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## Echoes of No Thing: Thinking between Heidegger and Dōgen

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## The Question of Time

### The Question(s) of Time(s)

In our discussion of a new beginning, and the inception of thinking, we have scarcely dwelled (*begun to dwell*) on one very important aspect that represents Heidegger's challenge (to us and to himself — *to the rare*), as well as to his "turning" of his thinking in the mid-1930s from the facticity of being to the imperative of the event, or *Ereignis*. The question of time has so far been barely investigated, but as a concept looms large for the thinker; the event of being occurs within time (and almost, with Dōgen, as time), and it is through the disclosure of a primordial time that being *be-*comes being-there, or Dasein. Heidegger's work is as much a practice of thinking differently from the tradition of philosophy, as it is a philosophical encounter with the idea of being-there (and with the time of being-there), and as such we must leave open the way for this new beginning (of *incipient thinking*) to make its own disclosure apparent to us. In this we require an attunement and resoluteness in the practice of attaining radical openness. Critically, this is not a quietude towards which Heidegger directs us, but rather a practice of profound acceptance, a falling into the slipstream of the draft. The surren-

der into the leap, the letting go or releasement (*Gelassenheit*),<sup>1</sup> the abiding in and dwelling, the anticipatory resoluteness of the being toward death; all of these begin to call us towards an acceptance of a world that remains at once very close and impossibly remote, a world uncontrollable, though not uncontrolled, possibly predictable, albeit not to us.

This uncontrollable world is a concern for Dōgen as well, though, like Heidegger, Dōgen counsels a “standing by” within the uncontrolled chaos of time (rather than trying to contain and manipulate it.) His philosophy is clearly one of meditation (his primary teaching is of *shiken-taza*, or *zazen*-only, which, as we will see in more detail below, directs one to just “sit,” actively, within the world). In his fascicle “Uji,” also a part of the *Shōbōgenzō*, Dōgen writes, that, in manifesting oneself within a world, “you must not by your own maneuvering make it into nothingness; you must not force it into being.”<sup>2</sup> In a way similar to what we have seen in Heidegger, world worlding must not be interfered with in Dōgen. Indeed, to take an action is in effect to restrict, and create an inauthentic, artificial world; however Dōgen, like Heidegger, does not interpret this as a form of quietism. Rather, this standing in is an active being-there (Dasein) of being-time (*uji*).

For Heidegger, time — like the idea of being, like the idea of thinking itself — needs to be rethought, re-apprehended, in order to “allow” for the presencing of truth as *alētheia*, or in the event of *Ereignis* making itself manifest through its own disclosure. This requires a different and difficult approach to the question of time itself if we are to understand it (and, as we shall see, one which is fluid and self-surpassing as we move from the years before *Being and Time* to the years following *Contributions*).

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1 Heidegger rarely used this term prior to his “turning” and never with the specificity that it came to mean prior to the end of the war when *Gelassenheit* — specifically the letting go or releasement of being into Being began to be used with formal intention.

2 Eihei Dōgen, *The Heart of Dōgen’s Shōbōgenzō*, trans. Norman Waddell and Masao Abe (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002), 53.

In *Being and Time*, Heidegger works to counter common “everyday” notions of time, notions inherited from Aristotle (and which extend through to Bergson), as well as a history of a metaphysical thinking that grants permanency to a supreme Being but which constricts an understanding of time to a series of ever-reproducing “now-points” located in a continuum stretching between past and present. Time is seen as a fact, and its progression is predictable and dependable. In Aristotle’s *Physics*, he writes that “It is clear [...] that time is ‘number of movement in respect of the before and after,’ and it is continuous since it is an attribute of what is continuous.”<sup>3</sup> These “now-points” stand in relation to that continuum, Aristotle explains, as a point stands in relation to a line; the point is not a part of that line but marks, as a separate phenomenon, a place on that line “that both connects and terminates [...]. It is the beginning of one and the end of another.”<sup>4</sup> However this is treated, time remains a constant, inescapable other within the continuum. For Heidegger, however, time is apprehended in two ways; initially, and in the everyday, it is taken as a vulgar measurement through which, as Aristotle distinguishes it, time exists between things and is measured, adduced, plotted. In the second way, Heidegger sees the existence of another, deeper, more originary, and primordial temporality through which Dasein, or being-there, becomes, or appropriates, its authentic self. It is with this primordial temporality and the echoes we hear in Dōgen, which we will be focused on in this chapter.

Eihei Dōgen also approaches time “differently” than how we “normally” experience it. For Dōgen, we “should not come to see that time is *only* flying past” or as “something that *goes* past.”<sup>5</sup> Rather, time presences itself not as a series of past and present times that “overlap or pile up in a row,” but in a form, to Dōgen, not unlike “spring [...] with all of its many and varied

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3 Aristotle, *Physics*, Book IV, 11.

4 Ibid.

5 Dōgen, *The Heart of Dōgen’s Shōbōgenzō*, 51.

signs.”<sup>6</sup> Time, for Dōgen, on the one hand, is a series of interlocked nows, but, more importantly, these “nows” are interpenetrated “being-times dwelling.” The result is that, literally, everything is “being-time”; as in Heidegger’s temporality, everything that is, is already time. Time becomes the primordial ground through which things are, or come to be. This can be contrasted with Kant’s ontological categories of time and space, in that time is not something through which we experience a world; time is, so everything else is, too. Rather than seeing time as a separate entity, something through which phenomena pass, for Dōgen, time is, as everything else is; it is not limited to a mere continuum nor is it anything which can be removed from things in the world, nor from world itself. Dōgen writes that “mountains are time, and seas are time. If they were not time, there would be no mountains and sea.”<sup>7</sup> Time here acts predictably perhaps as a logos, presupposing and allowing for the presence of phenomena within its field, but time *is* also, as other things are. Without time, “things would be not-so.”<sup>8</sup> We will attempt to address these concepts in greater detail below, as well as where they help (or hinder) our understanding of Heidegger.

### The Time of Being and Time

Heidegger’s first published attempts towards thinking *Sein* (being) and *Zeit* (time) differently came after nearly twelve years of silence in which he published nothing. This was a time during which, though he was teaching extensively (and many of his lectures from that period are now “texts”) he brought onto final being nothing. *Being and Time* then came as a sudden shock to the philosophic community. According to Theodore Keisel’s *The Genesis of Being and Time*, Heidegger attempted three different drafts before the final; these are known as “The Dilthey Draft: The Concept of Time,” “The Ontoneroteric Draft: History of the

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6 Ibid., 54.

7 Ibid., 56.

8 Ibid.

Concept of Time,” and the “The Final Draft: Toward a Kairology of Being.” It is important to note that each of the titles of these drafts, as does the book in its final form, contains an allusion to time, while only two acknowledge “being”; time, then, is of critical importance to all of Heidegger’s career — from *The History of Time*, derived from a lecture course taught in 1925, through the turn of the 1930s, to the later writings on language.

It is common knowledge that Heidegger was, at best, pressured to publish *Being and Time* in order to keep his academic position; in a sense then, we can see the finished text as provisional, if not rushed. The final draft was written in just under a month, and indeed, Heidegger himself claimed that for much of his career what we now read as a completed text was only the “first” part. *Being and Time*, then, serves as a ground for a system purposely left unconstructed; it is the beginning of the clearing that Heidegger draws us back towards in his later writings, the space where the forest has been pushed back enough to allow for the lightening (*Lichtung*) to come forward. We can then begin to see his later work, his work after the turn (which is not so much a turn, as is often thought, in Heidegger’s thinking so much *as a turn in thinking itself*) as always a return to the issues of *Sein* and *Zeit*, and of the questioning, repeated always, of the bare facticity that there is something rather than nothing. We will attempt here to continue to follow a *Holzweg* between Heidegger’s conception(s) of time and Dōgen’s, not so much to define how one influences the other (they don’t influence so much as interpenetrate), but in a way that by understanding Heidegger’s fluctuating concepts of temporality, *Augenblick*, *Ereignis*, and Dōgen’s *uji*, we will be better able to understand the other through the first.

Heidegger’s concern with time involves the very idea of being itself. As early as 1924 in a small text that could serve as first draft of *Being and Time* titled *History of the Concept of Time*, Heidegger states that “*Dasein itself* [...] is ‘time.’”<sup>9</sup> Time and

9 Martin Heidegger, *History of the Concept of Time Prolegomena*, trans. Theodore Kiesel. (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1985), 197.

thereby history (that through which we pass) is not merely a door through which we pass nor an ontological entity which passes us by, but is rather the very definition of being; it is not a separate thing from us. To be is not only to be within time, but indeed to be with time, or even to be time. In *Being and Time*'s introduction, Heidegger writes that "we shall point to temporality as the meaning of the Being of that entity which we shall call 'Dasein.'"<sup>10</sup> To understand Dasein, or "being-there," we must understand being's very real temporality; being is, in effect, being-temporary; to be is to be contingent, temporary, finite. To authentically understand our temporality is to go beyond the surface knowledge of one's mortality, and to understand being-there's profoundly contingent, temporally bounded, nature.

In order to understand these attempts to characterize time, it may be necessary to provide a background understanding of how time works. For most of our lives, we exist in a time that is broadly understood — it is perhaps a little boring in its predictability, as one moment follows the next. The Greeks referred to this time as *chronos* (from which we get chronological from); moment follows from moment, and what once was not yet is all too quickly already past. This is the time we know all too well, but the Greeks also imagined another time, which they referred to as the *kairos*. Kairotic time is the moment of the instant, and holds within itself an opening to the potential beingness of all things; it is timeliness (a moment of that moment, an instant of that instant). A.N. Whitehead called this time the time of the "creative advance." Kairotic time is the instant fulfillment of potential, and as such cannot be plotted or predicted; it is, at the risk of falling too far into the vague, an opening into what otherwise remains closed with the seriatim universe of chronological time.

For Heidegger, time informs—and forms—one's being through its indeterminate possibilities in relation to the three conventional stages of past, future, and present. Past, future,

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<sup>10</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), 38.

and present are, in an everyday sense, separate “times” or individual phenomena; according to our prosaic senses, what is in the future must remain there until becoming something present and with that it is suddenly gone, reclassified as the past, where it must reside eternally. A common (mis)conception of time is that it is something we pass through or over — viewed this way, time is not us but a separate entity entirely. Aristotle struggles with this aporetic difficulty, asking “does [the now] always remain one and the same or is it always other and other?”<sup>11</sup> and in answer replying “if the ‘now’ were not different but one and the same, there would not have been time.”<sup>12</sup>

Heidegger was writing against, and actively struggling with, Aristotle’s conceptions of time. For Aristotle, time comports difference, change, alterity, fluctuation, and instability. Aristotle saw time as *seriatim* passage, predictable as “number of movement, according to before and after.”<sup>13</sup> For Heidegger, authentic temporality remains a possibility and as such is very much a dynamic force. Temporality reaches into the future and extends to the past in a mode of ecstatic fluidity. It is not simply an interminable parade of now-points. Drawing on the new, more original descriptions of time, Heidegger refers to these modes as “the ecstases of temporality.”<sup>14</sup> In a footnote to *Being and Time*, Macquarrie and Robinson describe the root meaning of the word *ekstasis* as the mode of “standing outside,” which lends a more precise cast to this idea; rather than being something rapturous (how we would normally define the word ecstasy), “standing outside” contains an inflection that removes us from the immediate nature of transformation; standing outside means we exist at a remove from something. By being removed (through standing in a clearing), we are able to observe it occurring; *we look in*. Heidegger describes the different forms of ecstatic time as inter-informed — “the future, the character of having been, and the

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11 Aristotle, *Physics*, Book IV, 218.

12 *Ibid.*

13 *Ibid.*

14 Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 377.



Present show the phenomenal characteristics of the ‘towards-oneself’, the ‘back-to’, and the ‘letting-oneself-be-encountered-by.’<sup>15</sup> Rather than time existing as a separate entity which we encounter at one time, temporality is being-there’s original Being. Being becomes manifest (to beings) through what could be called an interpenetration of times within times; time is in motion, and moves not only in a single direction. Time “allows” for the “factual potentiality-for-Being,”<sup>16</sup> or what becomes Dasein. We become aware of Being through the profound understanding of, or encounter with, our being’s highly contingent nature. Indeed, Dasein only comes to be as a possibility through engagement with the fact of our futural finitude. That I will die, that this is not permanent, and, far more radically, that none of this perdures, and that everything that is, is contingent, exists as a source of dread to me; confronting the world at its very limit is horrifying, it is the ground of nihilism. However, that same horror also, in extreme cases, reveals another, primordial ground, a ground which liberates me for the first time from the prosaic, quotidian reality of crude, everyday life into an authentic encounter with Being, which is, in effect, not bound by the temporal, and which exists outside of—or above, or beyond—inauthentic conceptions of a correct and acceptable world view. This soteriological vault through horror is best illustrated through Kierkegaard’s “mighty trampoline leap” in which true authentic belief only emerges through a confrontation and rejection of learned dogma, through a resistance to received knowledge in favor of a passionate, perhaps illogical, response to that which cannot be known; for Kierkegaard, this is God.<sup>17</sup>

While a common everyday view of time views a future which passes through a “now” into the past in a unidirectional, constant flow, Heidegger’s determination of time is significantly more nuanced; in Heidegger’s “primordial temporality,” the

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15 Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 377.

16 *Ibid.*, 372.

17 Søren Kierkegaard, *Fear And Trembling: Repetition*, trans. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), 36.

question of the future is always informed by a past, and the past, or having-been, is of a concern for being-there. In *The Concept of Time*, Heidegger casts Dasein as a future possibility; Dasein is a “being out toward what is not yet, but can be.”<sup>18</sup> Dasein views itself through its own possibilities — even the possibility of possibilities — and through its futural thrownness; being-there projects itself into what it desires and imagines itself *as a self* there. It reaches towards. This is not wishful thinking but a genuine (authentic) grappling with its own existential possibilities. This futural possibility is, however, inevitably informed by a past (past decisions, heritages, histories, etc.) and therefore this possibility of a future “draws” as well on a past, re-invigorating that past, reimagining it, but making it something unequivocally, defiantly, no longer past. Heidegger writes in *Being and Time* that “only in so far as Dasein is as an ‘I-am-as-having-been’, can Dasein come towards itself futurally in such a way that it comes back.”<sup>19</sup> Being and beings are reunited — become unalienated and return as one — through authentic engagement with the question of beings’s contingent finitude. Being-there becomes through what it was, as much as what it will become. It reaches both into the past and the future, becoming now through its past facticity and futural possibilities. Heidegger continues “As authentically futural, Dasein is authentically as ‘having been’ [...] the character of ‘having been’ arises, in a certain way, from the future.”<sup>20</sup> Being-there is, Heidegger writes, because of what it was; the future be-comes because of the past. Time, then, is not a unidirectional street from the future into the past; rather it effects and informs itself *as it comes to be*.

How then do we come to view time, not in the conditioned everydayness of common, “vulgar,” chronological reality, but within the ecstatic dimensions of *kairotic* temporality which exist, so far, as possibility, and more importantly, why does it

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18 Martin Heidegger, *The Concept of Time*, trans. Ingo Farin (London: Continuum Publishing, 2011), 48.

19 Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 373.

20 Ibid.

matter? For Heidegger, especially in *Being and Time*, but, as we shall see as well in *Contributions*, we attain a new understanding (we begin again) of being-there's fundamental approach through "anticipatory resoluteness," through a "standing-in." By projecting ourselves towards a future (which is informed by the past) which we are not sure about, we experience the "ecstasy" of anticipation; we find ourselves resolved in our expectation, thus leaving open, or allowing to come (forth), that futural experience which, if we were to remain closed down, cannot come forward. For Heidegger, anticipatory resoluteness is "authentic Being towards the possibility which we have characterized as Dasein's utter impossibility."<sup>21</sup> The idea that Dasein's existence is not temporal is "an impossibility," but one which we seek safety in everyday; to remain "authentic" we must recognize not an end as such, but that Dasein as being "exists finitely." This is the radical stance of anticipatory resoluteness; to recognize in Dasein's "utter impossibility" not a nihilistic surrender but the chance to prepare oneself for a new beginning. Few, as we have noted elsewhere, are prepared for such a challenge; "only the rare," Heidegger writes in the *Contributions*, "who are endowed with great courage" can place themselves on the path of thinking finitude with any authentic resolve.<sup>22</sup> This is not mere resolve born from a stoic nihilism, but rather a revolutionary attunement of being that is profound and born from a certain attuned and enlightened horror at being's sudden finitude.

### The Time in Contributions

In *Contributions*, Heidegger's treatment of time changes (but again, we can begin perhaps to see this as a rethinking of his earlier considerations, a provisional restatement of an incipient thinking-towards begun early in the century and carried for-

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 378.

<sup>22</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Contribution to Philosophy (Of the Event)*, trans. Richard Rojcewicz and Daniela Vallega-Neu (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012), 12.

ward through the thrusts and feints of what Blanchot will call the disaster of the 20th century), and this is yet again a sign of how Heidegger's own thinking replicates his call towards a new beginning. In *Contributions*, Heidegger describes his stance (to the question of the "meaning of Being")<sup>23</sup> as essentially unchanged from that of *Being and Time*; only "the positions of the questioning are constantly different."<sup>24</sup> Yet as we begin (*again*) to question "more originally," the nature of questioning changes radically, though not necessarily the essence of the questioning. Before claiming mastery of an entire system, we need to begin with the preliminaries, and it is so often the preliminaries — the originary beginnings — where thinking at its most essential is birthed, and where it is first interrogated. This is where Heidegger resists easy interpretations and simplistic conceptualizations; Heidegger himself practices, as an ethics of thought, a constant return to the incipient beginnings he calls us towards in his writing. It is in the preliminaries where the main points are broached and understood, and Heidegger returns to again and again as the originary question — the question that is of a concern for us — that we have not yet *begun to think* — the question of thinking.

Yet what we have described here so far, has, to a large degree, been, in Heidegger's words, "blind, useless, and bereft of any actual, philosophizing question."<sup>25</sup> We have merely picked out and strung "together 'passages' in which some problem or other is discussed."<sup>26</sup> We have not yet begun to think the question. In order to understand the disclosures of the event of truth, we must examine in depth, with Heidegger, the advent of the event, and more importantly, (the) space and (the) time in which it can occur. While an entire study or career could be made of examining the pathways of thinking that Heidegger exposes in the *Contributions*, for our purposes, within this chapter, we will

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23 Following the style of Rojcewicz and Vallega-Neu, we will take for *Seyn* their translation henceforth as "Being."

24 Heidegger, *Contribution to Philosophy (Of the Event)*, 67.

25 *Ibid.*, 299.

26 *Ibid.*

restrict ourselves to a single section — that of chapter v, entitled “The Grounding” which looks to the emergence of “Da-sein,” “truth,” and “time-space” in the new beginning — in an attempt to understand his *Holzweg*, which is as much ours, towards another grounding, which ends, if it does, only within the domain of the abyssal. That this grounding is one that never grounds, that never becomes *essence* is of a concern for us.

### Da-sein

Yet how abyssally cleared must the clearing for self-concealing be, such that withdrawal might not appear superficially as mere nullity but might reign as bestowal.<sup>27</sup>

The concept of Dasein changes in *Contributions* and marks the most profound shift — or at least evolution — in Heidegger’s thinking Being and beings in the decade since *Being and Time* was first published. Dasein here becomes Da-sein, and, as the hyphenation indicates, is no longer concerned with the possibility of beings encounter with Being, as such, but attends instead to the profound possibility of the event of truth, or of disclosure of truth to being, through its encounter with Being; the emphasis of the word changes from *being-there*, to *being-there* (from *Da- Sein* to *Da-sein*). Heidegger’s concern is with the there of Being’s disclosure, the site of its presencing, which acts as the event of truth, or *Ereignis*. No longer is Dasein simply a possibility; it becomes, through Da-sein, being’s exposure to Being within the “*there*” of truth’s eventual truthing. There is a great deal of language at play here, and it is critical to note that for the Heidegger of the *Contributions* (even more so than in *Being and Time*), the need of a system of the logical and the rational has been laid to rest; Heidegger is speaking towards the question from within a sense of awe, rather than answering it with a certainty. As such, we will need to restrict our understanding to a thinking with, or thinking towards, rather than a knowing as such. Thinking with the *Contributions* leaves behind the

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<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 231.

Socratic certainty of the syllogism and returns thinking to the place of the wonder of Parmenides and Heraclitus. From that rejection to the claim of edifying knowledge comes an embrace towards the uncertainty of Being's *be*-coming within the site of the rejection, within the openness of the event of truth.

The disclosure of *Ereignis* happens no longer in a grounding which is rooted in a world of "Christian saeculum" but rather occurs in a more original, abysally located fissure through which the event of truth comes forward not by force and naming, but of its ownmost authenticity.<sup>28</sup> This fissure is a break in the known; rather than certainty what emerges is the uncertain. It is important to note that the uncertain is in no way the unclear; the uncertain has the quality of a deep abiding, a dwelling-in which gives forth, through practice, a brilliant quality of knowing. Heidegger writes that "in *Being and Time*, Dasein still has an appearance that is 'anthropological,' 'subjectivistic,' 'individualistic,'"<sup>29</sup> but that in this new reading of the term, as we read it in the *Contributions*, Da-sein is as a *das Sein des Da*, or the being of the there, with this there-being "the openness of beings as such and as a whole, the ground of the more originally conceived Ἀλήθεια [*Alētheia*]."<sup>30</sup> Da-sein, as the there of being-there is the grounding of truth in "this simplest of fissure[s]."<sup>31</sup> As we read "The Grounding" carefully we will begin to see what Heidegger means by fissures, and of the different conditions, or manifestations, of ground as not only ground, but abyssal ground and primordial ground. The presence of the abyss, into which we both leap freely, as well as find ourselves thrown toward, is by its very nature a groundless ground, and this has the effect of radically leaving open "the question of Being" to be asked again "in the new beginning."

Read this way, being-there opens itself to the event of truth through an act of clearing away the inherited misconceptions

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28 Ibid., 233.

29 Ibid.

30 Ibid., 234.

31 Ibid.

from the history of metaphysics, of the misconceptions birthed in “that other beginning.” (Now we are beginning to think, if only hesitatingly.) Like a form of “anticipatory resoluteness,” the human being who is grounded in “steadfastness,” who grounds oneself *as a practice*, and within the practice of thinking the other beginning, allows for the presencing of the event of truth to open, or disclose itself, to them. This steadfastness (which reads as a preparatory or initial *Gelassenheit*, or releasement, a term Heidegger does not think in any formal way until roughly eight years after the initial writing of *Contributions*<sup>32</sup>) is like a clearing and, like a literal forest clearing, must be attended to, cleared and prepared. Heidegger writes:

The steadfast enduring of the clearing of self-concealing is taken up in the seeking, preserving, and stewardship carried out by that human being who has the self-knowledge as one appropriated to being and belonging to the event qua the essential occurrence of Being.<sup>33</sup>

To practice the steadfast enduring, the staying with, that the clearing calls us towards requires a careful practice and “stewardship” by the person who is already self-aware. This is not a revelatory moment of sudden “seeing” in the history of religious attunement; rather the exposure of being to Being requires a persistent training towards this event, a waiting “on that which answers pure waiting” in the dialogic language of the “Evening Conversation.” Through practice, beings, when met with an open clearing, are prepared to experience the event of truth truthing and do not stumble past this clearing blindly.

In preparation for this event of the grounding of Da-sein, Heidegger advises in *Contributions* the cultivating of four practices, or virtues; the first, “strength” works not as a simple, mere

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32 Despite the appearance of *Gelassenheit* in numerous forms prior to *Country Path Conversations*, the term itself is “inherited” from Meister Eckhardt and as such was already part of the German philosophical lexicon. We will examine Heidegger’s thinking of *Gelassenheit* in a subsequent chapter.

33 Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy (Of the Event)*, 235.

accrual of power; rather strength is seen as “the mastery of the free bestowal of the broadest fields of creative self-surpassing.”<sup>34</sup> This can be read as allowing oneself—through a strength as mastery—to creatively remain open to the moment of “self-surpassing.” That is, as a practice to *practice* the recognition that one always exceeds the known. The second virtue, “decisiveness,” is practiced not through obstinacy, or stubbornness, but rather through “the security of belonging to the event, the entry into the unprotected.”<sup>35</sup> Opening oneself to the possibility of being unprotected—from within the unknown—is a hallmark of the leap; we can read here again the surrender of letting go; to let oneself go is to fall unprotected from the confines of safety; it is *to decide to fall*. The third virtue, “mildness,” is not to be confused with “the weakness of leniency” (we can read Nietzsche here). Mildness instead, for Heidegger, is the “generous wakening of the concealed and retained, that which ever strangely binds all creating into what is essential to creating.”<sup>36</sup> Instead of directing us towards a Christian timidity, the form of mildness that Heidegger invokes here advises one to practice a restraint in naming the world, in building an inauthentic edifice over the uncertainty of the fissure. By practicing restraint, we allow that which is “creative” to *be-come* the creative. This is done not through an act of positive assertion, or claiming, but through its ownmost originary, essential force of being *be-coming*. Finally, Heidegger names “simplicity” as the fourth virtue, one which is not meant to be confused with the “futureless” nor the easy, but in “the passion for the necessity of the single task of securing the inexhaustibility of Being in the shelter of beings and not letting go of the strangeness of Being.”<sup>37</sup> Simplicity directs us towards the new beginning which returns us, in turn, to the awe and wonder of thinking that Heidegger has traced to existing before Plato, before Socrates, before the onslaught of metaphysical and

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34 Ibid.

35 Ibid.

36 Ibid., 236.

37 Ibid.



scientific answering. We must never let the strangeness — of existence, of life, of world — go; to do so risks enmeshing being in an unreal, alienated, and withdrawn existence, to an inauthentic existence already formed, already answered, already taken up and in which we find ourselves already thrown upon. Taken together, these four practices work to direct and “ground” being as being-there, there in the “steadfast enduring of the clearing, i.e., of the freed, unprotected and belonging domain of the ‘there’ wherein Being conceals itself.”<sup>38</sup> Be-ing is disclosed as being-there within the event of truth through a practice of the four traits of strength, decisiveness, mildness, and simplicity which amount to a practice of “steadfast enduring.”

Heidegger is careful in the *Contributions* to “allow” for Da-sein to evolve from a mere “anthropological” concept grasped only in relation to the human being as he views the Dasein of *Being and Time*, into what seems to function within the “between.” Before we describe what he means by the “between,” we must continue to understand the very specific meaning of Da-sein that Heidegger is trying to describe. It is important, again, to understand what Heidegger is describing is in motion, in flux. It is not an isolated concept which can be readily defined and named; we can only claim to understand it provisionally. Heidegger writes that though Da-sein could never be named in an “immediate ‘description,’” as if it “were simply to be found objectively present somewhere,” it can and should be found

in a rightly understood projection which brings forth the contemporary human being, even if only in abandonment by being and prepares the resonating of the fact that the human being is the being which has broken out into the open.<sup>39</sup>

Da-sein is not — in contrast to a traditionally conceived God — a separate entity that gives being Being, nor is it being itself; rather, Da-sein, in flux, in movement, creates the opening (*das Of-*

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 235.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 246.

*fen*) for being to *be*-come, even if this being is within the midst of the plight of the abandonment by Being. The event “opens up” in the space between — according to an illustration in *Contributions*<sup>40</sup> — Human Being and Gods, World and Earth. Da-sein exists as being-there in a central pivot through which the event of truth as appropriation sunders common reality, the reality based in that first beginning, and which must make a break with contemporary existence in order to allow for the more authentic, more primordial other beginning which, to Heidegger, is as much a site of “strife” as it is an edenic truth. Da-sein withstands “as an essential occurrence of the truth of Being,”<sup>41</sup> as a space between two beginnings, between humans and gods; in this way it is not its ownmost site for truth, nor is it separate from truth. It occurs as the space between, and this between must be looked at more closely.

## Truth

It is only in these fissured, abyssal spaces — spaces which are indeed non-spaces — spaces which are groundless (which *resist* the grounding), that Heidegger proposes that any element of the unveiling, or remembering, of truth can appear. This happens in the open (*das Offen*) of the cleared space where the eventual disclosure of the event of truth, the event of appropriation — the making, or rather claiming, of something its own-most — can occur. It is exceedingly difficult to describe these “events” chronologically; as we have already seen, the “event” of inceptual thinking takes place in the leap, yet the leap could not, would not, occur authentically had not the event of thinking already begun. This is what Heidegger means by inceptual; in this new world of the new beginning, everything is inceptual, provisional; it is both the hesitancy of the *Contributions* and the anticipatoriness of *Being and Time*. It is the self-withholding of being-there in expectation of the incipient belonging to Being that occurs in

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

the sudden moment of authentic presence (*Augenblick*), a moment that beings have been preparing for, through the practice listed above.

While an entire study could be taken up with the idea of *alētheia*, or the disclosure(s) of truth as the site of being, for our purposes we will again restrict Heidegger's conceptions of the term to a single section of the *Contributions*. Here, Heidegger traces the genealogical etymology of the word "truth" from its "first beginnings" immersed in pre-Socratic "awe" and "wonder" to its eventual impoverishment as a term more closely "yoked" to a correctness and rule-following from which Heidegger proposes to rescue or re-ground it. The concept of truth as an uncovering, or as an appropriation of its self to its ownmost, only emerges within the opening or clearing; it is towards that end that we will pursue the understanding.

For Heidegger, the question of truth always remains a question as important as the question of Being. It is only through, as we shall see, the event of truth disclosing itself that being-there is understood as a unity with Being, and it is not seen as separate, disparate, possibly inauthentic and possibly all-pervading entity. While Heidegger uses various words throughout his career to describe the event, we cannot understand the concept without first an understanding of the word — *alētheia* — which he uses most often to describe it. For Heidegger, *alētheia*, which he takes to mean both truth and the event, is the event of truth as it comes to be. The word describes that which comes forward, or is disclosed, with and within the evental site. *Alētheia* returns to truth its original self through the event of appropriation, or making something one's ownmost. Is *alētheia* then the event itself? *Alētheia* as the disclosure of truth cannot come forward without first a clearing of the evental site, but, just as importantly, the site itself always presages the already undisclosed nature of *alētheia*; both come to be co-originarily, and neither precedes the other. Both already exist, and it is through an attunement — to the moment, to Being — as well as a "letting-be," that they come to be experienced. This sudden attunement to the event as it comes to be is Heidegger's understanding of *kai-*

*rotic* time, that time mentioned above in which an opening occurs which propels da-sein out of mundane chronological time.

Heidegger traces the meaning of *alētheia* back to its etymological origins (which, for Heidegger is always more than an etymological journey, and inevitably serves as a way to understand the ground of a word, to better understand our comportment toward the meaning of the word). As already discussed, *alētheia*, operating as an a-privative in Greek, refers to truth as a “disclosure” or an “unconcealedness” and refers always to the “whence and wherefore [of] concealment and unconcealment.”<sup>42</sup> The term *aletheia* draws its inspiration from the river Lethe of Greek mythology, one of the five rivers of Hades underground world; all who drank from it forgot completely their previous lives aboveground. Lethe then is the river of forgetting; the word itself means either “oblivion” or “concealment.” *Alētheia*, as the privative *alpha*, thus becomes the “remembering” of truth (or the forgetting of what was forgotten, and the remembering of what was to be remembered.) Truth then becomes a rescuing from oblivion of what was lost, and an unconcealment of what had been concealed. In this sense, *alētheia* is opposed to a more Western notion of truth as something unchanging and based in fact, and takes on instead the notion of action.

Heidegger discusses *alētheia* in his first substantial discussion of the term in his essay from “The Origin of the Work of Art,” written roughly two years before *Contributions*.<sup>43</sup> In the “Origin,” Heidegger equates *alētheia* with “the unconcealment of beings” and an “essence of truth<sup>44</sup> that flashes out [with] in the word.”<sup>45</sup> While truth as unconcealment existed as a possibility in early Greek thinking, it has, Heidegger writes, been eclipsed

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42 Ibid., 261.

43 Heidegger writes “The Origin of the Work of Art” over a span of two years, from roughly 1935 through 1937, and reworked it for publication in 1950, and again in 1960.

44 We will see that this “flash” of Heidegger’s will be of critical concern below as we discuss *Augenblick* and *satori*.

45 Martin Heidegger, *Basic Writings*, ed. David Farrell Krell (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), 176.

by equating truth with “correctness,” which, in effect, creates a false edifice of “truth as certainty.” By exploring the concept of truth as unconcealment or disclosure, “we are reminding ourselves of what, unexperienced and unthought, underlies our familiar and therefore outworn essence of truth in the sense of correctness.”<sup>46</sup> When we expose ourselves to the possibility of truth as a “remembering,” we remove it from something we “make” or “create”; truth as disclosure becomes, in effect, a more primordial—*abyssal*—ground on which to base the essential openness of wonder and awe. Truth as a ground has always existed, yet only always as withdrawn, abyssal ground; in this, one cannot make truth, but only clear a space through which it may emerge. The act of metaphysical releasement takes place without God, without a correct bearing; it is an opening of beings to the possibility of Being, to the possibility of possibility itself. In “Origin,” Heidegger writes:

Things are, and human beings, gifts and sacrifices are, animals and plants are, equipment and works are. The particular being stands in Being. Through Being there passes a veiled fatality that is ordained between the godly and the counter-godly. There is much in being that man cannot master. There is but little that comes to be known. What is known remains inexact, what is mastered insecure. Beings are never of our own making, or even merely our representations, as it might all too easily seem. When we contemplate this whole as one, then we apprehend, so it appears, all that is—though we grasp it crudely enough.<sup>47</sup>

Truth is never absent, but is always withdrawn, undisclosed; *alētheia* brings forward the disclosure as an encounter, an encounter which occurs “in its essential extent as the openness of being.”<sup>48</sup> *Alētheia* is the remembering of the authentic being-

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<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 177.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 178.

<sup>48</sup> Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy (Of the Event)*, 261.

there which is always already a possibility. In *Contributions*, Heidegger writes that *a-lētheia* means “un-concealment and the un-concealed itself.” While *alētheia* may mean this originally, the claims of metaphysical certainties have corrupted this term, denying truth “openness” and replacing it with “correctness.” Heidegger writes that, at the end of this history of truth as correctness,

All that remains as first and last is conformity, *rectitudo*, and within this determination an explanation of “correctness must be sought out of the respective interpretation of the human being (as soul) and of beings, provided “correctness” is not altogether taken as purely and simply self-evident.<sup>49</sup>

By artificially “yoking” the concept of truth to “correctness,” truth is robbed of its originary authenticity; what is correct has replaced what is authentically true. Things — as undisclosed, partial entities — are not true at all but are instead enmeshed endlessly in inauthentic relations with the “perceiver to things.”<sup>50</sup> The truth of something becomes a handmaiden to one’s perception of the thing, and no longer has as its own its own appropriation. This, in effect, reduces the entire notion of truth to the “correctness” of a perception. It is not, however, to the originary, primordial event of truth’s disclosure. The term *alētheia* returns to truth its original, primordial meaning.

In the *Contributions*, Heidegger answers, provisionally, in §213, “What the question of truth is about.”<sup>51</sup> To arrive at the more originary, more primordial event of truth that the encounter with *alētheia* brings forth is to understand that what truth means is “not about a mere modification of the concept,” nor even a “more original insight into the essence” of the thing or event.<sup>52</sup> Rather, for Heidegger, one’s exposure to the question of

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49 Ibid., 265.

50 Ibid., 264.

51 Ibid., 267.

52 Ibid.

truth opens one into possibility, into what he calls “the leap into the essential occurrence of truth.”<sup>53</sup> This leap into an authentic encounter at once results in “a transformation of the human being in a sense of a dis-lodging of its position and beings.”<sup>54</sup> The transformation is a grounding, which, as a fundamental action, “empowers” being-there “itself as event.”<sup>55</sup> Being-there is the evental *be*-coming of the event itself which is “above all the grounding of the human being in Da-sein as the ground required by Being itself for its own truth.”<sup>56</sup> What we are seeing here is an essential occurring of being’s joining to Being as being-there (Da-sein), not in the sense of a reunification or of a divisible two becoming one, but through a recognition that — within the primordial, and originally — Da-sein is the possibility of an essential wholeness that discloses itself repeatedly as the event of truth.

Within the schema of what Heidegger refers to as “the usual horizon of ‘logic’ and of the predominant thinking,”<sup>57</sup> the projection of the grounding of truth remains arbitrary. Science, as logic, creates an artificial ground upon which the essence or basis of “truth” is projected; this only serves to maintain an artificial barrier to the presencing of an authentic truth. It remains false and unstable and “truth is taken as an object of calculation and computation, and ultimate intelligibility by an everyday machinational understanding is claimed as the measure.”<sup>58</sup> However, for Heidegger, this interpretation of “truth” as a measure of world fails disastrously by creating an “arbitrary ground” upon which we build “stable” answers to questions, and where we falsely answer the original question. Heidegger writes:

Truth for us is also not what is firmly established, that suspicious offsprings of validities in themselves. Nor is it the mere

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53 Ibid.

54 Ibid., 268.

55 Ibid.

56 Ibid.

57 Ibid., 260.

58 Ibid.

opposite, the crude and constant flux of all opinions. Truth is the abyssal center which trembles in the passing of the god and thus is the withstood ground for the grounding of creative Da-sein.<sup>59</sup>

Truth exists as an in between, as a trembling center into which can flow, and does flow, the essential occurrence (which is different than the essence) of the event. The trembling center, by being precisely nowhere but “in between,” allows for something to come to be, to be-come. This occurs by way of a ground which only provisionally acts as a ground, as a “withstood ground.” Heidegger proposes locating the clearing as merely a provisional, fugacious site. He directs us towards a ground which has been temporarily delineated and laid out in order to prepare the site for the eventual event of truth to take place; that it is provisional is not a detriment, but indeed necessary to begin to anticipate an authentic relation to truth.

In a long paragraph which deserves to be cited in its entirety, Heidegger draws us towards something with which Dōgen is comfortable (but which the history of Western metaphysics remains decidedly uncomfortable). This is the concept of emptiness, of the space for nothing, or more accurately, *no thing*. It is critical here to point out that our reading of *no thing* follows a Buddhistic notion equating nothingness not to the meaninglessness of nihilism, but rather as a soteriological “opening” into a new beginning, an other place; it is the clearing which we have been practicing clearing, which all practice inexorably leads towards, and through, an opening towards the event of truth surges forth. For Heidegger, it is where no thing exists, perdures, manifests, that is precisely the space (of no-thing-ness) where the truth of things — as the event of appropriation — can come to be known; it is the clearing, and it is the openness, and it is the space of no thing, through which things — in their authentic, deeply original selves — can presence themselves. Heidegger writes that this is not a truly empty realm;

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59 Ibid., 262.



the open realm, which conceals itself at the same time that beings have come to stand in it in each case [... It] is in fact something like the inner recess, e.g., that of a jug. Yet it must be recognized that the inner recess is not just an haphazard emptiness which arises purely on account of the surrounding walls and which happens not to be full of “things.” It is just the opposite: the inner recess itself is what determines, shapes, and bears the walling action of the walls and of their surfaces. The walls and surfaces are merely what is radiated out by that original open realm which allows its openness to come into play by summoning up, round about itself and toward itself, such-and-such walls (the particular form of the vessel). That is how the essential occurrence of the open realm radiates back from and in the embracing walls.<sup>60</sup>

This is not to say, for Heidegger, that there was no thing there, within the jug. Heidegger is drawing us towards the idea that within this space of no thing, there is not-a-thing per se, but that the *no-thing* — which is the event of truth — occurs as an in between, *between* the walling actions of the jug (or presenting phenomena). Heidegger writes that, despite it being no thing and no being exactly “it pertains to being itself and is the trembling of the event of the self-concealing.”<sup>61</sup> This is where, in the space of no space, that truth itself comes to rest, comes to be, where the event of truth, as a truthing event, discloses itself only (with)-in no thing-ness.

And yet, within this disclosure is the concealedness of being-there which remains within the opening of the disclosure. The concealed is only partially ever overcome, so that within this space of no thing, what is there must remain always partially withdrawn. We come to *know* the event only provisionally, as an incipient beginning, beginning again; our very encounter is partial, fragmentary but this very act is what it means to begin to think. The leap is inevitably a leap into an unknown, and indeed

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60 Ibid., 268.

61 Ibid.

must be; it is a surrender into a tradition that is not a tradition at all, that destroys traditions as ideas, and which rests its own grounding on the authentic event of truth which happens in the abyssal between.

### Time-Space (*Zeit-raum*)

But where then is the “there” of being-there? In what space, primordial or otherwise does there manifest itself? Can something come from where there is nothing? Even in the quivering between — a fissured remnant — is there not space? (Here we can recall Nietzsche, who, perhaps describing Zarathustra in his short “The Parable of a Madman,” writes, in the famous passage on the death of God, “*Are we not straying into an infinite nothing? Do we not feel the breath of empty space? Has it not become colder?*”<sup>62</sup>) For Heidegger, the event of truth manifests and comes to be within the “space” of time-space (*Zeit-raum*). This space is not a Kantian category, an irremovable set of goggles that must exist *a priori* to our experiencing of the truth. Space and time are normally conceived and defined through the postulations of “physics,” and leaves time, as a concept, a mere “fourth parameter,” a fourth wall on which the edifices of modern scientific thinking are founded, and in which the radical concepts of space and time “have already been leveled down to the sameness of what is calculable and what makes calculation possible.”<sup>63</sup> Even here Heidegger has changed the formula, reversing the standard equation of space and time (and hyphenating the words). For Heidegger, time-space is where space and time “each represented for itself and in their usual conjunction” arise from.<sup>64</sup> Time-space is “more originary than [space and time] themselves and than their calculatively represented conjunction.”<sup>65</sup>

62 Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, trans. Walter Kaufman (New York: Random House, 1974), 181.

63 *Ibid.*, 298.

64 *Ibid.*, 294.

65 *Ibid.*

In this sense, space and time are controlled and ordered in such a way as to make sense of the world (rather than leaving open the question, the question which is *most* question-worthy). This approach ignores the more “originary,” and therefore more fundamental, conception of the unity of time and space as a possible site in which the unity serves as a provisional and abyssal ground for the coming to be, or emergence, of the truth of Being in the form of an historical *be*-coming. This is only possible if, at least initially and provisionally, we uncouple the concepts of time and space from each other to first identify the essence “of each, clarified as properly as its own” and examine within each concept both its “extreme separateness” and that each arises from something shared and “originary.”<sup>66</sup> This originary source is common to each as a root is common to the shoots of a plant (yet remains different.) This common root acts as a “root-grounding ground” and “the essence of truth.”<sup>67</sup> The difficulty, if we refuse this, is that we will never arrive at the “ground” in which the event of truth is located. We will always refuse the call *towards* being-there, and always be already thinking what has previously been thought, cogitating about the known rather than leaping into a new, in Heidegger’s words, “abyssal ground.”

The “abyssal ground,” for Heidegger, is the “*originary unity* of space and time,” the unity which “allows” them to “diverge into their separateness.”<sup>68</sup> This same abyssal ground is the “originary essence of the ground,” and as such, is “*of the essence of truth.*” The abyssal ground is also “the staying away of the ground.” If we were to illustrate this notion, we might imagine ground being an “ungrounded” temporary, provisional support hovering somewhere above a purely opened space which, as the abyssal ground, is in the process of always withdrawing, always separating itself from the provisional ground, always already “staying away.”<sup>69</sup> The two grounds, though intimately giving each other

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66 *Ibid.*, 298.

67 *Ibid.*

68 *Ibid.*

69 *Ibid.*, 299.

being, are always in a process of magnetic-like repulsion, resisting their unification and joining. Heidegger writes that “inasmuch as the ground, even and precisely as abyss, still grounds and yet does not properly ground, it abides in hesitancy.”<sup>70</sup> This is not a refusal entirely, however; the provisional “hesitancy” towards a saying of the definite, of stating an absolute, keeps them in this abyssal sway towards each other, even as it holds them apart. Heidegger writes:

The abyssal ground is 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.<sup>71</sup>

Within this abyss where hesitancy looms, an emptiness is opened into, but this emptiness is decidedly not a negative space; rather it represents a fullness, or at least the possibility of a fullness. It is as though, within the abyss, everything that is, every thing that occurs within the quotidian, crude world of the everyday, drains away and is replaced by an originary “yawning” emptiness, which, like the *no thing-ness* already mentioned, “allows” to come an entirely new beginning, a new thinking towards the event of an authentic experiencing of the truth as disclosure. This is not an emptiness “in the sense of sheer absence of things,” but rather an emptiness that *allows*, that gives to being Being through its “originary yawning open in hesitant self-withholding.”<sup>72</sup> It is the “attuned disposing of the essential *dis-lodgments* of precisely *this* cleared being which allows such self-concealing to stand within it.”<sup>73</sup> Opening being-*there* to the *there* located in the fissured opening of emptiness lets being-there be there as authentic beingness. Emptiness, Heidegger continues, “is actually the fullness of what is still undecided and

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70 Ibid., 300.

71 Ibid.

72 Ibid., 301.

73 Ibid.

is to be decided, the abyssal ground that points to the ground, i.e., to the truth of being.”<sup>74</sup> Emptiness is not a negative concept, but rather, like the jug, fulfills the plight of the abandoned being by “allowing” itself to give. Emptiness is the originary gift of the abyssal grounding of no thing. For a “thing” to come forward, it must have the space to (be)come; emptiness, effected through the withdrawal of phenomena from the clearing, is “offered” as a site for the be-coming, or disclosure of, *alētheia*.

Within the yawning fissure or gap, within this opening, originally occurs time-space (*Zeit-raum*), which exists, as an abyssal ground for what will eventually become “space and time.” Time and space, as a singularity, originally “are not” writes Heidegger. Rather, “they essentially occur.”<sup>75</sup> They occur as a “hesitant withholding” that grows out of an “intimation” (*der Wink*). This *Wink*, or hint towards, grows itself out of an “e-mergence” (*Ent-springen*) in the abyssal grounding of the essential occurrence of truth.<sup>76</sup> Time and space exist as categories, but only as the product of this original occurrence of time-space be-coming. What has occurred within this site is a captivating (of the “abyssal embrace of the gathering”<sup>77</sup>) and a transporting (of the “abyssal gathering into the embrace”<sup>78</sup>). Heidegger writes that, “time spatializes and is never captivating.”<sup>79</sup> What is meant here is that time, as its originary form, works as a “countercurrent” and by being time, allows for space to exist as a grounding of the “embrace.” He continues: “Space temporalizes and is never transporting.”<sup>80</sup> As a countercurrent, again, the existence of space as an abyssal ground, allows time to come to be as a grounding of the “gathering.” Heidegger continues:

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74 Ibid., 302.

75 Ibid., 304.

76 Ibid., 305.

77 Ibid.

78 Ibid.

79 Ibid.

80 Ibid.

Time-space is the gathering embrace that captivates and transports at once; it is the abyssal ground which is structured in this way, which disposes accordingly, and whose essential occurrence becomes historical in the grounding of the “there” by *Da-sein* (by its essential paths of sheltering the truth).<sup>81</sup>

Time-space occurs as the original site of the be-coming of truth, and has almost nothing to do with our common, contemporary understanding of time and space, though, according to Heidegger, it does “contain a development, toward an understanding of these terms.”<sup>82</sup> But does this not mean that *Zeit-raum* is simply a reformulation of a system of categories (Kantian or otherwise) in which an *a priori* ground is formulated, a ground which is not abyssal at all but in fact simply “resets” where, ontologically, Heidegger chooses to hang his hat?

Though an attempt to answer this question definitively would take more time (and space) than this study can anticipate, it is critical to note that Heidegger is not unaware of this problem. He writes, as though in response to our concern, that “the opening of the abyssal ground is not groundless.” It is not simply a “no” to every conception of a ground. It is, rather, a yes “to the ground in the concealed breadth and remoteness of that ground.” An affirmation, then, towards nothing, but not to the corrosive nothing of nihilism; instead then it is an extreme yes to the opening of nothing into absolute emptiness. We are in a place of regression, but not a negative regression. It is an “oscillating site of the moment,”<sup>83</sup> through a constant shifting (of sands, of grounds), through a refusal to state, or accept, the absolute as an Absolute. The abyssal is always already provisional, dynamic, in flux; it operates in a temporary “between” of fissured grounds, in the infinite nothing of Nietzsche’s primordial question (do we not feel the breath of empty space?) Heidegger

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81 Ibid.

82 Ibid.

83 Ibid., 306.

writes that “the abyssal ground is thus the inherently temporalizing, spatializing, and oscillating site of the moment for the ‘between’ and Da-sein must be grounded in this ‘between.’”<sup>84</sup> The abyssal ground is not a negative, endless falling away; it is, instead, a place which refuses the already said, the already formulated, which questions, and most importantly, which thinks *that which is most question-worthy*.

## Between

We have mentioned the “between” several times already and we should pause, if only temporarily, to explore this idea in Heidegger (and with the thought of comparing Heidegger’s thinking with that of Dōgen, later). Da-sein, we have already said is not an entity, nor is it a site, though arguably it works, at times, as such. Instead, the encounter with being-there comes to be, in the in-between, *between* the projected entities of human beings and gods, world and earth. The between is the site (though it is not — it is a juncture, a joining or even a jointed encounter —) of strife and appropriation and is presaged by the leap. The leap into what? Precisely, it is the leap into the *between* that is itself seen as a “semblance of utter recklessness”<sup>85</sup> but which actually holds itself in a “steadfastness in withstanding the most remote nearness of the hesitant withholding.”<sup>86</sup> Rather than a leap towards something, as in Kierkegaard’s “leap to faith,” Heidegger’s leap is a “first penetration into the domain of the *history of being*. In the same sense that Da-sein is neither being, nor is it separate from being. Da-sein equally is not a geographical place, but operates as a sort of “place holder” for the withstanding or standing-in of being, for being’s *sudden* intrusion. This is akin to the reticence that thinking must practice in order to allow, or to facilitate, the “place” of truth to occur. This returns us to the practices of strength, decisiveness, mildness, and simplicity; our

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84 Ibid.

85 Ibid., 179.

86 Ibid.

leap into the between is controlled and withheld, embraced only to be released, to be let go.

The “between” space of Da-sein’s coming to be (and the place of our leap) is within the fissure (*between the leap, into the abyss*). The fissure occurs as a result of the leap; these two cannot be separated. Heidegger writes that the fissure “is the inner, incalculable splitting open of the *ap-propriation*, i.e., the splitting open of the essential occurrence of Being.”<sup>87</sup> This occurs with the possibility of the leap (and the leap is only possible within the possibility of an opening, the fissure, the “plight” of abandonment) and works as an “appropriating event” which “consigns god to the human being, even while it assigns the human being to god.”<sup>88</sup> Da-sein, and thereby the human being, “are grounded abyssally in the event” through the leap, through the fissure.<sup>89</sup>

If we are going to be charged with thinking (in) a new beginning, the site of this confrontation with the *between* is not to be underestimated, indeed, it is critical. The *in between*, the site-less site of the impassioned withholding of power to allow for that which has withdrawn to *re-appear* is exactly not indeterminate as a something between; indeed, in its very *nothingness* (as opposed to its *somethingness*), the *between* operates as a juncture (*Fugen*)<sup>90</sup> between beginnings. This *between* grounds, for Heidegger, the occurrence of the event of Being, and (it is important not to deny the poetry that is at work in Heidegger’s writing) the “self-opening center” which, within the *in between*, “makes the gods and humans decidable for one another.”<sup>91</sup> The *in between*, as such, is indescribable in terms of entity or system-

87 Ibid., 220.

88 Ibid.

89 Ibid.

90 According to Parvis Emad and Kenneth Maly’s translation, “juncture” (*Fugen*) is translated as “jointing.” (Martin Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy (From Enowning)*, trans. Parvis Emad and Kenneth Maly [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999], xvii). That may, in this rare case, work better than the more contemporary translation.

91 Heidegger, *Contributions to Philosophy (Of the Event)*, 247.



atized processing. The in between occurs as an event through the fissuring of the concrete, concretized ways of being; far from being indeterminate, it is a landslide, an earthquake; behind me a stable predictable, inauthentic world — ahead, the passional plight of the new beginning *in between* the not yet known, the unnamed. It is into this abyss that the leap (*that most daring venture in the course of inceptual thinking*)<sup>92</sup> takes us; instead of being thrown into a world, projected as an inauthentic being into a world perpetually undisclosed and without truth, we (*the few, the rare*) suddenly find ourselves no longer mere beings; rather the leap *which expects nothing immediate from beings, takes us into the belonging to Being in the full essential occurrence of Being as event.*<sup>93</sup>

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92 Ibid., 179.

93 Ibid.