

## HEIDEGGER'S HERMENEUTICS OF BEING

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### Abstract

*The question of Being in axio-teleological sense is of profound significance for the history culture and politics of nations, in fact, for the rise and fall of the civilizations. Heidegger brings out that man as well as nations in their greatest movement and traditions are linked to being. Their falling out of being was the most powerful and the most central cause of their decline . In fact, all philosophical questions about Being are interminability, interlinked with the meaning or goals involved in Being. The present paper will bring out the different questions and different meanings of being .*

**Keyword:** Hermeneutics, Being, Metaphysical, Axio-teleological.



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The central philosophical problem embodied and delineated in Heidegger's philosophical works is the problem of Being. It is especially the theme song of Heidegger's magnum opus *Sein Und Zeit (Being and Time)*. The problem has been posed by Heidegger in various formulations as here under

- a) What is Being?
- b) What is Being of entities?
- c) What is the meaning of Being?

(Martin, Heidegger, 1962, p. 1).

In his another work in 'Introduction to Metaphysics, the question becomes,:

- d) Why are there entities rather than nothing?

(Martin, Heidegger, 1961, p. 1).

The subsequent formulations for the same question are worked out as hereunder:

Why, that is to say, on what ground? From what source does the Being derive? On what ground it stand? (*ibid.*, p. 2).

We are asking for the ground of the being; that it is and is what it is and that there is not rather nothing (*ibid.*, p. 26).

Thus Heidegger is asking various questions pertaining to being. He is asking the analytical question with regard to the meaning of the expression of Being. This question asks us as to what are we saying of a thing then we assert that it exists. The answer to this question

is to provide a set of criteria of some sort for determining whether or not a thing exists, regardless of what particular thing or type of thing it is. Secondly, Heidegger is asking a metaphysical question as to what is Being? Or what is the ground of Being? In response to this metaphysical question, Heidegger often suggests that the expressions we used to discuss Being do not faithfully capture the correct concept of Being. Heidegger believes that we shall have to go beyond our present language to develop a better language for capturing certain philosophical insite. Heidegger actually develops various neologisms with a view to capturing presumably certain crucial metaphysical insite. In view of the same understanding Heidegger becomes all the more difficult. The earlier Heidegger advances the thesis that our everyday language is incapable of capturing essential truths about Being. The later Heidegger advances the generalized thesis that no language can capture these truths at all. Thereafter, Heidegger's philosophy shifts away from ontological concerns of *Being and Time* to a peculiar sort of non theological mysticism. The third question as to why is there Being rather than nothing at all, sounds to be theological according to Robert C. Solomon (Robert C. Solomon 1972, p. 192). The question, "why are there Being?" appears to be a search for an explanation of beings. It also sounds like a search for justification for there being entities. It sounds like the theological question as to why God created the world. On the other hand we may assume that the question as to why there are things is not a question for an explanation of why the things ought to exist. It may be a simple question for an explanation of what it is for something to exist. Nevertheless, the question, "why there is Being rather than nothing?" does have teleological and even Qusi-theological implications. It is a question for meaning and justification of Being with special reference to human being and any response to this question has wider cultural implications. The following lines from Heidegger will make it clear that Heidegger concern with Being is not entirely shorn of or innocent of crucial ethical, axiological and teleological implications:

Philosophy always aims at the first and last grounds of the being, with particular emphasis on man himself and on the meaning and goal of human being – there (op.cit, 1961, p. 8).

This question with eminence axiological and teleological is asked by recourse to a leap rather than arrived at by way of conceptual analysis:

We find out that this privileged question, "Why" has its grounds in a leap through which man thirst away all the previous security, whether

real or imagined, of his life. The question is asked only in this leap; it is the leap; without it there is no asking (Martin, Heidegger, 1961., p. 5)

The question of Being in this axio-teleological sense is of profound significance for the history culture and politics of nations, in fact, for the rise and fall of the civilizations. Heidegger brings out that man as well as nations in their greatest movement and traditions are linked to being. Their falling out of being was the most powerful and the most central cause of their decline (*ibid.*, p 30). In fact, all philosophical questions about Being are interminability, interlinked with the meaning or goals involved in Being. Metaphysics is inseparably interlinked with ethics in Heidegger's philosophy.

Heidegger contends that despite the central and vital significance of Being for philosophy as well as wider culture, philosophers and men in general have fallen out of Being. Philosophers have not asked the question of Being and made it the centre point and cynosure of their philosophical investigations and interpretations. However, historically speaking philosophers have always being concerned with the problem of Being or question of existence. Ancient Greek philosophers, Medieval Christian philosophers and Modern European philosophers have been deeply engaged in metaphysical and ontological inquiries. However, they have asked metaphysical questions which Heidegger thinks are not germane to an inquiry into the problem of Being. Philosophers have asked the questions as to whether a particular entity exists viz: "Is there a God?", or whether a particular type of entity exists, for example, "Are there members of a certain class?" However, Heidegger is not primarily interested in asking such questions. He is interested in asking as to what it is that is been asked in such questions or what it is for anything to be philosophers according to Heidegger, have precisely not asked the question as to what it is to anything to be. The question with regard to Being is different from the question with regard to entity. Being according to Heidegger becomes cancelled from us (Robert C. Solomon 1972, p. 193). We do say that animals, trees, stones, human feeling and ideas and mathematical numbers do exist. However, we do not ask as to by virtue of what they exists. Philosophers have ignored or sidelined this question. For example, Kant in his refutation of the 'Ontological Proof' of God's existence has advanced the thesis that existence is not a property of a kind or a predicate of any kind. Hegel does treat Being as a concept, but adds that it is the emptiest of all concepts. For Aristotle, Being is the most universal of all concepts. However, such characterizations of

Being refuse to see the seriousness of the philosophical problem of Being. This, according to Heidegger, is what constituent the fallenness of philosophers from Being. Heidegger concedes these pre-Socrates philosophers did seriously engaged themselves with the problem of Being. Modern German idealists such as Kant, Fichte, Schelling and Hegel have almost negotiated movement of “disclosure” of Being. They almost unlocked what forgetfulness of Being hides. However in the middle of the nineteenth century German idealism collapsed for the age was no longer strong enough to stand up to the greatness, breadth or originality of such a spiritual project (Martin, Heidegger, 1961, p. 37).

Nietzsche, according to Heidegger, is a prime example of a philosopher who has forgotten Being or fallen out of Being, for he has categorically asserted that the question of Being is not only not emptiest of all problems of philosophy. It is also devoid of any sense of significance. However, notwithstanding such radical disavowals of the problem of Being, understanding of Being – of what it is for anything to exist – is the basis problem of not only of philosophy but of all human fields of endeavor and all human beings in general. Philosophical search for foundations can never be accomplished unless the concept of Being is categorically illuminated and understood. The problems pertaining to the foundations of mathematical, physical and biological sciences are also intimated to the problem of Being. In fact the basic tension of modern culture is also a function of our failure of understand Being. Our refusal to even attempt to provide an analysis of Being constituent our fallness from Being. It is one thing to be able to recognize thing as existing, it is something very different to recognize what it is for something to exist. All ontological investigations remain perverted if they do not clarify the meaning of Being and conceive this clarification as its fundamental task (*ibid*, p.11). According to Heidegger we need a clarification not about entities but about the Being of entities. The problem of the existing particular entities must await a clarification of the central and fundamental problem of Being. Heidegger claims that in the entire history of western philosophy he is first one to raise the problem of Being:

In *Sein Und Zeit* the question of the meaning of Being is raised and developed as a question for the first time in the history of philosophy(*ibid.*, p. 70).

To overcome Dilthey’s historical anarchy and alienation, Heidegger by seeing historically in the very Being of *Dasein* has removed history as something that keeps *Dasein* separated from where it actually is (it’s Being-in-the-world). *Dasein* can no more be detached

from its historical world than to be detached from itself. *Dasein* is, in some way, the march of history itself. Any movement of history is a movement of *Dasein* and problems stemming from the historical situatedness of truth are a problem internal to who *Dasein* is: *Dasein* exists as historical.

Heidegger raises the issue of historicity in *Being and Time* primarily from the standpoint of *Dasein*. From this direction, history appears to *Dasein* as a function of its ontological condition of Being-in-a-world in conjunction with *Dasein's* temporality within the care structure. As a consequence of the world's interpretation across a temporal/historical horizon, things which are disclosive of that world are also seen as historical.

However, Heidegger works which followed *Being and Time* approach the question of history and historicity in general not exclusively either from *Dasein's* ontology or from Being itself. Reflecting upon the relevant insights from his middle and later works, namely, "Introduction to Metaphysics", "Origin of the Work of Art", "Metaphysics as a History of Being", "Nietzsche Vols. I and II" and "On Time and Being", Heidegger's conception of *Dasein's* historicity is ultimately related to the so-called "sending of Being". In these works, Heidegger avoids a solipsistic subject-ism, for *Dasein's* inherent historicity is included within the unfolding of Being. In these later works, *Dasein's* Being-in as a Being-with (others) and Being-alongside-things is approached not from the standpoint of *Dasein's* current understanding but from the totality of a yielding of Being. Heidegger's profound insight into the concept of truth is that truth happens as strife between concealing and revealing. *Aletheia*, the unconcealment, in essence (that which holds open and preserves itself) is a process and not static. He describes this unconcealment in the Origin of the Work of Art; "the unconcealedness of beings - is never a merely existent state, but a happening" (Martin Heidegger, 1971, p. 54). Simultaneously with the giving of itself which, ultimately through *Dasein*, reveals a world, Being conceals way of revealing itself. This is definitely not to say that Being is something, but that Being is providing the grounding for whatever does show itself. The totality of any given sending is capable of providing any historical period with evidence of Being, which in the history of thought has either been conceived as the most empty or the most important of concepts. In terms of his earlier thinking, the meaning of Being is visible in an examination of one's own historical world in a moment of "fateful repetition" which discloses the "thrownness of the there" as a constant possibility (Martin Heidegger, 1962, p. 443).

According to Heidegger's vision of ancient Greece, one such moment of fateful disclosure happened when the ancient Greek questioning process brought Western thought out of the darkness of concealment into the light of awareness. Greek artists and sculptors, statesmen and poets, created a world based on experiences of the wonder of Being (op.cit, 1971, p. 152). Thus historicity for Heidegger exists projecting out of a present, in as much as whatever is historical shows itself out of the present. Heidegger makes use of Nietzsche's thought, he neither accepts the determination of the Being of history as a thing dependent upon an axiological system and beings, nor that a concrete history as represented in monuments existing independently of the ontological temporality of *Dasein*. Rather, Heidegger's determination of the centrality of Being, allows these factual monuments to be present for *Dasein*, over *Dasein's* horizon of temporality (historicity). Heidegger approaches the question of the historicity of Being with an analysis of the history of Being. Heidegger maintains in the essay, "*Metaphysics as History of Being*" that the entire project of Western metaphysics since the time of Plato and Aristotle has been a forgetting of the primordial questioning of Being. To probe the earliest thought about Being, Heidegger returns to the works of Heraclitus and Parmenides with a close and rigorous etymological examination. Heidegger contends that the conflict between revealing and concealing, between the ordinary and the unknown, was not yet reduced into a regressive materialism but still asked why there is what there is. Such a question returns in Leibnitz' "Why is there something rather than nothing", and is used by Heidegger as a basic question for philosophical thinking (Martin, Heidegger, 1973, p. 42.62). According to Heidegger, Plato fell away from such basic questioning with his metaphysical postulation of an ideal world. This retrenchment which stresses the 'whatness' of things, excluding the 'howness' or 'whyness', has served to concretize beings and make Being merely a (forgotten) issue. Later transformations through Roman, Christian, and modernist phases, have highlighted the nihilist basis of such exclusionary concentration upon 'whatness'. Specifically, by always searching for 'what' is behind every question about existence, answers like the world of perfect forms, necessarily invite a negative or nihilistic counter-response, History, in its common modern formulations has stressed this 'ideal place' within which humans live and with which one must imaginatively return in order to capture the truth that then existed (R.G. Collingwood, 1982, pp.105-125).

Thus it is important for an hermeneutical investigation into the central theme of historiography to delve into the history of metaphysics generally and analyze Heidegger's standpoint concerning the end of Western Philosophy. In his essay "Metaphysics as History of Being", Heidegger contends that "truth" in the writings of Heraclitus and Parmenides was not contingent on human subjectivity, but was the unconcealing (*aletheia*) of Being in the appearance of things. At this time, before logos became propositional, the Being of things lay bare (*logoi*) a clearing that Being lit, an "open" where things could be seen. It is the seeing that determined truth, not understanding. That is, there was no appeal made to an authority above and beyond the facticity of the presence of things, there was no obvious reason to question from some standardized viewpoint. This was a time when "appearance just as much as appearing, belongs to the essent ... This appearance is not Nothing. Nor is it untrue", (Martin, Heidegger., 1987 , p. 105). Heidegger called this the 'Great Age of Greece' because it accepted that the power of the moment provides real knowledge about the experience of existing: for the ancient Greeks, beings gave adequate information about Being. Truth is inherent in Being, and thus truth appears in so far as something is. Heidegger maintains that Plato, responding to the seemingly contradictory sayings of Parmenides and Heraclitus, metaphysically redirected the course of philosophical thought, hiding the deeper questions about Being in favors of superficial clarifications on a particular sending of Being. Plato mistakenly detected crisis of truth. Are things and thus truth ever-changing (i.e., Heraclitus) or does nothing change (i.e., Parmenides)? Plato, reacting to the problems of sensory perception, linked truth with the unchanging – that which cannot be fooled by mere appearances (Heidegger, Martin, 1987, p. 97 & Heidegger, Martin, 1973, p.864). Because everything on earth changes, the unchanging was not on earth and so consequently it therefore existed only in a supersensory world of perfect forms. With Aristotle's establishment of propositional logic as the arbiter of truth, truth had indeed changed from its Pre-Socratic form. As an indication that people were satisfied with this way of thinking, Heidegger quotes Kant's comment that "since Aristotle [logic] has not taken a single step backward" but, "that it has also been unable to take a single step forward to this day and thus to all appearances seems to be concluded and complete" (Martin Heidegger ,1999, p. 188). Thus for the posterity of Western metaphysics, truth meant that appearance must be tempered with 'rational' and 'Idealized' thought.

Tracing back the progress of ideas provides a glimpse into the different possibilities that *Dasein* could find itself in, and out of which it could and did choose its disclosure of world. These beginning transformations of Western thought are only the first of many transformations. The presenting of Being has since come to show itself, according to Heidegger, then, the unique unifying One, the logos, Idea, *ousia*, *energeia*, *substantia*, *actualitas*, *perceptio*, *monad*; as objectivity, as the being posited of self-positing in the sense of the will of reason, of love, of the spirit, of power, and finally “as the will to will in the eternal recurrence of the same” (Martin Heidegger, 1972, p.7). What we now call ‘Being’ provided the basis for these concepts, yet, through this intellectual process Being itself has remained hidden. Yet in any of these various transformations of thinking about Being via beings, whether in the Medieval period which viewed the world as God’s creation or the modern period which viewed the world as material for manipulation, *Dasein* remains open to the possibility for historical awareness of its position within a particular disclosure of Being’s sending. Emerging from this analysis is that *Dasein*’s ontological historicity, thus temporality, is linked both to the lived historical world and to Being itself. How Being is conceived, the truth of Being is and each conception reveals truth differently. It is not that there are different truths, but that the clearing from which Being can be thought about, is changing: this clearing is historizing. *Dasein* exists both within this historizing clearing and yet remains the one who does the historizing. At each moment what can be thought about changes what Being, in truth, reveals. Descriptions of the “there” as a constant possibility changes, and in so changing reflects the truth of Being as unconcealedness, which is a process. The truth of any given description is better described as the happening of truth that has in this present revealed Itself in this way. *Dasein* is the only “existent” being who throughout history has the task of forming the bases of questioning and thus can be regarded as the necessary outgrowth of the happening of truth itself. Heidegger wishes to clarify what is and what is not being referred to here. Claims have been made that metaphysics in all of its various manifestations is merely ‘pointing’ to the same universal thing or idea. This asserts that metaphysical thinking is innocuousness in that it denies that the ideas that we use to explain our existence, to understand or interpret our Being-in-the-world, has any effect on who exists, namely, *Dasein*. According to this view, no matter what we say, metaphysically speaking, the world remains the same and our place within it merely takes on a different way of dealing with an eternal given: ‘Even though the linguistic formulations of the essential

constituents of Being change, the constituents, so It is said, remain the same. If changing fundamental positions of metaphysical thinking develop on the foundation, then their manifoldness only confirms the unchanging unity of the underlying determinations of Being. However, this unchangingness is only an illusion under whose protection metaphysics occurs as history of Being' (Martin Heidegger, 1973, p. 11)

Heidegger is challenging us to think beyond the framework of Western metaphysics constructed over two millennia. Metaphysics, and its basing of truth on the eternal-unchanging, can only have sprung from the history of the "sending" of Being, *Seinsgeschichte*. Heidegger asserts that Nietzsche turned Plato on his head. The inversion of Platonism where "the sensuous becomes the true, the *suprasensuous* the *semblant* world" (Martin Heidegger 1977, p. 176) leaves to humans only hollow empowering. Specifically, Heidegger points to an inner unity between Nietzsche's notions the "eternal recurrence of the same" and the "will to power", and that both are symptomatic of the anthropomorphic revaluing of all values, that clearly asserts the domination of beings over Being. It is not just that 'When Being lacks the clearing, beings as a whole lack meaning' but that the ungroundedness of the primordial commencement cannot be preserved in beings. Rather, history begins when the commencement – "which is only in commencing", is compelled to rest in the abyss of its ungrounded ground. The truth of Being, as the subject of the primordial question of commencement, "haunts" the beginnings of history, which remains outside of historical descriptions. "The determination of man as subjectum and of beings as a whole as 'world picture' can only have sprung from the history of Being itself- here meaning the history of the transformation and the devastation of its ungrounded truth" (*ibid.*, p.179). Thus despite Being refusing itself by abandoning beings in its historical destruction of all grounds, what is worthy of question - Being as Being - is lodged in the clearing that Being opens. Keeping this originary question in the forefront means that mechanical domination, in the form of a stamp technology or scientific standardization (including historical science), must be replaced by "unusual and singular things". Therefore, even with, the meaninglessness of Nietzsche's eternal recurrence of the same/will to power, the end of metaphysics speaks more loudly that ever of its own demise and of a new commencement.

Following this avenue of thought, what Heidegger is arguing for is an appreciation of the mystery of Being. Being is not subject to a single historical interpretation, but it is only "by grasping what the metaphysics that predetermines the age has elevated to thought and

word' that one can determine what sustains history and draw nearer to 'what is happening' - namely Being (*ibid.*, p. 8). Because humans have a Being in which Being is an issue they are an integral part of history. Creating and changing the way that Being's sendings (*die Schicken*) are interpreted, humans participate in interpreting the way that, in strictly Heideggerian terms, the world worlds. Essentially, metaphysics does not reveal its own essence, does not show its own necessity. According to Heidegger, nihilism within Western metaphysics repeatedly shows itself incapable of showing such necessity by metaphysical means. Whereas a hermeneutic of historical interpretation shows, if thoughtfully viewed, that Being-in-the-world as a Being-in-an-historical-world has been manifested differently in different epochs. Different interpretations do not merely describe the same manifestation, but different interpretations actually describe specific historical worlds, which are different ways in which the world has worlded. The structure of the world-process is the same; the contents of different historical worlds are expressive of the different possibilities of "the (human) world". Ultimately, one can only catch glimpse of what is 'happening', of the undercurrent behind the manifold descriptions. Varying opinions do not negate the veracity of the sending of Being, but merely serve to raise the question of the history of the sendings of Being.

Heidegger says that the Being-there of historical man is a "breach" out of which the power of Being bursts forth making the breach itself smash against the wall of Being. The "over powering of Being is confirmed in works [art works or specifically that which brings about the phenomenon] in which the emerging power *physis* comes to light" and in these works Being accomplishes itself as history (Martin Heidegger, 1987, pp. 159-64). History is primarily the destiny of Being. History as a concrete temporal manifestation of Being, is necessary for Being if Being is to have any "there", that is, if it is to be either concealed or revealed to *Dasein*. Art works give evidence of the connection between the destiny of Being as history and the historicity of *Dasein's* Being-there. Great art works center attention upon commonplace articles, and/or historical monuments, thus showing a human historical world around that entity, revealing how the art work and the onlooker (called the "preserver" by Heidegger) gathers and views the world as an historical people. In such a gathering what is thoughtfully presented is the presence of that which is presencing - that is, the Being of beings. Humans can appreciate and understand history as a reflection of their own ontological foundations, (thus a reflection of Being itself). But, in order to avoid a solipsistic-anthropomorphic view of history, they must also see the limits of their understanding of

history and thus of the world. Heidegger seems to court a solipsism when he criticizes the very question of whether the objects of historiography are “laws” or “events” saying that inaccessible and colourless supra-temporal models must be replaced by objects “already in the factual existentiell choice of *Dasein*’s historicity” (Martin, Heidegger, 1962, p. 447). However, if it is the capacities of *Dasein*’s understanding which provide it with historical knowledge of Being, itself and Others, how can we avoid falling into a radical subject-ism? What are these aspects of *Dasein*’s disclosedness or the “there”? According to Heidegger, *Dasein* has moodiness (*Befindlichkeit*), understanding (*Verstehen*), and discourse (*Rede*) equiprimordially as the constituents of its disclosedness. Language is regarded as meaning bearing. Thus these aspects can be regarded as the means by which *Dasein* articulates meaning to itself, or to others, about the world and about its historical world.

For, according to Heidegger, it is the case that despite our current and “outworn” nature of truth as correctness, one nevertheless remains open, and attendant upon the primordial unconcealedness- for which one need no presuppositions. One stand in a lighted realm, unthought by us, exposed to the primal conflict of Being which presents to us something that one apprehend. When Being thus yields and holds itself back in the various historical epochs, the “appropriate” grounds of understanding emerge in each epoch. Thus the aspects of *Dasein*’s disclosedness shed their solipsistic implication, as their direct connection with the yielding or holding back of Being in any historical epoch is discoverable by an ontological Inquirer. Heidegger asserts that the appropriate grounds for understanding exist necessarily within the sending of Being itself. The inexplicability of the beginning of this revealing and concealing Heidegger explains, is not a deficiency in our knowledge of history, rather, that the “greatness of historical knowledge resides in an understanding of the mysterious character of this beginning” (Heidegger, Martin, 1987, p. 155). “The knowledge of primordial history is not a ferreting out of primitive lore or a collection of bones. It is neither half nor whole natural science but is, if it is anything at all. Mythology” (*ibid.*, p.155). For Heidegger, the appropriateness of an understanding that humans have about the history of Being, one based upon the secondarily-historical objects such as myth, depends upon the given historical epoch, “Thinking remains bound to the tradition of the epochs of the destiny of Being” ( Heidegger, Martin, 1972, p. 9). Any given epoch is seen as historical only upon interpretations of the various temporalizings of temporality which reveal themselves in stories and in the words that are used in those stories. Any mythology, equipment and ideas

as well as our perception of factual history are dependent on the ideas which articulate the changes that arise out of our historicity.

It should not be overlooked that Being does not have a history like a city or people have their history. Thus Heidegger says, “What is historical in the history of Being is determined by what is sent forth in destining, not by an indeterminate thought up occurrence” (*ibid.*, pp. 8-9). By this, what is historical in the history of Being depends upon the appropriateness of what is sent by Being. We cannot randomly pick a transcendent universal or some independent arbiter to decide upon the way that the history of Being unfolds; we must take our clue from what is already there. There is no other measuring stick against which to determine what the history of Being is, it is just the way it sends itself.

Heidegger also speaks about the absence as a means of explicating the sending of Being. One can make nothing of this absence if it is a pure absence, but Heidegger specifically speaks of a “what-has-been” and a “what is to come” as a letting become present what “is no longer present” and by withholding the present lets that be present which is “not yet present”. Here one have “manifest” the open into which Being as temporal “gives all presencing into the open”. Thus the absence of something from the past lets us clearly see the open of the present, which is open and waiting for what-has-been, or something else that may presence. Heidegger also speaks of a giving. The giving that conceals itself, accordingly, is the sending of Being as time. But one may not speak of Being as a being; neither may speak of time as a being, according to Heidegger, how can one understand the giving of time, which appears not to be a giving of anything at all? Here one must look to the word *Ereign* is which denotes an “Appropriation” which when applied to Being and to time, means that they belong together in that the “destiny, lies in the extending opening up” (*ibid.*, p. 19). The sending of Being is time, and is the clearing in which Being can be seen as historical. But this clearing is not temporal as in a past, present, future. Rather Heidegger states that this time is four-dimensional, and the nearing of nearness is the fourth dimension of this ontological time. This nearing of nearness opens by unifying and separating past, present and future, and it is thus the openness of the presencing of the gift of time-space. The nearing of nearness can be seen as a special case of the appropriating of appropriateness. Here what is appropriately given to understanding also clears and opens a place for Being to be described. And just as past, present and future must remain united but separated by nearness in the giving, in historicity what is appropriate keeps truth from collapsing into an a temporal static form. In

the openness of time-space, the destiny of Being as the history of Being, is a double holding back (*epoche*) of the self-manifestation of both the sending and that which sends (*ibid.*, p. 9). This obscure double holding back, harkens back to *Dasein's* guilt over the facticity of its thrownness. Here, instead of finding the destiny of Being self-manifested, one question from where this historical age comes from (metaphysics), or how this historical epoch appeared (fundamental ontology), or even ethical judgements on the goodness of such appearances. Moreover because no-thing is self-manifest, questions arise over any given interpretation of what appears. Any and all interpretations must of accord strive to be grounded in something other than what is manifested as such, and yet there remains nothing other than the manifestations to look towards for interpretation. Thus interpretations will shift as manifestations shift. History, as a history of Being, is a shifting of what is appropriate as a grounding for the interpretations of Being. Heidegger suggests that one should not consider the destiny of Being only in the historical terms presented in *Being and Time* but one should instead use the corrective of placing the 'destiny of Being as history' as a being, and then doing an ontological analysis of the Being of beings as was done in *Being and Time* (*ibid.*, p. 9). This type of procedure ends treating history only as an occurrence interpretable on the basis of *Dasein's* historicity but includes history itself as a manifestation of Being. It is credible to notice the historicity of Being as a concretization of the temporality of Being. Thus by revealing such a relation between temporality and historicity one can see why there needs to be a space opened for a particular instance of nearness, a space for the action of life to take place. By striking a balance between what remains known and what unknown in any historical epoch, Being yields what is appropriate for sense to be made of any-thing. In a sense it is like a theatre which opens the curtains while keeping the actors true identity hidden. An historical epoch (holding back) manifests enough of itself so that some of what is hidden can come to the fore. If the question of Being remains hidden from questioning, then the gift of Being that refuses such questioning moves into the fore. Heidegger states that what is appropriate is neither "accidental, nor can it be calculated as necessary" (*ibid.*, p. 9). It is only by removing the covers of many obscuring epochs layered one up on another that we can reach the root of appropriateness. Finally, we should not be content to find a singular source (i.e., historical) for appropriateness either ontically in any given age or ontologically in the destiny of Being as history. Equally, if we level off the grounds of appropriateness then

history as an articulation of that clearing that holds back a sending of Being will go unnoticed.

The first page of *Being and Time* makes it clear that Heidegger's basic question was not about being, but about the meaning of being (*der Sinn Von Sein*) the distinction between being and the meaning of being is utterly crucial. it is the clue to distinguishing Heidegger's thought from both traditional metaphysics, and Husserlian phenomenology (Thomas Sheehan, 2005, p. 193). He is a strange question and it is not a question after being itself, but after the meaning of being. This is the most crucial point of Heidegger's discussion. Being is that which determines entities as entities that on the basis of which entities are already understood (Frede, Dorothea, 1993, pp. 25-26). The meaning of being initially comes to light as that which determines entities as entities. This is the closest thing to a definition of being in *Being and Time* according to Taylor Carman (Taylor Carman, 2003, p.15).

Heidegger accepts the claim that Being is not a being; indeed, that assumption guides his whole project. He also accepts that our comprehension of Being is nonetheless bound up in some essential way with our comprehending interactions with beings. Being is not a being, but Being is not encounterable otherwise than by encounters with beings. For if Being is, as Heidegger puts it, 'that which determines entities as entities' (Martin, Heidegger, 1962,p. 25) of their articulability in terms of what being and that-being, then it is necessarily only to be met with in an encounter with some specific entity or other. In short, 'Being is always the Being of an entity' (*ibid.*,p. 29).

Heidegger was of the view that philosophy should be an inquiry into the being of Being, thus moving philosophy beyond metaphysics into the realm of ontology. The history of metaphysics, or ancient ontology, has to be overcome as it inaccurately creates a division between ideal and real, subject and object. Heidegger argues that there are conflated in Being, which is the founding condition of possibility and ontological ground for both. The end of philosophy signals the end of metaphysics as ancient ontology, or representational thought.

The question of Being is Heidegger's starting point, because it is a question that, for the most part, the tradition has overlooked, taken as self-evident, intentionally ignored, or misunderstood.

It is said that 'Being' is the most universal and emptiest of concepts. As such it resists every attempt at definition. Nor does this most universal and hence indefinable concept require any definition, for

everyone uses it constantly and already understands what he means by it (*ibid.*, p. 21).

Heidegger agrees that the concept of Being evades definition, but, rather than ignore the question altogether, “the in definability of Being... demands that we look that question in the face” (*ibid.*, p..23). In order to appropriately explicate the meaning of Being, Heidegger grants himself the task of examining the various ways there are to be. In *Being and Time* his focus remains limited to Dasein’s Being-in-the-world, because Dasein is unique in that it alone is able to raise the question of Being.

Heidegger was strongly of the belief that western philosophy had misunderstood the nature of Being in general and the nature of human being in particular. So he dedicated entire life to getting it right on both the fronts, in his view, the two issues are inextricably linked. To be human is to disclose and understand the being of whatever there is. Correspondingly, the being of an entity is the meaningful presence of that entity within the field of human experience. The proper or improper understanding of human being entails a proper or improper understanding of the being of everything else.

In *Being and Time*, Heidegger intends to raise the question of the meaning of Being which the onto-theological tradition has always failed to recognize. Instead of engaging in a theoretical inquiry, ontology has always devolved into the ontic analysis of beings and was never investigated far enough to carry out the fundamental ontology, that is, the ontological analysis of Being. On the one hand, our understanding of Being is self-evident because we must always already have understood Being pre-conceptually; on the other hand, our understanding of Being is obscure because we take it for granted or fail to penetrate it ontologically. According to Heidegger, ‘Being’ is “that which determines entities as entities, that on the basis of which entities are already understood. The Being of entities ‘is’ not ‘itself an entity’ (*ibid.*, pp. 25-26). Elsewhere he writes that “we are able to grasp beings (i.e. entities) as such, as beings, only if we understand something like Being” (Martin, Heidegger, 1982, p. 10).

Later Heidegger is not a rebuttal or rejection of early Heidegger mainly represented by “*Being and Time*”. The central problem for Heidegger throughout his philosophical career has been working out an explication or accomplishing an illumination of the problem of Being. Early Heidegger, however, was more focused on the study of the Being of particular entities including human Being. Later Heidegger is more focused on the problem of Being

itself. Early Heidegger heavily emphasized on *Dasein*. Later Heidegger turns back to the problem of Being. However, the problem of Being remains central throughout as it was announced in the very “*Being and Time*” that investigation of *Dasein* was only a preliminary to the problem of Being. However, in his quest for the expression of Being itself or Being as such, Heidegger negotiates several twists and turns. Giving up routinised language of traditional philosophers, Heidegger comes up with radical use of not-so-traditional terms in “*Being and Time*”. After the publication of “*Being and Time*”, Heidegger increasingly turns to poetic use of language as an authentic expression of Being for poetic language is unmetaphysical and unconceptual and yet akin to philosophical quest for Being. He is also attracted to pre-Socratic philosophy as an authentic expression of the problem of Being. However, finally nothing satisfies Heidegger’s search for an unprejudiced language with a view to expressing Being itself. He gives up all his philosophisations. He gives up all ontological investigations. He gives up all efforts at disclosure of truth or expression of Being or revelation of Reality, so to say. He is landed into what may be called an idiosyncratic condition, into what may be characterized as mysticism of silence and patience. In silent patience Heidegger waits for the word of Being, for the self-disclosure of Being, for the self-revelation of Being. Heidegger gives up his earlier humanistic proclivities and predilections. He gives up his earlier thesis that Being has its’ ground in man or *Dasein*. Man does work out his representation of Being. He does appropriate his intuitions of Being. He does bring out his definitions of Being. However, all is representations, intuitions and definitions are ineliminably and inextricably rooted in the impasse of his own humanity (Heidegger, Martin 1980, p. 358).

The quest for Being is inescapably humanized by man. Later Heidegger as against early Heidegger brings out that *Dasein* on its’ own cannot disclose Being to itself. The disclosure of the truth of Being is not worked out by *Dasein*. Such a disclosure is vouchsafed to *Dasein* to *Dasein* by Being. Such a disclosure is a gift of Being to *Dasein*. This disclosure is a function of an original mystery. Being is independent of *Dasein*. However, *Dasein* is dependent on Being:

It thus becomes necessary to escape this “inescapable humanization” if we are to understand Being itself, and this requires giving up the notion that *Dasein* himself discloses the truth of Being to himself. In these later writings, disclosure is not carried out by *Dasein* (as in Sein

und Zeit), but is “granted” or “given” to *Dasein* by Being itself. This disclosure, or gift of Being, is no longer based on *Dasein*, but on an original mystery. Being no longer is for *Dasein*, but *Dasein* is for the sake of Being (R. C Solomon, 1972, p. 242).

Thus, in his later phase, Heidegger works out a radical shift or paradigm shift. The Being is not disclosed by *Dasein* himself. Rather, the Being discloses itself to *Dasein*. It is the Being that unfolds itself. Later Heidegger’s conception of Being quite vividly resembles the traditional transcendent Christian God. Man becomes a vehicle for the self-revelation of Being. This personified Being is to be approach with devotion and an attitude of reverence, rather than to be treated as a question of philosophical interpretation and ontological investigation. The religious and devotional fervor of the following lines from Heidegger cannot be missed by anyone:

- (i) Being is the mission of thought: (Martin, Heidegger, 1962, p. 46).
- (ii) Thought is the devotion to Being, nothing else (*ibid.*, p.42).
- (iii) The need is: to preserve the truth of Being no matter what may happen to man and everything that is (Martin, Heidegger, 1949, p. 389).

In fact, Heidegger exhorts us to be grateful to Being. We must express our thanks to Being for being graceful in endowing us humans with those qualities of head and heart that in our relationship to Being we can take over even the guardianship of Being (*ibid.*, p. 389).

Man has been all along concerned with the capacity of language to express Being. Heidegger now talks about “the word” which is spoken by Being to man. Human thought is obedient to the Voice of Being. It seeks “the word” through which the truth of Being may be expressed (R.C Solomon, 1972, p. 242). This language is not the natural language or language of everydayness. The truth of Being cannot be brought out by careful preparation or systematization of our ordinary mode of thought. The truth of Being can be brought out through the utterance of a thinker which comes after long guarded speechlessness or silence and field-clarification. Poetry and thought born out of the cultivation of such silence and field-clarification nurse the most unadulterated or purest of utterances. In such moments of purity, the thinker utters Being and the poet brings out what is holy (*ibid.*, p. 243).

The *Dasein* does not constitute Being. On the other hand, it is Being that constitutes *Dasein*. The original and essential thought of the truth of Being is transcendently if not

divinely vouchsafed to man. The existence of man, according to Heidegger, is nothing but standing within the disclosure of Being (*ibid.*, p 13).

“Language is the house of Being” (Martin Heidegger., 1998, p. 239) is one of the catchphrases of Heidegger. However, it should not be construed to be indicating that man is capable of using or mastering language with a view to understanding or expressing Being. Rather, it is language that uses man. It is the Being that grants disclosure to *Dasein*. It is the Being that imparts message to man. In fact, Being discloses itself to itself. Man is purely a vehicle for self-revelation of Being. The disclosure of Being to man is to be patiently striven for and gratefully and reverentially acknowledged. Traditional philosophy in all its ontological glory, cosmological resplendence and axiological radiance is irrelevant to Heideggerian “Theology of Being” or shall we say “Mystery of Being” or “Mysticism of Being”. This shift from Greek and Modern philosophy and Christian Theology to “Mysticism of Being” is a paradigm shift of exceptional and radical consequences and implications.

The following words from David E. Cooper succinctly bring out Heideggerian contention with regard to being.

Heidegger accuses metaphysics of an ‘oblivion of Being’ of failing to heed the ‘ontological difference’ between Being and (particular) beings. The metaphysician tries to explain or ‘ground’ beings as-a-whole in terms of just one kind of being (substance, self, will to power, or whatever). But this is incoherent, since ‘Being [is] essentially broader than all beings’, including those regarded as the ground of everything. To be anything at all, every being owes its existence to Being, and none, therefore, can qualify as Being ‘itself’. In one of his favourite metaphors, Heidegger compares beings to objects which are lit up and Being to ‘the lighting itself’ (Martin Heidegger, 1996, pp. 216-17). Just as no lit up object can account for how objects are lit (cannot, that is, itself be the lighting), so no being can explain how it or anything else is (cannot itself be Being). Being is not a kind of being but the way – or, rather, the series of ways – in which, historically beings get ‘revealed’ or ‘lit-up’ for us. It ‘is Being itself, not man, which is responsible for these ways of revealing. Thus the history of metaphysics is also ‘the history of Being’: metaphysicians merely articulate these revelations, in the deluded belief that they are plumbing the eternal foundations of reality. Nietzsche, for instance, is merely giving voice to Being’s latest ‘lighting up’ of things as objects to be used and dominated. The human subject is a cipher or messenger of Being, and so not the autonomous rational being of traditional philosophy (David.E. Cooper., 1996,p.234)

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