for self-concealment. The primordial ground, which is the event “grasped from the perspective of truth as ground,” is self-concealing only in the abyssal ground (300). The primordial ground “is *beyng*, but in each case as essentially occurring in its truth” (300). Truth is the ground of the event in its staying away as ground. As ground, that is, merely in its role as ground and not fathomed in its staying away as abyssal ground, the truth is separated from the abyssal grounding of the unique event in which the unique passes by. The truth is the truth of this

passing by in the sense that *beyng* occurs in its truth. But the truth is not fathomed as the truth *of beyng* unless it is fathomed as the truth of the event. “The more groundingly the ground (the essence of truth) is fathomed, the more essentially does *beyng* occur” (300). Time-space, as the abyssal ground, is the persistence of fathoming the ground as the essential occurrence of truth for which truth as the primordial ground remains constant in its truthfulness in that it is fathomed in its essence and as its essence—the being there of this turning about the abyss of non-essence for which the essence is constant in its essential occurrence. Truth does not ground the event if it becomes eternalized in a way that is separated from its essential occurrence in the unique eventuation of the event. When truth is eternalized, as it is with correctness, it no longer opens onto the self-concealment of the clearing for which it is the truth of the unique event that remains in its uniqueness. The open is distorted by what is revealed in it as true—the truth of beings—and this alone. Constancy, as persistence, becomes presence. In the fathoming of the abyssal ground, however, “the first clearing of the open as “emptiness”” is experienced, and thus it becomes a clearing for self-concealment rather than a clearing for the presence of what is cleared (300). Truth, in its turning with essence in the abyssal ground, is the staying with the staying away of the ground. Truth with-stands the abyss by with-staying it. Truth stays with the abyss as the emptiness of the clearing and in this clearing the truth endures the full extent of belonging as both undivided and divided in belonging to the event.

The emptiness of the clearing is not the mere absence of objectively present beings. It is not the emptiness of a space and time thought of as extensions but devoid of any content. It is, rather, “a temporal-spatial emptiness, an originary yawning open in hesitant self-withholding” (301). The emptiness opened up by time-space as the abyssal ground is the stillness of the passing by of the unique in the simplicity of the truth. It is the stillness of *beyng* essentially

occurring in its truth. The yawning open of time-space as the abyssal ground is the temporalization and spatialization of truth. Da-sein is the persistence of fathoming the stillness of time-space as this yawning open—that in this yawning open truth occurs in the *stillness* of what has not yet unfolded and the *still* occurring of the yawning open as the unique event of the appropriation of being. The unique passes by as this stillness where the yawning open of the abyssal ground is the entering of the site of the moment but in which each moment remains in the stillness of its truth. The persistence of fathoming is the persistence of the joining of the spatialization and temporalization of truth in the simple overstepping of the essential occurrence into the essential occurrence in which this joining persists in the fathoming of that in which it is joined—time-space. The emptiness, opened in time-space, is the disposed joining of the event: “The event attunes and pervasively disposes the essential occurrence of truth. The openness of the clearing of concealment is therefore originally not the mere emptiness of vacancy; instead, it is the disposed and disposing emptiness of the abyssal ground which, according to the attuning intimation of the event, is a disposed abyssal ground, i.e., here, a joined one” (301). This emptiness “is only as Da-sein, i.e., as *restraint*, the withholding in the face of the hesitant self-withholding whereby time-space is grounded as the site of the moment for the decision” (301). In restraint, Da-sein withholds itself from being drawn into the unfolding of space and time that opens up in the emptiness of the clearing. Da-sein is restrained in order to ground the event, to be the disposed joining of time-space—that which is not carried away in space and time, but which remains disposed to the stillness of the moment that is self-withholding in the momentousness of the passing by in which each moment remains in the truth of being but being itself passes by in its uniqueness and as this uniqueness in remaining unique. In the moment, the decision is made about the identity and difference of the passing by of the unique, which is the decision about the

“eternal” character of uniqueness as unique and yet other than every determination of uniqueness. In the stillness of the moment the unanticipated occurrence of the unique is maintained in the anticipation of uniqueness. The temporalization and spatialization of the truth is therefore what is unique about time-space as the moment and not what has been levelled down to the predictability of space and time as empty extensions.

The emptiness is in fact a kind of fullness and fulfillment. Heidegger refers to the emptiness as “the fullness of what is still undecided and is to be decided, the abyssal ground that points to the ground, i.e., to the truth of being” (302). He also says that the emptiness “is the fulfilled plight of the abandonment by being, but this as already transposed into the open and thus as related to the uniqueness of being and to its inexhaustibility” (302). In this way, the emptiness is disposed by restraint as “the basic disposition of the most originary belonging” (302). Belonging is fulfilled in the emptiness for which the undivided belonging belongs to the divided belonging. Da-sein grounds this belonging as the joining of time-space in the disposition of restraint. The de-cision of Da-sein is the fullness of the undecided in that as joined in this disposition, the opening of time-space is the opening of what is originally decided but as undecided in that it belongs to the de-cision. It is the “remoteness of the undecidability” that “is prior to every discrete “space” and every demarcated flowing-by of time” (302). In other words, the de-cision that opens up in the emptiness of the clearing opens up the remoteness of its own undecidability—that it has not been decided—and this as remoteness as such. The de-cision and the undecided are one in the abyssal staying away of the ground. But the undecided is not simply to be decided and done with. It is already fulfilled in its undecidability. The remoteness of the undecidability of the de-cision is the fulfilled plight of the abandonment by being in that this de-cision is already determined by the ground that is pointed to in the staying away of the ground.

This ground is abandoned by being in that truth has been decided, even and as the remoteness of its having yet to be decided in specific cases of truth. This abandonment, however, is related to the uniqueness of being in that it is not the remoteness of undecidability that matters but the nearness of this remoteness to the de-cision. That the de-cision is unique is what is nearest and this is what is abandoned in the remoteness. To experience this uniqueness is to experience the unique event in which the unique passes by in the de-cision and the abandonment of being is thus experienced.

Da-sein persists in its fathoming by standing in the projection of the open clearing and bringing the essential occurrence of truth as time-space to ground the event by with-standing the spatialization and temporalization of its unfolding. Thus, Heidegger often speaks of the moment as the blink of an eye [*Augenblick*].⁴⁵ The persistence of fathoming is withstanding the loss of the moment that in its loss passes over the nearness of the de-cision into the remoteness of its undecidability and thus the de-cision becomes entrenched in the givenness of presence. In other words, the loss of the moment is, in a sense, the drifting along in the unfolding of the inessential space and time of what has already been decided even in its undecidability. The placing of the

⁴⁵ In his essay, “The Time of *Contributions to Philosophy*,” William McNeill discusses the genesis of Heidegger’s *Augenblick* as coming from Book VI of Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*. He writes: “The time of the *Augenblick* as the moment of genuine *praxis* informed by *phronesis* is thus a moment of knowing and seeing oneself—one’s own being—as addressed and called to decision by one’s worldly situation as a whole. It entails an authentic understanding of the being of oneself as *praxis*, that is, of one’s being futural in such a way that one’s own having-been—who and what one has been up to that moment—is not left being as a past that can never be retrieved except by recollection, but approaches one as that whose being is now to be decided, held open for decision. As the time of authentic action, the *Augenblick* as the moment of authentic presence is distinguished from the ordinary representation of the “objective” time of nature (conceived as a linear sequence of homogeneous “now”-points unfolding before an independent or outside observer) in being finite and unrepeatable, unique and singular, bound to the finite being of the individual in these particular circumstances and at this particular place and time, and—as this protoethical moment—essentially inaccessible to others” (CCP 131).

essential occurrence into the projection of uniqueness, however, is what allows the unanticipated nature of the unique to be reached: “the essence of truth is a clearing concealment which takes up the event and, by bearing it, lets its oscillation protrude through the open. As bearing and letting protrude, truth is the ground of being. The “ground” is not more originary than being; it is the origin as what allows being, the event, to be reached in a leap” (302). Heidegger continues: “Yet truth is a ground that grounds originally as the abyssal ground. The latter itself grounds as the unity of temporalization and spatialization. These accordingly derive their essence from that whereby the ground is a ground, i.e., from the event” (303). Temporalization and spatialization derive their essence from the event in which the abyssal ground protrudes as self-withholding. Self-withholding protrudes as the event, which is grounded in truth. As the essential occurrence, truth is here what gives an intimation of the unanticipated uniqueness of the event; Da-sein experiences the intimation of the unique as self-withholding in its protruding. By protruding into the emptiness, the self-withholding makes this emptiness “one that is in itself transporting, i.e., transporting into the “to come” and thereby simultaneously bursting open what has been” (303). The emptiness is a transporting into self-withholding such that this withholding withholds in the withstanding of the unique event as the essential occurrence of truth. The moment is thus transporting and not the mere now that passes by in a succession of nows. Transporting is the essence of temporalization. Heidegger explains this essence of temporalization in relation to the essence of spatialization:

To express it more clearly, temporalization, as this dispensation of the (hesitant) self-withholding, a-byssally grounds the domain of decision. With the transporting into that which withholds itself (this is precisely the essence of temporalizing), everything would indeed already be decided. Yet what withholds itself does so in a hesitant way and

thereby grants the possibility of bestowal and appropriation. The self-withholding dispenses the transporting which is characteristic of temporalizing, but, as *hesitant*, it is also the most originary *captivation* of things. This captivation is the *embrace* in which the moment and thus the temporalization are held fast... This captivation also makes possible a bestowal as an essential possibility, grants bestowal a space. The captivation is the spatialization of the event. Through the captivation, the abandonment is an established one which is to be *withstood*. (303)

If not for the hesitation that manifests in the emptiness of the clearing, the event would not take place. The de-cision requires that its domain be grounded by the abyss such that the ground hesitates in its grounding. To be the ground without hesitation is to have everything decided according to the ground that has already established its grounding and so reigns over everything that is grounded. Truth that is unquestioned in its essence does not allow for the de-cision about the essence of truth to essentially occur. The unique event needs the hesitation of the abyssal ground, and thus it needs the essential occurrence of truth—the truth of the uniqueness of being—for the uniqueness of being to be fathomed in the simplicity of its passing by. Hesitation grants uniqueness a space of bestowal in that the truth of being can be true and being can be appropriated in the uniqueness of the event for which it is fathomed in and as its uniqueness. The unique withdraws in that it remains unique, but the truth of this uniqueness is the hesitation that grounds in that it stays away in its grounding. This staying away is disposed for the being there of Da-sein as the joining of the spatialization and temporalization in time-space that with-stands the with-holding of uniqueness in the spatialization and temporalization of the event.

The unique identity and difference of the abyssal ground is what gives rise to the separation of temporalization and spatialization, which is the separation of the standing against to

the passing by. The uniqueness of the abyssal ground with respect to the abyss and to the ground is the intimation that calls Da-sein into grounding the event by with-standing the hesitant self-withholding as the “between.” Hence, Heidegger writes of this separation:

Then whence the separation into temporalization and spatialization? From the transporting and captivating, which, as fundamentally different, require each other, i.e., from the unity of the *hesitant withholding*. And whence the separation of transport and captivity? From the hesitant withholding, which is the *intimation* as the inceptual essence of the event, inceptual in the other beginning. This essence of being is unique and non-repeatable and thereby satisfies the innermost essence of being; φύσις also is unique and non-repeatable. (304)

The identity and difference of the abyssal ground, as time-space, requires the belonging of Da-sein to the event—belonging as such. Da-sein grounds and appropriates the belonging of the undivided belonging of the abyss to the divided belonging of the ground. Da-sein is called into this belonging by the intimation, which is “the self-opening of what is self-concealing as such and indeed is the self-opening for and as the ap-propriation in the sense of the call into the belonging to the event itself, i.e., to the grounding of Da-sein (Da-sein understood as the domain of the decision regarding being)” (304). Da-sein is the “between” of the call and the belonging in oscillation with each other. In this “between,” the de-cision about the identity and difference of the abyssal ground—the de-cision about uniqueness—occurs. This de-cision is the protrusion of uniqueness in space and time. The intimation, which is the inceptual self-opening of what is self-concealing—the inceptual essence of the event—calls Da-sein into belonging because the uniqueness and non-repeatability of the essence of being essentially occurs. This essential occurrence points to another beginning in which the self-opening opens itself uniquely. In

pointing to this other beginning, it points to its own uniqueness—that *this* self-opening is still occurring as the grounding of the event in being there to the ground. In pointing to the absolute otherness of the unique in its uniqueness, the unique points to itself. Spatialization and temporalization, captivation and transport, hesitation and self-withholding—these are the separations that in their absolute difference occur in the unity (identity) of time-space as the abyssal ground, and thus, as the unique event of appropriation grounded in the being there of Dasein for the de-cision. The “between” of this identity and difference is the essential occurrence of the unique in its uniqueness. “Time and space (originarily) “are” not; instead, they essentially occur” (304). Time and space originarily are unique, but their uniqueness only protrudes in the fathoming of the ground, as abyssal ground, in which the identity and difference of this ground belongs to the de-cision about its uniqueness. Time and space only “are” where the unique no longer belongs, which is where everything is decided as to how it can be, and is, questioned (if it is questioned at all) and so the inceptual cannot emerge.

The inceptual can be achieved only in the fathoming of the ground—the fathoming of time-space as the abyssal ground. To be inceptual is to fathom the simplicity of the ground for the proper overstepping of the unique. The other beginning is the simplest inceptual overstepping. It is that which allows time and space to be experienced in their uniqueness, which means the abyss becomes essential in its grounding as abyssal ground and thus time-space. Heidegger refers to transporting as the “abyssal grounding of the gathering” and captivation as the “abyssal grounding of the embrace” (304). Furthermore, he refers to captivation as “the abyssal embrace of the gathering” and transporting as “the abyssal gathering into the embrace” (304). As the essence of time and space, transport and captivation, in their abyssally grounding gathering and embrace, are the time and space of the inceptual—the time and space of restraint

for which the stillness of the essential occurrence opens the clearing for self-concealment and thus the emergence of the unique. This is the persistence of fathoming, which contrasts with the unfolding of time and space in the usual sense: “If transporting proves to be a gathering, and captivation an embrace, then in each case there is a countercurrent at work. For transporting seems at first to be a dispersing, and captivation an estrangement. This countercurrent is precisely the essential and points to the originary referentiality of both to each other on the basis of their separateness” (304). The persistence of fathoming the ground points to the essential occurrence of truth as time-space. Time-space is the unfolding of the essential, which means it is an unfolding of the persistence of fathoming and not the dispersed estrangement of the unfolding of time and space for the sake of what occurs within them unessentially—beings for the sake of mastery and production. This dispersed estrangement is likewise the unfolding of the familiar, which takes its measure from what is and can be in common. Hence, the persistence of fathoming must fathom what has nothing in common and it must understand that its fathoming is the unity of this lack of commonality, that it is in fact the uniqueness of its fathoming as the uniqueness of the horizon that fathoms the unique as the horizon of uniqueness. Thus, Heidegger writes:

Even in their unity, space and time have nothing in common; instead, what unifies them, what allows them to emerge *in* that inseparable referentiality, is time-space, the abyssal grounding of the ground: the essential occurrence of truth. This e-mergence, however, is not a tearing off; just the opposite: time-space is merely the unfolding of the essence of the essential occurrence of truth. (304).

What allows time and space to be time *and* space is precisely the fathoming of time-space that persists in the leap into the grounding of the unique event as Da-sein. Time-space as the abyssal

ground is this persistence of fathoming as the fathoming of the simplicity of the unique event, which in its fathoming maintains the “between” of the unique identity and difference of the abyssal ground. Thus, to persist in this fathoming does not exhaust the abyssal ground; it does not fathom the abyssal ground and draw what it fathoms into its possession. The unique identity and difference of the abyssal ground can never be represented, as representation is only ever difference as seen from the perspective of unity and vice versa. The persistence of fathoming is the entering into this grounding as being there to this uniqueness, which means to open onto the clearing for the self-concealment of being in its uniqueness.

The abyssal ground is the protrusion of the unique in the persistence of fathoming. The abyssal ground is not the negation of the ground, for it itself grounds, abyssally. In this ground, the unique protrudes—the uniqueness of being, which is nothing in the sense that it is “not” any determination of the unique without negating it. Heidegger writes: “The abyssal ground is as little “negative” as is the hesitant *withholding*. Indeed both, if understood immediately (“logically”), contain a “no,” and yet the hesitant withholding is the first and highest lighting up of the intimation” (306). The logic of representation requires the constancy of the present. In representation, the “no” is juxtaposed to the “yes” and can only ever negate it. It does not occur in its primordial unity with the affirmative, which makes it not a denial but an intimation. The “no” does not merely negate the “yes” in this sense; rather, it is the very persistence of the “yes,” which persists by being at rest in self-affirmation. The “no” is the persistence of fathoming the “yes” as the persistence of fathoming the stillness of the essential occurrence—the unique event of appropriation. Heidegger continues: “To be sure, a “not” does essentially occur in the hesitant withholding if grasped more originally. But that is the primordial “not,” the one pertaining to being itself and thus to the event” (306). The “not” in this sense does not negate, it cannot

negate, for if it were a negation, it would be the negation of the event itself. Yet it “is” the negation of the event itself, but in the stillness of its affirmation. It is the shifting tonality of the phrase, “nothing is without reason” that Heidegger later speaks of in the lecture course, “*The Principle of Reason*.” “Nothing *is* without *reason*” and “*nothing is without reason*”: these belong together in the simplicity of the essential occurrence of truth, for which language cannot say more without losing its hold on that of which it speaks. Where the unique protrudes, there is always a failure to speak of it, a failure that nonetheless attests to the unrelenting uniqueness of the unique.

We cannot represent the unique; instead we are open to it. But the unique does not exist outside of the possibility of representation as if it were in the eternal heavens of Plato’s forms. It is this failure to represent and it is this failure precisely so that the unique can remain the intimation that draws us forth. The history of the unique can be represented as little as the unique itself. The history of the unique is that still occurring occurrence of what is essential and thus any representation would fall short of what envelops and penetrates every installation of the represented within that unique history. In “*The Principle of Reason*,” Heidegger addresses this:

Of course, the handy representation of history as the temporal actualization of what is supratemporal makes more difficult any effort to bring into view that which is unique, the unique concealed in the enigmatic constancy which at times erupts and is assembled into the suddenness of what is genuinely *Geschick*-like. The sudden is the abrupt that only apparently contradicts that which is constant, which means, that which endures. What is endured is what lasts. But what already lasts and until now is concealed is first vouchsafed and becomes visible in what is abrupt. (PR 95).

Failure, or breakdown, is the site of persistence. Failure is what brings the unique into view—into the uniqueness of the horizon that is the horizon of the unique. This horizon is failure. It is the failure to make of the unique something that no longer erupts, but that is possessed in the constancy of its endurance. Failure harbors the affirmative negativity of the unique. It is the horizon as an eruption that does not remain after its eruption but leaves one transformed in the stillness that persists in its wake. This stillness intimates to the persistence of fathoming this eruption. There is persistence only where there is failure; otherwise there would be only accomplishment and the end to occurrence. The unique is the eruption of the future—the intimation that in the stillness of restraint, the unique might vanquish all pretense and elevate failure to the highest belonging. We fail to possess the unique such that we might belong to the event of uniqueness, the essential occurrence of truth. The abyssal ground is the failure to ground as the staying away of the ground. This failure is not a deficiency of the abyssal ground. It is precisely that which allows for the persistence of fathoming what endures as the abrupt: the unanticipatedly unique. Time-space is this abrupt eruption. In time-space the unique protrudes as an essential occurrence; it is still protruding, but this stillness is not constancy. It is the stillness that occurs only for Da-sein, who leaps away from every ground in order to ground the unique event as the “there” of time-space and thus the “there” of this essential stillness in the fathoming of the ground.

The persistence of fathoming persists as an enigmatic failure. The persistence of fathoming the ground, as abyssal ground, is the persistence of the essential occurrence of time-space. This persistence is not the constancy of what endures as it is fathomed; the persistence of fathoming is the persistence of founding, which occurs as time-space. Heidegger writes:

every foundation—even and especially self-founded ones—remain inappropriate to being as ground/reason. Every founding and even every appearance of foundability has inevitably degraded being to some sort of being. Being *qua* being remains ground-less. Ground/reason stays away from being, namely, as a ground/reason that would first found being, it stays off and away. Being: the *a*-byss. (111)

The ground as foundation is an abyssal ground because as foundation it fails to secure *itself* as ground. Nothing that is a foundation can be a ground in the sense of its own justification as ground. And yet it grounds in the persistence of fathoming. This fathoming does not force the abyssal ground into the role of a secure ground because it does not demand of the abyssal ground that it justify itself. The persistence of fathoming is a remaining near to what opens up as at a distance. To be a foundation is to be the “there” as this persistence, which cannot justify its “thereness,” but can own its failure to justify it as what is proper to being the “there.” In other words, it can belong to its foundability and it is a foundation only as a belonging. Belonging grounds the protrusion of the unique as the failure to ground. Thus, the abyssal ground is the identity and difference of the abyss and the ground that are the same and yet different, without ground/reason; instead they are fathomed in failure:

If we think this, and if we persist in such thinking, then we notice that we have leaped off from the realm of previous thinking and are in the leap. But do we not fall into the fathomless with this leap? Yes and no. Yes—insofar as now being can no longer be given a basis in the sense of beings and explained in terms of beings. No—insofar as being is now finally to be thought *qua* being. As what is to be thought, it becomes, from out of its truth, what gives a measure. The manner in which thinking thinks must conform to this measure. But it is not possible for us to seize upon this measure and what it offers

through a computing and gauging. For us it remains that which is immeasurable.

However, so little does the leap allow thinking to fall into the fathomless in the sense of the complete void that in fact it first allows thinking to respond to being *qua* being, that is, to the truth of being. (111)

Failure is the play of the de-cision to persist in the fathoming of the ground, which, as abyssal ground, is the staying away of the ground. The abyssal ground is the measureless measure: that which intimates towards the measure, but only in order to remain measureless. The unique opens up in the play of failure, which occurs in the persistence of fathoming the ground that abides in the hesitant withholding of the opening: the ground of the uniqueness of the horizon as the horizon of the unique. The unique event reveals that it is always occurring, never stops occurring, but in order to belong to this eternal occurrence, it is necessary to give up the need to possess it for oneself—that this self is in fact only a self in being proper to this failure to possess. The self is only affirmed where it abides in the impossibility of affirmation. The unique is this impossibility that escapes selfhood and yet assigns what is proper to being a self. If the self is assigned in this impossibility, then the self is assigned in failure, in the breakdown of the self. The persistence of fathoming is the persistence of the self in failure, because of failure and not in spite of it. The belonging of the “yes” to the “no” in the unique event is the affirmation of failure in the persistence of fathoming. Here uniqueness is at home.

Conclusion

The idiosyncrasy of Heidegger's way of thinking should not be discounted, especially when reading *Contributions*. This thesis has been written in an attempt to think alongside Heidegger's idiosyncratic way of thinking by being idiosyncratic in its own right without concealing or distorting this fact for the sake of an objectivity that Heidegger himself would have denounced as a means of falling back into the old ways of doing philosophy. This thesis has been written in an attempt to understand the Heidegger of *Contributions* by appropriating what is unique about this text in terms of my own unique understanding of Heidegger's project, which is not to simply make this text into what I want it to be for the sake of advancing my own ideas, but to struggle with the very nature of the text in terms of what the text itself tries to make into a struggle—the appropriation of thinking to beyng as an event. In other words, it is to treat the text itself as a sort of abyssal ground, as without precedent and yet opening up a unique future that can be seized only where one dares to put oneself in the role that Heidegger himself calls upon the thinker to play. This may seem immodest only where such an attempt is a struggle to become an achievement instead of the restrained stillness of a waiting for that kind of thinking which is already mine and can be thought only if this owning is itself owned, appropriated, and does not merely conform to what has already determined how such a relationship should be.

Contributions demands that thinking become beyng-historical, and so it demands that thinking be an event. Only "I" can leap into this event; I cannot merely analyze it from afar, disinterestedly, and without placing the legitimacy of my own thought at stake. According to Heidegger, the time for that has come and gone. *Contributions* demands that we seek the future uniquely. This, in turn, requires that we attempt to think the unique itself.

Heidegger says of Hölderlin and Nietzsche that their times have yet to come. In the same vein, the Heidegger of *Contributions* still waits for his audience. Many scholars have come and gone, confident that Heidegger's place in the history of philosophy has been set, that Heidegger has himself been outdone, overcome, and as such, he is no longer relevant to what is important for thinking today. All great thinkers have their day and then the time comes that a new generation of thinkers become exhausted by their influence, oppressed, in a certain sense, by their constant prevalence on the widest academic circles. Some are abandoned for a time; others are forgotten almost completely. But those who have truly thought can never be discarded; for they still speak from thinking itself. One of Heidegger's most penetrating insights was to make thinking once again into a plight that must be thought about, into an urgency that only history could understand in its emergence. As long as thinking does not emerge as an event, without ground, and yet grounding such that it gives itself a future to take hold of, then thinking becomes merely an image of itself. The great enigma of thinking is that to think we must simply think. Can that still take place in the age of reason without becoming unreasonable? Or has thinking been pinned down for all time to come? The only way to find out is to attempt this feat ourselves.

For me, this means that thinking must attempt to be unique by thinking the unique. *Contributions* gives this thinking of the unique a future. *Contributions* is a transitional work in many ways, and one of those ways is that it does not exhaust itself by being self-contained according to the strict expression of its ideas. *Contributions* withdraws into its own concealment such that what is unique about *Contributions* still intimates towards a future that it itself does not have within its grasp. In this thesis, I have attempted to think what is futural about *Contributions* by drawing *Contributions* into the historical moment of my own thought, into what is unique about my own way of having a future. By doing so I have attempted to think what is proper to

Contributions. The paradox here is that to think what *Contributions* offers to thought is to think what is proper to oneself. It is to be uniquely un-Heideggerian precisely in such a way that this thinking is most proper to what Heidegger himself tried to think and say. It is not by accident that this is expressed throughout this thesis in terms of what is uniquely unimaginable. Like the unique, I have attempted to make Heidegger other than himself, without negation. Only in this way can the project of *Contributions* be appropriated in the way that it demands.

To such a project as *Contributions*, there can be no intermediary. Only a similar contribution can itself speak of the event. To simply analyze the text, to clarify and abstract, is to lose sight of the text for the sake of possessing it. *Contributions* participates in something that is not textual. It participates in an appropriation, an enowning, which is vital to understanding the direction of its thought. It demands that we acknowledge its own strange occurrence as a transition in philosophy. It demands that we enter into transition ourselves, experience the strangeness of this transition without taking it out of transition and placing it before ourselves. If *Contributions* has a legacy it is the legacy of unique contributions—not scholarly attempts to assimilate this text into some sort of canon, but the call to contribute to the event such that what is to come bears no similarity to *these* contributions because they are themselves unique by participating in the uniqueness of what came before. The future, in a certain sense, is what is unique about the past *in its uniqueness*. This is the horizon of the unique that is the uniqueness of the horizon. In this sense, *Contributions* is its own unique future.

If this thesis has accomplished anything it should be to render *Contributions* in all its strangeness, but at the same time, to bring that strangeness near. For those who come to *Contributions* having read this thesis, it is my hope that they will be prepared to accept that only they can read this text for themselves. For those who will not read this text, I hope that this thesis

offers a means of understanding the unique in all of *its* strangeness, such that nothing will henceforth appear uniquely but the uniqueness of the event itself, which is to say that they will find themselves in a unique occurrence such that this uniqueness will reveal itself as the most intense plight. The readiness to question awaits this plight. Thinking must be prepared to accept that.

The three chapters of this thesis have explored three aspects of the uniqueness of the event: the relation of the unique to Dasein, selfhood, and the imagination; the relation of the essence of truth to the simplicity of the unique; and the time-space of the unique event as the persistence of fathoming the uniqueness of its ground. These three aspects have been drawn from the chapter of *Contributions* on the grounding. Much more can still be made of this exploration of the unique from the perspective of the other chapters. This thesis is not exhaustive, but hopefully it has been informative, insightful, and provocative. There is still much more that *Contributions* has to offer even where this thesis is concerned. I have attempted to give a lucid account of this text with respect to the uniqueness of the event, but in many ways, I am sure that I have failed. And yet it is this failure that has the possibility of being transfigured into the most intense persistence. As long as we are not motivated by what we can produce, but instead seek only to remain near to what demands attention, then even failure will come to have its day of celebration, which will itself be unique and a celebration of this unique occurrence. *Contributions* is a call to persist in thinking from out of the failure to think. Where it is otherwise, there we can be sure that history does not take place. For history emerges from the unique event; thinking is how we belong to this emergence.

While Heidegger provokes us to think in this beyng-historical way and thus to think the uniqueness of the event, we are, nevertheless, drawn exclusively into the orbit of his own use of

language. Thinking, however, cannot remain confined to this use of language alone if it is to remain true to the uniqueness of the event. Heidegger explores the solitude of this thinking, but this solitude is itself unique. In order to continue to think in this way, we must be willing to explore what this would mean beyond Heidegger's use of language alone. Only in this way do we remain near to what speaks in this language so that we might hear the call wherever it be found and in this way belong to the uniqueness of the event, no matter what it is called.

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