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Senior Projects Spring 2018

Bard Undergraduate Senior Projects

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Spring 2018

## Being and Itself

Chi Fung Lok  
*Bard College*

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### Recommended Citation

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Being and Itself

Senior Project Submitted to  
The Division of Social Studies  
of Bard College

by  
Nile Lok

Annandale-on-Hudson, New York  
May 2018

## Acknowledgements

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Immortal gratitude to my advisor and professor, Ruth Zisman, for all her understanding, patience and support. Hers alone is the reason this flower has sprung from its sealed bud.

To all the professors who have guided me throughout my four years of Bard College.

To the composers whose triumphant music inspired much mania and excitement in my creative and philosophical imagination, without which such writing was never possible. Praise be unto Dvorak, Beethoven, Bizet, Saint-Saëns, Tchaikovsky and dear God—Paganini!

To my mother without whose financial support my academic career would have never began.

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## Introduction

“Take this kiss upon the brow!  
And, in parting from you now,  
Thus much let me avow:  
You are not wrong who deem  
That my days have been a dream;  
Yet if hope has flown away  
In a night, or in a day,  
In a vision, or in none,  
Is it therefore the less gone?  
All that we see or seem  
Is but a dream within a dream.

I stand amid the roar  
Of a surf-tormented shore,  
And I hold within my hand  
Grains of the golden sand--  
How few! yet how they creep  
Through my fingers to the deep,  
While I weep--while I weep!  
O God! can I not grasp  
Them with a tighter clasp?  
O God! can I not save  
*One* from the pitiless wave?  
Is all that we see or seem  
But a dream within a dream?”

—Edgar Allan Poe, *Dream Within a Dream*

Is all that we see or seem but a dream within a dream? This question shall be left here as the central inquiry and philosophical inspiration that has set us off on the following voyage. But before the sails are unfurled and the winds let loose their primal fury, I ask the reader to also let loose their sober inclinations—their sentiments of permanence and conformity which all too often ground us in the shackles of common sense. Let us therefore be *good philosophers* who know nothing. Let us be like the baby who cannot distinguish the sky from the earth and the molten stomachs beneath. Let us be like the child who looks into the mirror, perhaps wondering if another world were to lie beneath. Let us forget all axioms of logic, all principles of human understanding and all that the sciences have had to teach. And let us remember the old foray that the world must have appeared to the nubile eye when we first crawled out from the wombs of our mothers. What tumultuousness, what indiscernibility, what ecstatic chaos! Each sensation had brought with it a new chapter of possibility. Each color had come with new vistas of beauty. It is no wonder then that our first intuition was to weep.

In this returning imagination of the world without all ordering, where the laws of knowledge no longer stand in reign, the preponderance of the essential questions surface to the fore. What *is* this place? How did it come to be? What am I? Why am I here? A moment of experience melts away into an infinite nothingness and oblivion looms ever menacingly beyond the present. Suddenly we find ourselves at an age and a cliffside where all the valleys of youth are shrouded in mists. What? Did any of *that* even happen? Where did all the time go? The only thing that separates the years is an *instant* and the past becomes little more than a thought, riddled with so many distortions and abstractions. Is anything even real? Or will every form and value around me inevitably fall into the same abyss of memory? Alas, is all that we see or seem but a dream within a dream?

The anxiety of Poe's verses speaks to the heart these philosophical misgivings. They ask us to contemplate the apparent world, the material and immediate world, which since Descartes has been considered *res extensa*—the extended being.<sup>1</sup> What we find from Poe is that this ostensibly solid world of corporeal being, in its actual experiential level, reduces itself to intangible, abstract, formless and unobtainable *dreams within dreams*. The narrator struggles to clutch but a single grain of golden sand which they can hold as a fixed *being*, mirroring Descartes' own quest to seek the one epistemic absolute from which all knowledge can be reconstituted in his meditations. Yet, whereas Descartes believed he'd erected the kingdom of truth from his cogito, Poe laments with torment that every *being-as-such* dissolves to oblivion ("O God! Can I not save *one* from the pitiless wave?"). He declares in the end, "Is all that we see or seem but a dream within a dream?", abandoning the epistemological certainty that even *one* grain of sand can be *known* to be real. For Poe's narrator, every perception has begun its melting into nothingness; the line "how they creep through my fingers to the deep" remarks upon how seemingly substantiated "grains of golden sand" are ultimately evaporated when held. They perish away "*to the deep*"—to dreams and to dreams within dreams. The poetry purports itself as a remarkable contemplation of both the unconscious internality of the human subject as well as a metaphysical skepticism on the nature of the world's external being. More specifically, it posits the outlandish idea that the material and immediate *being* which we encounter in our relations to the real world—the world of the post office, of grocery shopping, of leg cramps and hunger and runny noses—to be *a dream*. Yes, even as the reader's eyes glaze over these preliminary musings, they are lost in the dream of the waking everyday.

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<sup>1</sup> A note of clarification—I mean here that notion of being which takes imagines the quality of 'existence' in the extension of physical objects in space, composed of some 'substance' as such.

If this idea seems to be the offspring of insanity, it should be noted that it is not without its reasonable following nor without precedence. In fact, the soul of the idea is neither unique nor uncommon. The notion that life itself is a dream is rather well established and many adhere to some variation of it. Christianity, for instance, teaches that the simple and immediate life is merely a trial—a pre-examination which determines whether man will be brought into the true, ascended world of eternal Being betwixt the bosoms of Christ and heaven's host. In the philosophy of Plato, the world of material immediacy is taught to be a shadow world, illusory in nature and without that quality of *realness* which would constitute true being. In such a sense, the *res extensa* which we encounter in our natural dealings with the world is not itself as such, but rather something like Poe's sand—a slipping away, an ephemerality that never obtains to being. But it should be understood that *our* notion of the world-as-dream differs greatly from the fantasies of these predecessors.

I confess upon the reader that this work shall be an attempt at a proof that Poe is correct. Reality *is* a dream. The two terms are ontologically identical, if by 'reality', I mean the nature of the world as it is in-itself, at the ultimate and most fundamental level of its existence. But what I mean by this and how this contrasts from other similar hypotheses is something which must be shown through meticulous clarification and the stacking of smaller philosophical stones. It cannot be overstated that my intended argument is antithetical to the metaphysics of Christianity or Platonism and my thesis that the world is a dream is nothing akin to such ontologies. Whereas such doctrines ascribe to the world's dream-character the property of falseness<sup>2</sup>, I do not view the world dream as anything *false*. For where Plato divides the world between shadows and

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<sup>2</sup> In Platonism, the world of our immediate apprehension is but the mere appearance of the universal Forms and in this sense, we live in a *false* dream. In Christianity, all of life before the judgement of God is merely a test of one's soul and in this sense, it is characterized by falseness in relation to the true being of the afterlife.



sunlight<sup>3</sup>, I posit that the *true* world is nothing more than shadows and dreams and that the entirety of the landscapes of metaphysics loops back around itself like the serpent of Ouroboros. Indeed, if I am to paint an orthographic perspective of my thesis, it is that the essence of the external world extends back into the self and that the essence of the self inverts upon the point of connection with outer being.<sup>4</sup> This ring of existence has the human subject as its locus and indeed, it is the human subject, the dreamer, from whom all the shapes of reality are unfurled. I aim to show is that the world is a dream, or translated to philosophical terms, that Being is the Unconscious.

In the ideas that follow, what we will find is a thinking about the nature of reality in a way that unites two unlikely lovers: phenomenology and psychoanalysis. What we will find is that in fact the methodology presented in each, the former represented by Heidegger and the latter represented by Freud and Jung, share such an uncanny resemblance in structure and form, that such a unification is not only interesting but necessary to the completion of the work of both. The title of this work, *Being and Itself*, shall be our guiding light that sets the theme of our analysis, for insofar as we are reminded by Heidegger: Being is the concept “darkest of all”<sup>5</sup>, we too are reminded by Freud that “the best-interpreted dreams often have a passage that has to be left in the dark.... This is the dream’s navel, and the place beneath which lies the Unknown...”<sup>6</sup>. The Unknown, the unspeakable thing, what Heidegger calls “the indefinable concept”<sup>7</sup> and the “indeterminate immediate”<sup>8</sup> is no doubt the selfsame ‘non-entity’ as Kant’s thing-in-itself, the

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<sup>3</sup> Shadows and sunlight here refer to the manner in which such terms are used in Plato’s allegory of the cave.

<sup>4</sup> Admittedly, one could criticize this section for its ostensible mysticism. Its meaning however, shall become clearer by the end of the work.

<sup>5</sup> Heidegger, Martin, John Macquarrie, and Edward S. Robinson. *Being and Time*. New York: Harper, 1962. 23

<sup>6</sup> Freud, Sigmund, and James Strachey. *The Interpretation of Dreams*. New York: Basic Books A Member of the Perseus Books Group, 2010. 528

<sup>7</sup> Heidegger., 23

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 28

noumenon of which nothing can be said and nothing can be known. It is this realm of shadow and nullness, ineffable to perpetuity, that has been philosophy's great enigma. In inquiring after this highest and most hidden of truths, that of Truth itself, Heidegger posed the question 'What is Being?' and Freud the question, 'What is the self?' But insofar as we keep these questions disunified in the miasma of misunderstanding, neither of them may truly be answered.

The goal is this: to demonstrate that *Being* and *the self* are one and the same. In the magnum opus of Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, we find a remarkable contemplation and unique re-examination of the very concept of Being. What *is*? Heidegger poses this question again and again throughout his philosophical career—posing the question of *isness*, or Being, to all manner of subjects. What *is* technology? What *is* the artwork? What *is* poetry? Not content with merely their *being* as an object, some material entity bound to a societal or utilitarian function, but rather their *Being* in his sense—what they are in essence. The method of investigation which he inherits from German idealism is called phenomenology and it is through this epistemological praxis that we are supposed to uncover insights into the nature of Being. In this work, I wish to bring to light a key contradiction within Heidegger's phenomenology, a paradox embedded into its very structure. This paradox shall serve as one of the most important themes of this project, for it is in its resolution that I aim to prove the identity of *Being* and *the self* (or the self as the unconscious).

Not too long before *Being and Time*'s publication, Freud shook the world of psychology with his conviction that the human mind could be investigated and probed to its utmost foundations through the analysis of dreams. *The Interpretation of Dreams* is Freud's manifesto of this idea and in it, we find the very first writings which would form the practice of psychoanalysis. While it seems to be a work of purely clinical interest, Freud's metaphysical and

epistemological insights often find themselves surfacing to the foreground. The work is laden with many philosophical ideas which, in the end, I aim to utilize in order to bring into dialogue with Heidegger and the question of Being. More importantly, in psychoanalysis, the same paradox mentioned in the previous paragraph arises, revealing the similar conceptual architecture of the two methods.

The methodology presented by both Heidegger and Freud in the analyses of Being and the Unconscious share an identical epistemological structure—that is, the same contradictory element emerges from both. This contradictory element is the epistemic ambiguity with which both authors seem to suffer. In Heidegger, this contradiction manifests as an ambiguity with respect to Being’s ontological status. Whether Being is an *essentia*<sup>9</sup> discovered or a *being-for-consciousness*<sup>10</sup> raised as part of Dasein’s hermeneutic nature is unclear. At times, with such phrases as to ‘let Beings be,’ and ‘poesis,’ or the epistemology of revealing called ‘aletheia,’ we find a Heidegger who presupposes an independent essential nature of things, a thing-in-itself, qualitatively removed from consciousness. This ‘Being’ is ostensible *something* latent, discoverable by Dasein, which means that it must *be* before Dasein itself engages with it. As the opposite formulation, Heidegger also seems to posit that the discovery of this essential Being is enacted only through the interpretative labor of the mind. Poesis, the poetic relation, must have interpretation, creativity and aesthetic sensitivity as its very vehicle. We find therefore that Being has the kind of Being of something both interpreted and discovered—that is both created and pre-existent.

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<sup>9</sup> Heidegger’s phrase, meaning something absolute or immanent.

<sup>10</sup> Being-for-consciousness refers to the notion of something existing not in and for itself, but as the product of another’s interpretation or perception of it.

This contradiction finds itself reappearing in Freud's epistemology in *The Interpretation of Dreams*—most noticeably that the manner in which one is to discover the nature of the Unconscious. I shall posit that the emergence of this similar contradiction in both thinkers is no accident or coincidence, but rather a hint towards a greater revelation concerning the relationship between the notion of Being and the human unconscious. That is, because the methodology by which they are discovered are identical in structure, the two concepts which have no obviously apparent relation will be revealed to be, in fact, ontologically identical. This work will aim to provide a draft of the architecture of the world by proposing a natural synthesis of phenomenology and psychoanalysis, thereby offering an account of the nature of Being that is distinct from the dominant contemporary view: not an external confluence of particle matter, but an internal cloud of conscious forces. Or more precisely, bringing the two divisions into matrimony by virtue of the intertwining of Heidegger and Freud.

This may be shown once we consider phenomenology as a psychoanalysis of the external world, or inversely, we might consider psychoanalysis a phenomenology of the internal world. In this work, I aim to demonstrate the necessity of this analysis in the question concerning Being. In doing this analysis, I aim to thus reveal the selfsame identity Being and the Unconscious. That these two wildly different texts, concerned with different subjects of thought, turn out to be espousing a method of inquiry identical in structure, is the insight which has inspired this work as proclamation of their natural union—and ultimately, the revelation that the object of their independent search is one and the same. The pathway which I shall lead us through in this work is as follows:

- 1) A rumination of Heidegger's phenomenology which will reveal its own internal contradiction. (First appearance of The Paradox).
- 2) That all independent attempts to resolve this paradox in Heidegger fail.

- 3) A rumination of Freud's psychoanalysis, in which we find the re-emergence of The Paradox.
- 4) That a theory of the unconscious allows for a possible resolution.
- 5) That Being and the Unconscious are one and the same.

The first two steps shall be the chief concern of the first chapter, whilst the second chapter shall deal with steps three and four. The final step shall be expounded in the third chapter, where we will also consider the consequences of such a theory. In my marriage of Freud and Heidegger, the former as the chief archaeologist of the internal world and the latter as the chief excavator of the external world, we will arrive at a lucid theory of their interactions—such that it becomes plausible to identify *the real*, or *the True*, as inextricable from the contents of the human unconscious. It is the utmost irony that Plato had sought to move upwards, out of the cave, in his search for Truth, when the path into its secrets lied buried deeper within the bellows of the earth.

### **Anticipation of a Possible Objection**

Insofar as the following work shall be an attempt at unifying psychoanalysis and phenomenology and the concepts therein posited: Being and the Unconscious, an immediate objection may be raised on the part of Heidegger himself. For in *Being and Time*, Heidegger writes,

“The existential analytic of Dasein comes *before* any psychology or anthropology... We must show that those investigations and formulation of the question which have been aimed at Dasein heretofore, have missed the real *philosophical* problem (notwithstanding their objective fertility), and that as long as they persist in missing it, they have on right that they *can* accomplish that for which they are basically striving. In distinguishing the

existential analytic for anthropology, psychology... we shall confine ourselves to what is in principle the ontological question”<sup>11</sup>

The objection presented here is clear: that phenomenology amounts to an *ontological* investigation and that psychoanalysis, insofar as we take it to be a field of psychology in general, is an ontical<sup>12</sup> one concerning dreams, behaviors, etc. This problem is no doubt a serious one, for if we are to investigate the possibility that Being and the Unconscious are ontologically identical, then it seems erroneous to contemplate psychoanalysis as an ontological method of inquiry—for ostensibly, psychoanalysis does nothing to seek after the Being of consciousness, but rather in a pseudo-scientific fashion, explicate its ontical mechanisms. Namely, one might bring to surface the simple distinction between an ontological investigation, which is Heidegger’s chief concern, and Freud’s ontical investigation in the analysis of dreams. This objection may be resolved in two possible ways: the first being that one might take psychoanalysis, even as an ontical investigation, as a starting point into a broader ontological investigation which we ourselves shall be responsible for, in spite of psychoanalytic writing in general. This move is made possible also by Heidegger when he writes,

“The theme of our analytic is to be Being-in-the-world, and accordingly the very world itself; and these are to be considered within the horizon of average everydayness—the kind of Being which is *closest* to Dasein. We must make a study of everyday Being-in-the-world...”<sup>13</sup>

This means in beginning to seek after the ontological nature of Dasein, Heidegger first looks to its ontical experience of the everydayness of the world in order to understand Dasein’s Being-

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 71

<sup>12</sup> ‘Ontical’ and ‘ontological’ are Heidegger’s terms, with the first referencing the nature of any investigation or question concerning nothing more than what is apparent in our normal day to day dealings with the world. The latter refers to something which probes more profoundly at the primordial signification of that which we encounter, something which probes at ‘Being’ or essence (das Wesen). The division between the ontical and the ontological in Heidegger shall be explicated in greater detail in the next chapter.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 94

in-the-world. In a similar manner, we are taking the interpretation of dreams and the psychoanalytic study of the mind to be of the same kind of ontical study which purports us toward an understanding of its ontological nature.

The second way in which this objection may be answered is to insist that psychoanalysis *is* interested in the ontological nature of the mind—to a degree in which empirical psychology is not, and hence a distinction may be drawn between the “psychology” which Heidegger cites as secondary to his existential analytic, and psychoanalysis, which we shall investigate here as an ontological inquiry into the essence of the human subject. The evidence for this lies in the very way in which Freud describes the goal of his work—but this shall be left for the reader to discover and contemplate in the second chapter of what shall follow.

Regardless of this whether one is ready to accept either of these two responses, the proceeding investigation itself shall demonstrate to the reader that this objection is of no significant weight. For the uncanny similitude of phenomenology and psychoanalysis is so striking and the manner in which these investigations are structured is so deeply interwoven in their sharing of ideas, that their unification shall reveal itself to be justified. Through the unfurling of these methods and ideas in our analysis of them, this objection shall naturally dissolve against the weight of what is to come.

## Chapter I.

### Phenomenology as the Psychoanalysis of Being

#### i. Preface to the First Chapter

Heidegger begins his search for Being with the line, “We are ourselves the entities to be analyzed.”<sup>14</sup> What we find at the outset is this notion of ‘the self’ or “ourselves” as the centerpiece for Heidegger’s investigation into the nature of Being. But what is meant by this ‘self’? I have titled this first chapter ‘Phenomenology as the Psychoanalysis of Being’ in order to illustrate my intention to present Heidegger’s method of investigation as primarily something psychologically interested<sup>15</sup>—that its insights pertain to the mind as such. But this point shall bring itself to clarity only after a rumination of Heidegger’s analytic. Admittedly, such a characterization of phenomenology is rather curious and it must be clarified what it even *means* to have a ‘psychoanalysis of Being.’ I shall speak of this term, ‘Being’, as to refer to two possibilities of its meaning.

To grasp at Being is, so to speak, to become lucid of the very way the world is. We may abstractly consider Being the same name as the nebulous ‘Truth,’ the objective ‘thing-in-itself,’ which without qualification or subjective arbitration, *is*. Plato aesthetically understood this as the sun, representing the form of the Good in his allegory of the cave and little work needs to be done to understand the correlations between Being, Truth, essence and God. Insofar as all these phrases are related to the same type of cognitive lucidity, self-sureness, the feeling of increasing

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 67

<sup>15</sup> ‘Psychologically interested’—here I mean merely that phenomenology deals with the subject of consciousness in general and not that it must be interested in the field of empirical psychology.



knowledge, the happiness of coming into union with the substance of essential Nature, they are the goal of all human intellectual endeavors. To grasp at Being is to know the world in its absolutely essential nature, to have a blueprint of the architecture of the world. This is what I take as the first meaning of ‘Being’ when I employ the term.

The second meaning is to inquire further into the very definition given above, for one must wonder, as Heidegger does, what ‘essential nature’ means at all. So, whilst Being means that which *is*, it becomes a question in *Being and Time* what this *isness*—even *is*. The question of the ‘isness’ of isness is the question of Being. In this chapter, Heidegger’s analytic of this question is my chief concern. We shall follow through his footsteps and investigate Being, in terms of both definitions given, alongside the groundwork and methodology found *Being and Time* and *The Question Concerning Technology*. We shall investigate his reasoning for establishment of Dasein as an epistemological priority, his definition and methodology of phenomenology, thereafter revealing the contradiction in the heart of Heidegger’s work which will launch us into a contemplation of the unconscious in the second chapter. In the end, I aim to demonstrate how Heidegger’s methodology of philosophical inquiry concerning the question of Being naturally lends itself to questioning after the unconscious, or rather that the question of Being cannot be fully answered without a theory of the unconscious. In this sense, at the conclusion of the following analytic, it becomes imperative to think of phenomenology as the *psychoanalysis of Being*.

## ii. What is Dasein?

From which path does Heidegger approach the question of Being? What is emphasized primarily at the outset of *Being and Time* is the *priority* of Dasein in terms of his philosophical

project. From this priority, Heidegger may begin his exposition of phenomenology—but first this priority must be understood. Heidegger writes,

“Dasein is an entity which does not just occur among other entities. Rather it is ontically distinguished by the fact that, in its very Being, that Being is an *issue* for it. But in that case, this is a constitutive state of Dasein’s Being, and this implies that Dasein, in its Being, has a relationship towards that Being—a relationship which itself is one of Being.”<sup>16</sup>

Why is the inward turn essential into an understanding of Being? Because, as is evident in this passage, Being is that which is consciousness’ chief concern. Consciousness’ very existence as an entity distinct from all other entities is that it exists towards an understanding of Being. The Being of consciousness is therefore a relationship with Being. This relationship extends further than what is merely given by a rudimentary understanding of the word ‘relationship.’ If Dasein’s Being is itself a kind of relationship which belongs to Being, then we find very clearly the necessity with which the inward turn towards an analysis of Dasein is necessary. Consciousness has its own Being in its understanding of Being—and that is to say that what consciousness *is*, is *that which is concerned with ‘what is’*. Hence Heidegger states, “Understanding of Being is itself a definite characteristic of Dasein’s Being. Dasein is ontically distinctive in that it *is ontological*”.<sup>17</sup> Dasein *is ontological* means Dasein’s *Being* is one that purports itself towards ontology. In its ontic existence as an entity, it exists as the being for whom *Being* is its primary concern. The Being of consciousness is that it stands as an understanding towards Being.

What is the nature of this relationship? *How* does Dasein go about an understanding towards Being (and we must be reminded that this pursuit of an understanding *is* Dasein’s ontological nature). What is important is to grasp with the utmost clarity *what it means* that

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 32

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 32

Dasein's Being is its relationship with Being. It is this relationship with Being which distinguishes Dasein as an entity apart from all other entities and it is this relationship with Being which determines the necessity for Heidegger's analytic of Dasein. Heidegger therefore lists three priorities in argument for the immanence Dasein yields over other entities.

On the first priority, he writes, "Dasein accordingly takes priority over all other entities in several ways. The first priority is an *ontical* one: Dasein is an entity whose Being has the determinate character of existence".<sup>18</sup> This priority can only be understood when it is further dissected what Heidegger's very specific use of the word 'existence' means. This word is clarified in a later analysis, wherein we find that,

"...we shall always use the interpretative expression '*presence-at-hand*' for the term '*existentia*,' while the term 'existence' as a designation for Being, will be allotted solely to Dasein. *The essence of Dasein lies in its existence.* Accordingly, those characteristics which can be exhibited in this entity are not 'properties' present-at-hand of some entity which 'looks' so and so... when we designate this entity with the term 'Dasein' we are expressing not its 'what' (as if it were a table, house or tree) but its Being."<sup>19</sup>

Dasein is an entity whose Being has the character of existence. This means Dasein takes precedence over other entities because those entities possess a Being without the character of existence. Entities which are not Dasein possess the Being of *existentia* or '*presence-at-hand*,' which means such entities lack the kind of comportment which inquires after Being. Because Dasein's Being is such that it possesses an understanding towards Being, Dasein is immanent. Its existence means that it possesses a greater primordiality over other entities, and indeed this greater primordiality is so severe that Heidegger chooses to characterize its primordiality as existence and the presence of other entities as *mere* presence. We, Dasein, exist, because our very essence is a comportment toward an understanding after Being. An entity not comported in

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 34

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 67

this way does not *exist*—they are merely *presence-at-hand* for Dasein. The ontic ‘what’ listed as table, house or tree do not exist in this formulation. What exists is the immanent and what is immanent is Dasein’s Being.

“The second priority is an *ontological* one: Dasein is in itself ‘ontological’, because existence is thus determinative for it. But with equal primordially Dasein also possesses—as constitutive for its understanding of existence—an understanding of the Being of all entities of a character other than its own”.<sup>20</sup> The invocation of being-in-itself through the words ‘*is in itself*’ is here quite relevant for us. Dasein is in-itself ontological. This not only demonstrates the immanence of Dasein in Heidegger’s view on a deeper level but is also a tacit admittance to a kind of Kantian noumenal thesis. If Dasein has any kind of Being as it *is* in-itself, then it must be that Dasein has its Being objectively and as a pre-phenomenal constitution. Dasein’s Being is outside the kind of Being which belongs to other entities (house, tree, car)—the kind of Being which is hermeneutically derived. Dasein itself is the entity that engages in the hermeneutic derivation. In light of this division between Dasein and other entities, and this language of primordially and being-in-itself, we may understand the idea that Dasein is itself ‘ontological,’ or that its ‘Being has the character of existence.’ It must mean that Dasein is not only ontically immanent but also ontologically immanent. To be immanent is to *be-there-first*. Dasein as Being-there-first reveals that what Being means is something of the sort which has Dasein as its true center, and which means something *for* Dasein. The meaning of Being is *for* Dasein because Dasein is itself ontological and existent. Therefore, to understand what it means ‘to be’ and to

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 34

grasp at the ethereal specter of Being, one must turn inward into the most immanent of all beings and Being, Dasein itself.

An example of Dasein's ontological immanence lies in Heidegger's example of how Dasein discovers the Being of a common entity—the hammer:

“In dealings such as this, where something is put to use, our concern subordinates itself to the ‘in-order-to’ which is constitutive for the equipment we are employing at the time; the less we just stare at the hammer-Thing, and the more we seize hold of it and use it, the more primordial does our relationship to it become, and the more unveiledly it is encountered as that which it is—as equipment. The hammering itself uncovers the specific ‘manipulability’ of the hammer”.<sup>21</sup>

In the act of hammering which is a merely ontic employment of Dasein's body, there is a simultaneous ontological presentation being given over to Dasein. It is encountered as “that which it is”—namely it is encountered in its Being. But the hammer's Being in this regard, its ‘manipulability’ or ‘Being-as-equipment,’ or what Heidegger also calls ‘readiness-to-hand,’ stands as-equipment and manipulability, or ready-to-hand *for* Dasein. And only in Dasein's usage of the hammer does the hammer come into view as the hammer as an ontic object, and as readiness-to-hand as an ontological object. The only tension of course is the word ‘uncovers,’ and the phrase ‘encountered as that which it is’—for such phrasing seems to imply that the Being of the hammer has persistence independently of Dasein. As though the Being of the entity were something to be discovered, and if it were something to be discovered, then it must have some kind of Being-in-itself. And yet there is no way to make sense of the Being of the hammer as readiness-to-hand if there is not already Dasein for whom the hammer's Being may be ready *for*. Readiness, it must be granted, is senseless as a Being-in-itself, for how can something be ready without a relationship with an otherness for whom it is ready? Indeed, the word ‘ready’ would

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 98

have no meaning. This tension must be set aside for now but must be kept in mind, for it is out of this contradiction that arises the most interesting character of Heidegger's methodology.

“Dasein has therefore a third priority as providing the ontico-ontological condition for the possibility of any ontologies. Thus, Dasein has turned out to be, more than any other entity, the one which must be first interrogated ontologically”<sup>22</sup> What is essential about this final stipulated priority Dasein possesses as the subject of analysis over other entities is that it has the character of ‘providing.’ No doubt, this providing is the concern for Being which is Dasein's own Being. Dasein's Being is that it provides the conditions for any possibility of ontology—and this is all already explicated earlier, as Dasein is that which is Being-there-first and that which *is* ontological. But only now do we have a direct reference to the vehicle through which Dasein's Being comports itself after the Being of other entities—the word providing. Dasein's immanence means that it is the Being-there-first and that it ‘provides’ the condition for the possibility of ontology, which means the possibility of Being at all. Hence we find that Dasein is to be interrogated first because its Being itself belongs to Being, and from it is provided the possibility of Being at all. Being is therefore, for Heidegger, not something akin to *matter* or *substance*, but much like his predecessors of the German Idealist school, the kind of ‘non-entity’ which has consciousness or Dasein as the centerpiece around which the word derives any meaning. Dasein must be reached first because it is only *within* the ontological cognition of Dasein that ‘Being’ has any meaning at all.

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 34

### iii. Phenomenology as Method

This inward turn towards Dasein as the centerpiece around which the investigation of Being is to be conducted stands out insofar as that it is unique among the various attempts at a metaphysical explanation of the world that have existed prior to Heidegger. Metaphysics saw a clear division between subject and object, or the internal world and the external world. This had manifested neatly in the Cartesian division of the mind and the body—wherein it was clear that the world incarnate on the outside, governed mechanistically, corporeal, substantive and extended, *is* in such a way that it is distinct from the world as it is within—namely the mind, the soul, the spirit, the will or reason itself. To declare that indeed, an inward turn into Dasein itself is the necessary pre-requisite of any possibility of even understanding *the meaning of Being*, let alone Being itself, is a radical move. Through Dasein, Heidegger aims to unveil Being by means of phenomenology—that is by means of analyzing the internality of the subjective experiences which Dasein undergoes, and the interpretations it manifests, as the way into the meaning of Being.

Phenomenology is the method of arriving at Being through Dasein, because if Dasein is the ‘providing’ entity upon whose Being the meaning of Being has any meaning at all, then Being may be revealed by means of bringing to the forefront the subtle mechanisms by which this Dasein *provides* the possibility for ontology. Heidegger’s phenomenology is precisely this bringing to the forefront. Phenomenology is defined as “to let that which shows itself be seen from itself in the very way in which it shows itself from itself”.<sup>23</sup> Simply put, it is formulated by the maxim, “To the things themselves!”.<sup>24</sup> The ‘things’ here refer to seeing the way in which

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 58

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 58

something shows itself from itself. The picture presented to us by Heidegger is clear: Being is something veiled and hidden. Dasein is the providing entity whose existence wields immanence insofar as the reasons in the previous section are valid. Through an analysis of Dasein's providing, Being may be reached. This analysis of Dasein's providing is done in phenomenology. That is, in not merely seeing the apparent entity of the body material but returning to the original ontological labor done as per Dasein's Being, and thus letting the Being of the entities seen become seen from themselves, on their own terms. The ambiguity and tension of this formulation of the concept 'phenomenology' is already clear to a perceptive eye—for there is a disastrous question which follows immediately from this formulation: Is the Being of entities, or Being itself in general, something interpreted or something discovered?

The reader already having carefully read Heidegger should answer something along the lines of: 'It is both! Being is something discovered through interpretation or interpreted through discovery.' This answer is undoubtedly correct concerning Heidegger's own understanding of the mechanisms in play—but what does this answer actually mean? It seems to make sense in abstraction, but there is no clear way in which this method of phenomenology operates. How is it possible for something to be both discovered and interpreted, when the former has the connotation that the object discovered is existent in a latent and permanent manner, while the latter is a form of knowledge arrived at out of pure stipulation, estimation, and at its worst, forgery, fabrication, human invention. This confounded contradiction is difficult to contemplate given what is delineated by certain axiomatic divides: to discover something means to acquire knowledge of something that is already the case, persistent prior to discovery, which is not contingent upon the discoverer. To interpret something means the exact opposite. And given any reasonable epistemology, an interpretation of the sun as Apollo's chariot does not therefore mean



that the sun *is* Apollo's chariot. Nor does a discovery of the sun as a sphere of nuclear gasses count as an interpretation *in the same way*—it is fact, and anyone who disagrees would be counted as an idiot.

For something to “show itself,” and namely it is Being which is showing itself in the method of phenomenology, it must already persist. This is a simple logical necessity which, in our immediate reflection of Heidegger, seems like an insurmountable error. For in the same breath, Heidegger also declares, “Our investigation will show that the meaning of phenomenological description as a method lies in *interpretation*... The phenomenology of Dasein is a *hermeneutic* in the primordial signification of this word, where it designates this business of interpreting”.<sup>25</sup> Heidegger makes no attempt to hide the vehicle of phenomenology, which is pure interpretation itself. But how does interpretation get “To the things themselves!”? The thing-itself must be seen, “in the very way in which it shows itself from itself.” But how does something show itself when the proper meaning of phenomenology is interpretation? Interpretation, it must be said, is an active part of Dasein's own cognition—hardly an active part of the thing-itself.

If there is to be any sense made of this, we must attempt to make clear how it is possible that the thing-itself showing itself is the selfsame activity of Dasein's interpretation. In this paradox there are two agents and two acts: Dasein's interpreting and the thing-itself showing itself. In contemplating these objects, the latter two will first be analyzed. While it is unclear the identity of the thing-itself, which may be vaguely understood as Being in general, as well as the perspectival mechanism by which this thing-itself shows itself, or for that matter what is meant

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 62

by this *showing*, it is clear from Heidegger what this activity *is not*. This can be seen in the distinction drawn between appearance and phenomenon:

“Thus appearance, as the appearance ‘of something,’ does *not* mean showing-itself; it means rather the announcing-itself by something which does not show itself, but which announces itself through something which does show itself. Appearing is a *not-showing-itself*... What appears does *not* show itself; and anything which thus fails to show itself, is also something which can never be seen”.<sup>26</sup>

Announcing-itself is distinct from showing-itself. This is the qualitative difference between what Heidegger considers proper phenomenon and what is mere appearance. The apparent entity is not the showing-itself, for the showing-itself properly belongs to phenomena. The appearing is rather akin to the announcing-itself. Insofar as we now understand what showing-itself is not, namely not announcing-itself, we can thence derive a first principle about the meaning of showing-itself. It is not something which is self-announced, and though it may bear the potential to be shown on its own terms, it cannot have the ‘agency’ per say to announce itself. This announcing belongs to appearing, which is distinct from showing and from phenomena at large. Heidegger’s further elaboration brings light to this:

“*Phenomenon*, the showing-itself-in-itself, signifies a distinctive way in which something can be encountered. *Appearance*, on the other hand, means a reference-relationship which is in an entity itself, and which is such that what *does the referring* (or the announcing) can fulfill its possible function only if it shows itself in itself and is thus a ‘phenomenon’”.<sup>27</sup>

Here we find that what does the announcing in the appearance of the apparent “can fulfill its possible function only if it shows itself in itself and is thus a phenomenon.” This means that a phenomenal showing-itself must have already been shown for the possibility of any such announcing-itself to be posthumously possible. We may imagine this distinction in the same

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 52

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 54

terms as the division between the concepts ‘ontical’ and ‘ontological.’ One predates the other in cognition’s understanding—for only through the ontological does the ontical arrive to its own form, and similarly, only through phenomenon does appearance appear as what it appears to be. The referential nature of the appearance of things signifies the following relationship: one gathers the sensation that forms the perception of an entity. But this perception is guided by more than pure sensation—namely phenomenon, as that which shows-itself-in-itself, thereby giving such and such sensations a distinctive character. By virtue of phenomenon can a thing thereby be encountered in a distinctive way, for the entity has not only been announced, but prior to the announcement is already a predestining, a showing—a phenomenon.

It must be understood that Heidegger is specifically redefining phenomena in such a way. For it is not merely what is apparent to the senses but includes within it the conceptual mechanism by which an appearance is announced in the way that it is seen. To provide a practical example: Any given entity, say the immediate apprehension and stipulation of the object ‘dragon,’ is only attained to by consciousness because of some laden phenomenal aspects. The sense of sight which acquires disparate entities, such as wings, teeth, scales, horns, etc, cannot by itself give rise to the appearance of the dragon without first already having attained the ‘phenomenon’ of the dragon. By themselves, such entity-dragon-parts would not give rise to the appearance of a dragon any more than a random assembly of puzzle pieces would give rise to the image of its content. But the phenomenon can be considered akin to piecing such a puzzle together in such a way that some particular image appears, but what does this piecing together, the phenomenon which shows-itself, is not itself shown in the appearance. In this way, the appearance of an entity which announces-itself cannot possibly be *seen* phenomenally—for insofar as we are looking at a puzzle image, we do not see all the hours of laborious effort that

had been spent interpreting and imagining the possible combinations of the pieces such that the image emerges. The phenomenon of entities cannot thus be seen by appearance or ontical relationships alone, and no amount of scientific observation or microscopic investigation will ever arrive at this pre-ontical showing-itself which has already pre-destined the way in which all things announce themselves to us.

Let us return now to the paradox at hand: Dasein's interpreting and the thing-in-itself showing-itself. We now have a tentative understanding of what it might mean for something to show-itself. But is this thing that shows-itself the thing-in-itself? Clearly not, for we've already clarified that it is Phenomenon that does the showing-itself. "Phenomenon," is the "showing-itself-in-itself." But this invites yet another confusion—for if following Kantian definitions, this sentence might as well read as "Phenomenon is the noumenon-showing-itself." This nonsensical sentence invites that we either declare Heidegger a poor philosopher for having made such a bizarre error or allow him and ourselves to abandon the Kantian definition altogether of what it might mean to be the thing-in-itself. As we have seen, the definition of Phenomenon has already been redefined by Heidegger and perhaps this redefinition is already enough to make sense of this conflict. We may further understand what Heidegger means by his term Phenomenon in the way he describes his project of phenomenology:

"Phenomenology neither designates the object of its researches, nor characterizes the subject-matter thus comprised. The word merely informs us of the *how* with which *what* is to be treated in this science gets exhibited and handled. To have a science of phenomena means to grasp its objects *in such a way* that everything about them which is up for discussion must be treated by exhibiting it directly and demonstrating it directly... Now what must be taken into account if the formal conception of phenomenon is to be deformalized into the phenomenological one, and how is this latter to be distinguished from the ordinary conception? What is it that phenomenology is to 'let us see'?... Manifestly, it is something that proximally and for the most part does *not* show itself at all: it is something that lies *hidden*... Yet that which remains *hidden* in an egregious

sense, or which relapses and gets *covered up* again, or which shows itself only ‘*in disguise*’, is not just this entity or that, but rather the *Being* of entities, as our previous observations have shown. This Being can be covered up so extensively that it becomes forgotten and no question arises about it or about its meaning. Thus that which demands that it become a phenomenon, and which demands this in a distinctive sense in terms of its ownmost content as a thing, is what phenomenology has taken into its grasp thematically as its object”.<sup>28</sup>

Heidegger makes explicit his aim of “deformalizing” the conception of phenomenon into a phenomenological one. This deformalized concept of phenomenon is the Being of entities, and it is this Being which phenomenology, as the science of phenomenon, is stipulated to let us *see*. The entities whose Being or whose phenomenon we are trying to *see* are exhibited or demonstrated “directly.” This must be the same hinting towards the idea of the “To the things themselves!” The directedness or ‘the going to the things themselves,’ must be speaking of going towards this deformalized conception of phenomenon. By exhibiting directly, we understand this to mean exhibiting the phenomenon. By “To the things themselves,” we understand this to mean, “To the phenomenon!” The order of metaphysical immanence that Heidegger has postulated follows a hierarchy and may be understood structurally in terms of an analogy to Plato’s divided line. At the center of all entities, the immanent being-there-first is Dasein itself, who provides the possibility for ontology. Being arrives next through Dasein’s providing nature. Being then becomes ‘hidden’ and ‘covered up’ in the establishing of a phenomenon. Phenomenon then becomes appearance and itself becomes hidden, such that what is left is Dasein and appearance—who forgets the intermediate ontological steps and underworkings that have lead up to the announcement of its apparent world. If this structure of Heidegger’s metaphysics is correct, then Heidegger’s phenomenology is an excavation of these intermediate steps—first through phenomenon and then into Being. The confusion arises when we return to the obvious

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 59

error that is never directly addressed: Whether or not this excavation brings to the forefront something latent in-itself or merely some ontological arbitration, some organic *niaiserie*<sup>29</sup>, organized by the subjective whims of consciousness.

Given Heidegger's reworked concept of phenomenon, we find the name of this object which is both interpreted and discovered. It is without a doubt the essence of objects—it is teleologically identical to a Platonic Form, insofar as that it is the causative factor which gives rise to the appearance of the apparent world, and classes particulars into certain categories of ontical being. The essence of an entity would historically have been considered noumenal, a thing-in-itself, a definite reality that *is, has been and will be* regardless of humanity. But in Heidegger this essence is not characterized noumenally—it is called 'phenomenon.' The subtlety of this linguistic move is laudable, for it gracefully and secretively works to already undermine the prejudice we possess that the thing-in-itself must necessarily be mind-independent. Working based on the definitions of words alone, Heidegger would already succumb to inescapable error, for phenomenon implies something mind-dependent, and something-in-itself showing-itself to be mind-independent. This unique, rare and profoundly confusing mixture of previously subjective definitions and previously objective definitions is concocted in this term he postulates—phenomenon.

The phenomenon is what Dasein interprets in phenomenology. At the same time, the phenomenon is what Dasein must see in the way that it shows itself from itself. It is something that comes from Dasein, but independent of it with its own capacity for agency, willing, ability to *do its own showing*. Why does Heidegger not simply concede that the Being that is discovered

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<sup>29</sup> Silliness. The use of the phrase is an echo of Nietzsche's usage of the term in the 3<sup>rd</sup> aphorism of *Beyond Good and Evil*, where our preference for truth over 'mere appearance' is characterized as a certain kind of *niaiserie*.

through phenomenology is merely an object-for-consciousness and rid us of this insurmountable tension? Certainly, it would not be controversial or outrageous to cut off the notion of things-in-themselves entirely from philosophic discourse, as such a move had already been made, for instance, in Hegel. In effect, it would be to admit that the phenomenon in his sense is purely phenomenal, with no attribution for anything showing themselves *in-themselves*, but rather a re-examination of the way in which we had interpreted them primordially. We are left with two possibilities: either Heidegger simply erred in misusing these terms ‘in-themselves’, ‘showing-themselves’ and ‘things-themselves,’ or that there is a higher insight to be found in stubbornly refusing to admit to Being’s purely subjective origin. Let us leave this question and tension at hand to rest in our inquisitive imagination, turning instead to cases of practical application in which we might gain insight into phenomenology as a method which purports to arrive at Being. For in studying how precisely this methodology is *enacted*, we might be able to discern the critical elements that compose its contradictory nature.

#### **iv. The Application of Phenomenology**

The method of phenomenology is both an act of interpretation and a coming to discovery. Heidegger makes clear again his aim in the beginning of the third section, *The Worldhood of the World*, wherein he writes, “Here the first step is to enumerate the things that are ‘in’ the world: houses, trees, people, mountains, stars. We can *depict* the way such entities ‘look’, and we can give an *account* of occurrences in them and with them. This, however, is obviously a pre-phenomenological ‘business’ which cannot be at all relevant phenomenologically... It is ontical. But what we are seeking is Being. And we have formally defined ‘phenomenon’ in the

phenomenological sense as that which shows itself as Being...”.<sup>30</sup> Pre-phenomenological business is therefore all the incarnations of reason and science which enumerate the laws and the ‘accounts of occurrences,’ in which entities occur, but such methods do not acquire the phenomenon of entities, let alone approach them in their Being.

We can further understand phenomenology by contrasting it with empirical science, which only ever arrives at an enumeration of descriptive possibilities. Empirical science seeks to explain the world in terms of empirical science and not in terms of the world itself. To understand this, we may return to Heidegger’s hammer:

“Equipment can genuinely show itself only in dealings cut to its own measure (hammering with a hammer, for example); but in such dealings an entity of this kind is not *grasped* thematically as an occurring Thing, nor is the equipment-structure known as such even in the using. The hammering does not simply have knowledge about the hammer’s character as equipment, but it has appropriated this equipment in a way which could not possibly be more suitable. In dealings such as this, where something is put to use, our concern subordinates itself to the ‘in-order-to’ which is constitutive for the equipment we are employing at the time; the less we just stare at the hammer-Thing, and the more we seize hold of it and use it, the more primordial does our relationship to it become, and the more unveiledly it is encountered as that which it is—as equipment”.<sup>31</sup>

Encountering something in its unveiled *isness* is encountering it as its phenomenon. In this case, the phenomenon of the hammer is ‘equipment.’ This runs contrast to how the hammer may be encountered in the light of empirical science, which falls into merely “staring at the hammer-Thing,” in which the hammer is only examined at the surface of its constitutive properties. It may be understood mathematically, geometrically as a shape, chemically as a composition of elemental parts, or physically as an array of forces and tensions—but these do not get to the definitive characteristic of the hammer as it *is* a hammer characteristically. Its Being a hammer

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<sup>30</sup> Heidegger, 91

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 98



arrives only as we seize it, wherein the relationship between Dasein and the entity of the hammer is drawn ever closer, and the entity becomes itself as what it is. Its Being as equipment is revealed only through Dasein's providing the possibility of its Being, from the sheer nature of Dasein needing to make use of some entity to hammer. We can see already what Heidegger means to arrive at through phenomenology as a method of inquiry distinct from science or mathematics. The hammer is being understood in terms of *how it came to arrive at its hammerness*—and this question is not solved by identifying the craftsmen who bound iron to wood, for this putting together of parts is not enough to create the hammer-in-itself. That this conglomerate of material parts *is a hammer* is derived only from relating to it in such a way that it reveals its hammerness. This relationship, in the case of the hammer, is usage.

Heidegger situates his inquiry of the Being of Worldhood first and foremost on the Being of mundane objects, or entities encountered in our everyday dealings with the world. He writes, “The kind of dealing which is closest to us is as we have shown, not a bare perceptual cognition, but rather that kind of concern which manipulates things and puts them to use...”<sup>32</sup> From here we can observe his application of phenomenology—he is identifying the cognitive direction of the mind in how it functions towards perceiving the world. The “bare perceptual cognition,” which acquires only optical knowledge about things, does not get at the *isness* of things, which is only achieved by the manipulation of things and putting them to use. Putting things to use is the consciousness' primordial position, and it is from this position that its interpretation extends and understands. Heidegger sees that Dasein enacts its ‘providing the possibility of ontology’ through manipulation and putting things to use. In conclusion, he stipulates this essence of things as being manipulable in the term ‘equipment.’ Equipment is the hidden phenomenon behind the

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 95

appearance of the hammer, or of the clock, or of the workman's hacksaw. The arrival of his method to this conclusion demonstrates the two-fold nature of phenomenology in general—for in interpreting the relationship or the type of concern that Dasein has towards everyday entities, Heidegger at once discovers the Being of such entities as equipment.

Indeed, the primordial act that lead Dasein to seeing hammer-Things as hammers also exhibits this two-fold type of labor. Dasein encounters the hammeriness of the hammer-Thing by first interpreting it *as* some *thing* with which hammering is possible, and this interpretative step is made when the hammer-Thing is first seized upon and used. In the usage, the hammer-Thing becomes revealed as having the potential to achieve hammering, and its essence or Being as a hammer is thereafter clarified. The innateness of the hammer-Thing's potential for hammering, however, should not be confused with the Being of the hammer itself. The Being of the hammer is arrived at only when Dasein understands it as such, but it understands it as such only because of its innate potentiality. Again, we find ourselves locked within an inexorable tension—whether the hammer is a hammer-in-itself or a hammer-for-consciousness. Is its Being what it is because it is what it is, or is its Being such as it is the result of Dasein's usage and manipulation? The essence of the hammer-Thing is possible only given Dasein's providing the possibility for ontology, and yet, Dasein gives the hammer-Thing over to being a hammer by virtue of its revealing itself as having hammering potential in its usage.

It is hard to easily determine what is innate and what is provided, but from this example of how Heidegger applies phenomenology, we have made certain steps in elucidating this mystery. If, returning to the paradox, we supplement our formulation, it can be reformed in the following way: The original paradox stands between Dasein's interpreting and the thing-itself showing-itself. The former can now mean Dasein's usage of the thing, thereafter identifying the

hammer-Thing as hammer. The latter can now mean the hammer-Thing's potentiality for hammering revealing this potentiality and hammer property, when it is dealt with or used in such a way that this being, which is in itself, shows itself to Dasein's use. Can the paradox be reconciled in light of this reformulation? The answer is simply no—for we cannot appeal to an entity's potentiality as constitutive for its Being. Simply because the hammer-Thing has the potential to hammer does not lead to it having a necessary essence-in-itself as Hammer. Were this the case, we would stand in a conceptual absurdity wherein all entities which reveal the potentiality of achieving hammering possess the Being of hammer-in-itself.

The Being of entities, which is equipment, cannot be rightly understood to exist independently of consciousness. I would like to remind the reader of the earlier argument: something can be readiness-to-hand only given something for whom it is ready *for*. The Being of entities which Heidegger determines requires the immanence of Dasein as the being-there-first, but it is confusing again, therefore to insistently pose this Being of entities as something which is discovered in-itself as-itself, as it reveals-itself. The application of phenomenology only serves to bring the Paradox to the forefront, for now we can plainly see the ambiguity of the origin of Being. It appears philosophically stronger and less extraneous to see Being as being constituted by Dasein's manipulation and usage of the entities it encounters, but in this usage, Heidegger insists that Being is discovered and revealed as what it is in-itself. The concluding example of Heidegger's applied phenomenology will reveal an even more outrageous resurfacing of this contradictory problem.

#### **v. Poesis as Creation and Discovery**

Heidegger's turn towards poetry at the later end of his work only further exacerbates this problem. Poetry, unlike phenomenology, makes no claim to anything beyond pure interpretation

and pure artistry. Yet, we find in the name of Poesis, the type of concern which Heidegger outlines in *The Question Concerning Technology*, the idea that poetic thinking and poetic action reveals Being in a *superior* way. Not only does poetry reveal the truth of Being, but it does so in a way that is superior to other types of concern. How can this be, given that the knowledge found in poetry or art in general seems to be supported by nothing other than interpretation and the subjectivity of the artist? It is nothing like the labor of empirical science, whose claims are grounded in visible consequences and predictive powers.

In what way does poetic concern reveal Being in a superior way, and indeed how does it reveal Being at all? To understand the mechanism of Poesis, we must first turn to how Heidegger conceives of reality at large—the totality of ontological stipulations that govern our perception of the world in its appearance. We may remember from earlier citations that Heidegger sees the totality of entities in the world to be announced ontically by their ontological underground ‘phenomena’. This is translated in *The Question Concerning Technology* to the idea of bringing-forth. He writes,

“But how does bringing-forth happen, be it in nature or in handwork and art? What is the bringing-forth in which the fourfold way of occasioning plays? Occasioning has to do with the presencing of that which at any given time comes to appearance in bringing-forth. Bringing-forth brings hither out of concealment forth into unconcealment.

Bringing-forth comes to pass only insofar as something concealed comes into unconcealment. This coming rests and moves freely within what we call revealing. The

Greeks have the word *alethia* for revealing. The Romans translate this with *veritas*. We say “truth” and usually understand it as the correctness of an idea.”<sup>33</sup>

Truth is here understood, not as the correctness of an idea, but as *what is revealed*—what is announced to consciousness in its modes of concern with the world. This mode of concern is what constitutes the ontological relationship maintained between Dasein and its encounters, and the way the world thereafter appears—the way the world is thereafter *revealed to be*. Truth is here called ‘alethia’, the notion of unraveling or unveiling something from behind the curtains of what is given in order to arrive at its essence. If Heidegger understands truth in this sense, a sense beyond the permanent fixedness of a ‘correct idea’, then it is possible to have two simultaneous opposing truths. The world may be revealed in such and such a way that it is merely ‘standing-reserve,’ as is the case with modern technology, or it can be revealed in such and such a way that it is the handiwork of God or of divine inspiration, as is the case with religiosity. The mode of concern that we maintain with the world situates Dasein to tend to entities in such a way that a different truth is brought-forth and thereby revealed as such. It is in this way that poetry gets at the world’s Being—for it is a position or a mode of consciousness in which the world may be revealed in a certain way. To understand this, let us turn to poetry’s opposite for Heidegger—the revealing of the world done on the part of technology.

On technology, Heidegger writes, “Technology is therefore no mere means. Technology is a way of revealing. If we give heed to this, then another whole realm for the essence of technology will open itself up to us. It is the realm of revealing, i.e., of truth... What is modern

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<sup>33</sup> Heidegger, Martin. *The Question concerning Technology, and Other Essays*. New York: Harper Perennial, 2013. 11-12

technology? It too is a revealing. Only when we allow our attention to rest on this fundamental characteristic does that which is new in modern technology show itself to us”<sup>34</sup>

Revealing the world is essentially an interpretation of the world that is no longer conscious to us, and so it becomes enacted upon us by technology in this case. It is the movement from phenomena to appearance in Heidegger’s divided line, in which an ontological interpretation of the world is lost to an ontical understanding. Because modern science and technology ontically understands the world in such a way, a manipulable totality of particles obedient to fixed physical laws, the ontological pre-destination of this appearance is forgotten and lost, pushed to unconsciousness. Thereafter the understanding of the world in terms of ‘standing-reserve,’ what Heidegger calls the consciousness of Enframing, is not self-conscious on the part of Dasein, but it becomes how the world simply *is* in its Being. Technology imposes a relationship with the world in which the world’s Being is revealed, but this relationship itself becomes concealed.

In the matter of technology, the world is revealed as standing-reserve. What is the world revealed as in the light of the opposite position, of Poesis? Heidegger writes, “In Greece, at the outset of the destining of the West, the arts soared to the supreme height of the revealing granted them. They brought the presence of the gods, brought the dialogue of divine and human destinings, to radiance. And art was simply *techne*. It was a single, manifold revealing. It was pious, yielding to the holding-sway and the safekeeping of truth”.<sup>35</sup> The character of the world revealed through poesis is not the same as what is revealed in technology: the latter supposes that the world is devoid of its own teleological character, it is nothing but mere matter awaiting usage

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 12-14

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 34

and manipulation—it has no content other than the sum of clearly delineated mechanical parts. The former, in Heidegger’s language, brings “the presence of the gods”—revealing a teleological essence embedded in the world itself, illuminating the beauty of Hellenic Greece, such that the world is not merely the sum of material parts, but something graced by divine radiance.

In Heidegger’s conception of truth, both the revealed content of technology and the revealed content of poesis are *true*—meaning both reveal the world for what the world *is* in its Being. Needless to say, both discover the world by revealing it, and yet both only arrive at this discovery through Dasein’s providing itself and maintaining itself in a certain relationship with the world. But if we understand that the content revealed by phenomenology to be the world showing-itself in-itself, how then can the world show itself, revealing itself in such radically different ways: both standing-reserve and divine radiance? If Heidegger’s ‘things-themselves’ truly posited a thing-in-itself with a fixed essential character, then surely the world could not possibly show-itself as two different, radically opposed essences.

It is becoming harder and harder to grapple with the mystery at hand, and it cannot be helped but to ask again why Heidegger simply does not avoid the language of “revealing the real,” or showing-itself as it is in-itself. For it would seem like his system of phenomenology could just as easily function if poesis, Enframing, or the seizing of the hammer, rather than being anything amounting to the discovery of Being, simply interpreted its subjects subjectively as being-for-consciousness. It seems as if the only path forwards, which seems illogical and non-sensical in all directions, is to consider that the Being showing-itself to consciousness in all modes of cognition, *is Dasein itself*. For if Dasein provides the possibility for ontology in the first place and is the immanent being from whom Being is possible, then perhaps the mysterious thing-in-itself showing-itself *is Dasein itself*. It is Dasein that shows itself from itself, as it is in-

itself, to Dasein, in the entire enterprise of what has hitherto been discussed. In no unclear terms: what Dasein excavates in the work of phenomenology is actually the *unconscious mode of concern* that gives rise to the world as it is revealed. In this manner, phenomenology, which seeks after Being, is actually a depth psychology of metaphysics—or rather it is the psychoanalysis of the external world. Can this be possible? What would this mean in anything beyond abstraction and philosophical jargon? It is from here that we turn to Freud.



## Chapter II.

### Psychoanalysis as the Phenomenology of the Unconscious

#### i. Preface to the Second Chapter

As the previous chapter concluded with the possibility of contemplating phenomenology as the psychoanalysis of the external world, in this chapter, I aim to show that psychoanalysis is the phenomenology of the unconscious. To clarify what I mean by the term ‘unconscious,’ I mean precisely that font of hidden thoughts and unaware selfhood that Freud posits in *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Where Heidegger seeks an exegesis of our perceptions of the external world in *Being and Time*, Freud here provides an interpretation of our internal life—our instincts, drives and secret motivations. Freud makes clear with the very title of his work that his approach to understanding dreams is *interpretative*, already giving us the natural demand to be read in conjunction with Heidegger’s hermeneutic phenomenology. Dreams are, for Freud, “designed to take the place of some other process of thought”.<sup>36</sup> In this one line, a certain epistemological *divided line* is already postulated—with dreams occupying the lower sphere of ephemerality and appearance, while these “other process[es] of thought” ostensibly occupy a higher sphere of permanence. This is to mean that such, at the surface of our experience, we encounter dreams as we would naturally encounter everyday objects. But the meaning (or dare I say *Being*) of these dreams are of a greater degree of reality. These hidden thoughts which are transmuted in dreaming is, in a sense, the deepest and most essential nature of the mind out of which springs multiple layers of apparent consciousness. The work of Freud is thus an excavation of such

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<sup>36</sup> Freud., 121

hidden thoughts through a process of interpreting more apparent objects. This aligns, without any deviation, from Heidegger's own project—for as we recall, he had sought to uncover the Being of beings, the deepest and most essential nature of said beings, through interpretative phenomenology.

In addition to the similarity of methodological form also arises the self-same Paradox, once before in Heidegger's phenomenology and now again in Freud's dream analysis. However, whereas Heidegger cannot possibly account for this paradox alone, the very nature of Freud's work as the study of the self allows him to resolve this paradox in a clear and poignant way. In this chapter, I shall also focus in demonstrating that this paradox exists in Freud as it did in Heidegger, subsequently demonstrating how Freud's solution is applicable to Heidegger's work as well in the next chapter, though only *if* we can come to understand the idea of 'Being' as the self itself. Through such demonstrations, I ultimately aim to clarify how Heidegger's phenomenology and Freud's psychoanalysis may yet be unified into a single analytic principle which takes into account both the external waking life and the internal subjective life and ultimately revealing that the source of the former (called Being) is the selfsame ontological structure as the source of the latter (called unconsciousness).

## **ii. What is a Dream?**

The preliminary discussion which precedes our analysis of the interpretation of dreams is to pose the question of dreams themselves. What are dreams? This seems to be Freud's chief concern in section E of the first chapter: *The Distinguishing Psychological Characteristics of Dreams*. In this, he recounts the myriad qualities about dreams which naturally cause us

concern—the primary and most disturbing quality being that they are experiences which, at least for the time of dreaming, we take to possess some degree of reality and only upon waking up do we recognize their falseness. He remarks, “... [a dream] can let us touch the rose that we see—and yet we are dreaming”.<sup>37</sup> The dream-world has all the ontological precepts as the waking world in this regard. “Moreover, there is a spatial consciousness in dreams, since sensations and images are assigned to an external space, just as they are in waking”.<sup>38</sup> Freud notes that dreams “think predominantly in visual images,” but “they make use of auditory images as well, and, to a lesser extent, of the impressions belonging to the other senses”.<sup>39</sup> In addition to these observations, I shall include the idea that dreams possess a temporal quality too and even within the state of dreaming, we can clearly determine a *then* and a *now*—although to an unclear and immeasurable degree. It seems impossible to judge how long a certain event had been happening in a dream and often times it is difficult to recall when precisely one event transforms into another, though there is a clear demarcation between the temporal relation these events have with one another. In some instances, one might even be able to relatively judge how much time has passed in the waking world and how long they had been asleep, given the feeling of how *long or short* the dream was.

What are we to make of these observations concerning dreams? It seems to suggest that dreams are a phenomenal experience. There is time and space. There is sense data. There are visual and sometimes even auditory perceptions. The experience of a dream that *felt very real* is universal. The experience of waking up from a dream and being affected by some *physical* consequence (such as terror or ecstasy) is universal. It is this set of universal experiences which

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 81

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 80

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 79

demand an interpretation of dreams in the first place, for surely this *mirror plane* of the external world is too fascinating not to broach as a subject of study. Surely then, if a dream is to be interpreted, the objects of interpretation must be this set of phenomenal apprehensions: the events that we observe to transpire in sequence, with beginning and end, within a dream. But the difficulty in this lies in the obvious fact that dreams cannot be reproduced or re-explored and thus, interpretation cannot readily take a magnifying glass upon the *object-dream-as-such*. The exploration of the phenomenal dream content relies solely on memory.

Concerning the recollection of dreams, Freud writes, “The self-observer on the other hand need only take the trouble to suppress his critical faculty. If he succeeds in doing that, innumerable ideas come into his consciousness of which he could otherwise never have got hold. The material which is in this way freshly obtained for his self-perception makes it possible to interpret both his pathological ideas and his dream-structures”.<sup>40</sup> We are explicitly told that the interpretation of dreams must begin with a suppression of one’s critical faculty—that is, to allow the floodgates of apparently arbitrary thoughts run wild. This is akin to a type of mood or a positioning of the mind—a direction of the mind’s thinking toward. This positioning is what makes it possible to generate those pieces of information which will allow for the dream’s unraveling. Freud then goes on to note, “If we may trust the great poet and philosopher Friedrich Schiller, however, poetic creation must demand an exactly similar attitude”.<sup>41</sup>

Let us examine this comparison to Schiller in greater detail, for it reveals what is truly interesting about the being of a dream. Freud quotes Schiller:

“... where there is a creative mind, Reason—so it seems to me—relaxes its watch upon the gates, and the ideas rush in pell-mell, and only then does it look them through and

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 127

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 127

examine them in mass. You critics, or whatever else you may call yourselves, are ashamed or frightened of the momentary and transient extravagances which are to be found in all truly creative minds whose longer or shorter duration distinguishes the thinking artist from the dreamer”.<sup>42</sup>

The relation that Freud posits as the necessary attitude in the interpretation of dreams is exactly this: the relaxation of the watch upon the gates, the rush of ideas, or the momentary and transient extravagances. It is already an obvious parallel to Heidegger, for the comparison to Schiller makes it clear that the relation Freud demands is a poetic relation. *Poesis*, if one may be so bold. Indeed, the relaxation of the mind in allowing its own ideas to resurface and rush forth “in pell-mell” is akin to that state of mental positioning which Heidegger demands in *allowing things-themselves to show themselves as themselves*. In this exact manner are dreams supposed to show themselves as themselves through the poetic relation. The product of this free-flowing method is then the object of interpretation, that which stands in place of the dream-in-itself as such.

Freud recounts his dream, entitled *Dream of July 23<sup>rd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup>, 1895*. The entirety of it is written in italics. The first sentence: “*A large hall-numerous guests, whom we were receiving*”<sup>43</sup>, sets the stage. Freud is attempting to frame the dream for us and we are viewing it from the outside as though a play. The large hall is the setting. The numerous guests, the actors. The context of these objects is also set in place: that Freud and his colleagues are hosting them. What is in place with this one line is already a three-dimensional space, with actors, movement and action. Stylistically, the presentation of the sample dream is written as though a literary narrative, and indeed, Freud analyses it as such. Each independent line which he writes through the course of the dream’s explication receives its own paragraph of exegesis. We must also note the

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 128

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 133

following line: “*I said, ‘If you still get pains, it’s your own fault’*”.<sup>44</sup> This may strike all of us with a certain degree of skepticism, for certainly it is a common experience that our precise dialogue with other actors in dreams is largely forgotten and our reproduction of it must be inaccurate. Yet, the way in which the dream is recounted to us, there are several moments in which Freud quotes an actor with a specific line of dialogue. We must remember that Freud *could have* replaced such instances of quoted dialogue with simply a summary of what he believes such actors may have said in the dream (i.e. I remarked to her that it’d be her own fault for still having pains). What does the insistence upon quoted dialogue and the subsequent analysis of quoted dialogue reveal?

Clearly it shows that the presentment of the dream is intended to be an emulation of literature and that analysis of it is an emulation of literary exegesis. This interpretation of Freud’s method is in line with Freud’s reference to the poet Schiller in the discussion concerning the appropriate mood to take in recounting dreams. Consider the following excerpt from Freud’s self-analysis: “Moreover the wording in the dream was most ambiguous: *‘I noticed this, just as he did...’* I noticed it in my own body, that is. I was struck, too, by the unusual phrasing: ‘a portion of the skin was infiltrated.’”<sup>45</sup> This is the most revealing, and I daresay critical, part of Freud’s entire work, for even more so than the myriad of insights which he shall go on to offer us concerning the nature of dreams—it is here that the subtle philosophical move is made to tell us the *being* of dreams. Let us contemplate Freud here carefully. How is it possible to that he includes the *ambiguity* of the dream’s wording in his analysis of it? Certainly, the dream itself is not made of words—the dream itself is an ephemeral and bygone phantasm that none but the

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 133

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 137

omnipotent may yet have access to. Furthermore, it should be obvious that Freud himself is the author of the italicized writing which we take to be a summary of the dream. Thus, it must be asked, how can it be a point of analysis that his own writing is ambiguous to him? He is struck by “the unusual phrasing” that he himself wrote.

Freud subtly removes himself here from the author of the italicized text and is now interpreting that text *as though it were the dream-in-itself*. He does not say ‘my summary’s wording was ambiguous,’ or ‘I recounted my dream ambiguously.’ His meaning is clear: the wording in *the dream* was most ambiguous. We can deduct from this our answer to this section’s question: the dream is the literary narrative that is written in the subject’s attempt to remember the phenomenal encounter that they experienced during the actual state of sleep. This narrative, by virtue of Freud’s own reference to Schiller, is creative in nature: it is interpretative. It requires that the writer of the narrative *choose* certain phrasing, certain wording, to put emphasis on certain elements and to tell us a tale with a setting, beginning, middle and end. In other words, before a dream can even be interpreted, we have now come to understand that *the dream itself is an interpretation*. The dream itself is an interpretation of a phenomenal experience that consciousness encounters. In this manner, we are already beginning to see that psychoanalysis poises itself as a phenomenology of the internal states of consciousness itself—a looking into, a study and an excavation of the *phenomena* that shows-itself, not within the extended appearance of the outside, but from within consciousness itself.

### **iii. Psychoanalysis as Method**

Now with a solid grasp on what a dream *is*, we may turn to an examination of Freud’s psychoanalysis. Our focus is to understand it as an epistemic method by which one can obtain knowledge of the unconscious. Our interest lies in the structure of psychoanalysis—that is to say,

its basic assumptions and its understanding of how knowledge is acquired. We find him most ruminating on psychoanalysis' basic principles at the beginning of the second chapter, *The Method of Interpreting Dreams*. Let us quote Freud here: "My presupposition that dreams can be interpreted at once puts me in opposition to the ruling theory of dreams... for 'interpreting' a dream implies assigning a 'meaning' to it—that is, replacing it by something which fits into the chain of our mental acts as a link having a validity and importance equal to the rest".<sup>46</sup> Here, Freud makes no attempt to veil what his project is: the interpretation of dreams means that we assign meaning to dreams such that they have a place within the entire web of our psychic life. 'Assigning' a meaning is what is most important about this phrasing, for it implies that a dream's meaning is not something which is latent *in-and-for-itself*, but rather something given over to dreams.

Of course, this assignment of meaning could easily be criticized as being arbitrary and certainly, Freud anticipates such a reproach. He outlines two ancient methods of dream interpretation, *symbolic* interpretation and *decoding*, both of which rely on untrustworthy methods. Freud comments:

"It cannot be doubted for a moment that neither of the two popular procedures for interpreting dreams can be employed for a scientific treatment of the subject. The symbolic method is restricted in its application and incapable of being laid down on general lines. In the case of the decoding method everything depends on the trustworthiness of the 'key'—the dreambook, and of this we have no guarantee".<sup>47</sup>

From his criticism of previous modes of dream analysis, we find his own criteria for what should manifest as a proper method. First, we know that Freud seeks a 'scientific treatment of the subject.'" Second, that this method must be capable "of being laid down on general lines." Third,

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 121

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 124



Freud's critique of *decoding* would leave us to assume that his own psychoanalysis must have some measure of trustworthiness—some guarantee of its accuracy. He makes it clear that his interpretation of dreams is not some fanciful reading, but that he aims at “a scientific procedure”.<sup>48</sup>

This seems to us a strange pursuit. For indeed, the object of science is scarcely described as any ‘hidden meaning’ and the application of science is never akin to the ‘assignment of meaning.’ If anything, scientists are often prone to describe their activity as shying away from assigning *any* sort of meaning to the world outside of modeling its mechanical movements. Furthermore, from our insights into dream interpretation outlined in the previous section, we know that the method of dream recollection is artistic in nature, for it relies on some element of creative capacity. Freud's analysis of the dream of July is a reading of the text that he himself wrote and put together in a narrative fashion. Psychoanalysis, if it is scientific at all, cannot possibly be scientific in the way that such a term is commonly used (at least today). What is meant by Freud with such a phrasing seems to differ from what might be meant by a modern physicist when they claim their practice is one of science. What Freud seems to desire is more aligned with an insistence upon a *qualitative difference* between what he is doing and those two methods of dream interpretation which he renounced. There is an actual epistemic rule by which an interpretation, following psychoanalysis, might be judged according to non-arbitrary criteria.

The primary criterion seems to be the dissolution of neuroticism in patients of dream analysis. Freud writes:

“My knowledge of the procedure [psychoanalysis] was reached in the following manner. I have been engaged for many years in unravelling certain psycho-pathological structures—hysterical phobias, obsessional ideas and so on... If a pathological idea of

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 125

this sort can be traced back to the elements in the patient's mental life from which it originated, it simultaneously crumbles away and the patient is freed from it"<sup>49</sup>

What this means is—the measure by which an interpretation of a dream can be said to appeal to a ‘guarantee’ of its success is the actual resolution of pathological ideas. In other words, the interpretation is considered true and ‘scientific’ if it resolves the patient’s mental troubles or provides them with some therapeutic release. That they are “freed from it.” And we may find comfort in the trustworthiness of such an approach decidedly because there is empirical evidence that the method *worked*—that there is actually a freed patient. However, we must keep in mind that psychoanalysis does not merely purport to be a method of *work*, but a method of *knowledge*. It concerns itself with arriving at some satisfaction of the intellect, such that an arcane mystery is genuinely dispelled and that in exercising our mind to its endeavors, we arrive at the truth. It is interesting to note the phrasing of the passage, for the term “unravelling” is indeed the same notion of truth possessed by Heidegger (alethia). Freud’s interest in the unravelling of a dream is one of understanding its meaning and this is shared also by Heidegger in his analysis of Being—they both seek the *meaning* of such objects (Being and the Unconscious) through the “unravelling” of phenomenal apprehensions.

Freud writes, “The interpretation of dreams is the royal road to a knowledge of the unconscious...”.<sup>50</sup> This line demonstrates the necessity of understanding psychoanalysis as being a theory which purports itself as something higher than a mere therapy of the passions. Its unraveling of dreams is but a means toward the end of discovering the truth about the human mind—the Unconscious—that *self-in-itself* which is ontologically situated. It must be permitted that the most fascinating insight revealed by psychoanalysis in general is that there is some *being*

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 125

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 604

within the self of which the self is not, and at the same time, is. This entire subterranean apparatus affects us as though it lived a life of its own, itself outside of the reach of any empirical observation of the external world and yet at the same time phenomenally apparent when we are presented before the mirror realm of dreams. That we have a glimpse *behind the veil* seems to be the philosophical importance of psychoanalysis as an epistemic idea, beyond its work as a mere therapeutic idea—and this metaphysical thinking is not lost on Freud. Concerning the intrigue of the Unconscious as a metaphysical *inverted being*<sup>51</sup>, he writes, “There is often a passage in even the most thoroughly interpreted dream which has to be left obscure... This is the dream’s navel, the spot where it reaches down into the Unknown... It is at some point where this meshwork is particularly close that the dream-wish grows up, like a mushroom out of its mycelium”.<sup>52</sup> The ambiguous and frankly very mystical wording of this paragraph permits us the reading that Freud himself saw something metaphysical in psychoanalysis. This may yet be resolved if we consider that the task of psychoanalysis is to grasp at and understand that very structure (the mind, or Dasein itself) out of which all ontology is made possible, but this resolution I shall leave to the final chapter.

To conclude this brief analysis of psychoanalysis, we may come away with a picture of it as something which both demands an interpretative praxis (the ‘assignment’ of meaning, creative and literary in nature) as well as a scientific quality (that there is a qualitative difference between a good interpretation and a false interpretation). This methodology wishes to arrive at knowledge of the Unconscious, which it admits is not possible to the utmost completion, but rather only as

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<sup>51</sup> My idea of the *inverted being* is to suggest the possibility of something opposite of the Cartesian *res extensa*. Whereas the philosophical notion of *substance as such* always implies something that extends into space, the Unconscious as a metaphysical ‘inverted being’ suggest something that exists only in the inversion of space—behind the veils of space itself.

<sup>52</sup> Freud., 528

glimpses and visions. From this point, the reader should already be able to see the re-emergence of the Paradox as it existed in Heidegger and phenomenology.

#### iv. The Paradox in Freud

Let us recall this central Paradox as it had arisen within Heidegger's phenomenology—there is a tense simultaneity between Dasein's interpreting and the thing-itself showing-itself as itself. This is reducible to a paradox between creation versus discovery. That is: is Being created or discovered? Let us therefore define on what grounds Freud's psychoanalytic method may be said to be paradoxical in this manner. Freud seeks after the Unconscious as his object of knowledge. The form of Freud's work is here presented as an *undoing* of substitutions, untying a certain psychic knot such that the true underlying mental realm is revealed—that the unconsciousness of man is laid bare. Hence, the paradox which had arisen in Heidegger shall reappear in Freud *if* in his discovery of the Unconscious as it is *in-itself*, there is a critical element of subjective creation as the primary vehicle of discovering the Unconscious. Through everything that has already been written thus far, this is obviously the case. Once again, we are lead back to the question of how creative interpretation can possibly render the picture of an independent truth, if that truth is ostensibly situated *outside*. And although psychoanalysis is dealing specifically with content *inside* the self, this internality is nevertheless independent of consciousness.

Consider the following passage from Freud: "The unconscious is the true psychical reality; *in its innermost nature it is as much unknown to us as the reality of the external world, and it is as incompletely presented by the data of consciousness as is the external world by the*

*communications of our sense organs*".<sup>53</sup> What is meant by a "true psychological reality"? Indeed, we may follow his comparison of the internal world with the external in order to draw a parallel of this idea with a *true physical reality*. Undoubtedly, this would be the truth of being in general. Freud seems to say here that the means by which we achieve knowledge of the external world, through the observations of the senses, provide us with an incomplete picture of the external world as it is in its utmost reality (thing-in-itself). He draws a connection here with the limitations of psychoanalysis—that psychoanalysis can no more offer a picture of the *true and complete* psychological reality than can the sensory organs offer a complete picture of physical reality. This brisk comparison is further evidence that the unconscious, at least insofar as it is the goal of Freud's project, is understood as something that is not *unlike* the external world in epistemic possibility. True things can be said about it in the same way that true things can be said about the physical world. We may glimpse into it with some applied method. It is possible to have *incorrect* ideas about it. And most of all it is understood as *real*—as being a "*true reality*"—and as any reality which may be called *true*, there must be some standard by which truth is distinguished from falsehood.

It is in the ability to distinguish true from false ideas about the unconscious which separates psychoanalysis from pure speculative conjecture. This demonstrates that knowledge of the Unconscious must be in some way universal—much like knowledge of Being in general, for if any *truth* is to be attained of it, there must be some appeal to its epistemic independence. For psychoanalysis, the unconscious is *there*—and indeed, we must discover it as it is in-itself. But let us remind ourselves of how it is discovered.

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<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 607

It would be crass to say that the interpretation of dreams is immediately evocative of the Paradox as it arose in Heidegger, merely because of its interpretative nature. This is not the argument of this chapter. Indeed, one could consider any number of interpretative projects which do not spur the Paradox to awaken—art or literary criticism for example. When Kierkegaard interprets the story of Abraham and Isaac, the subsequent point about existentialist philosophy produced does not purport itself to be a discovery of some ontological truth. On the other hand, when Freud interprets the story of Oedipus Rex, the murder of his father and his bedding of Jocasta, this interpretation is cited as evidence for knowledge about the human Unconscious. What makes this epistemologically possible? How does the reading of a story lead to universal truths?

While these questions seem difficult to answer by themselves, psychoanalysis' full structure only further complicates the matter, for it is not merely the reading of a story or a dream which entails its complete process. I must now remind the reader that in the interpretation of the dream of July, 23<sup>rd</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup>, Freud makes the strange allusion to the dream's "most unclear wording." I previously concluded from this remark that the *dream-object* of psychoanalysis is not the actual dream which an individual has, but rather the literal words written down for the purpose of its recollection. I cited the stylistic structure of Freud's July dream as further evidence of this, for the written dream is demonstrably literary in nature. Finally, there is also the overt reference to poetry and Schiller wherein we find Freud himself talking about recalling dreams as though it required the same mental state as one would find themselves in during creative writing. Alas, what one concludes from this is that 'the interpretation of dreams' has a dual meaning. While one is interpreting (reading) a dream, one is also interpreting their dream through the writing of it in recollection. This written recollection of the dream then becomes psychoanalysis'

*dream-object*. The created dream-object then itself goes through interpretation with an analyst until ostensibly this created content is unwounded and the subject's unconsciousness is brought to the fore. This exercise in literary creativity and analysis is, at the same time, insistent upon its status as "a scientific procedure," as Freud put himself out to formulate. It seems impossible, as it had been in Heidegger, to reconcile how an act of creation (the writing of the dream) pre-requisites the discovery of the unconscious.

Let us go over some obvious and common objections to psychoanalysis in general: what prevents someone from lying about their dream when writing it? What prevents someone from aggrandizing certain parts whilst ignoring others? What prevents someone from *pure and total fabrication*? These questions, while they pose no serious threat to psychoanalysis as a practice, do serve to invoke the problem of the Paradox in Freud. Even if one were to attempt at a pure and accurate honest depiction of their *actual* dream-experience, the nature of creative literature itself is inherently theatrical and deceptive. Yet it is precisely in such theatrical and deceptive works (Oedipus Rex) that Freud cites as evidence for his grandest of ideas (theory of the Oedipal complex in the Unconscious). How can we have confidence that our ideas about the Unconscious are indeed *true*, in the strongest and most useful sense of the word—if the basis of such ideas stem, not from observed reality, but from art and creativity? Is the Unconscious a being to be discovered, as one would assume given its description as "the true psychical reality," or something that is created, as one must admit, given that the possibility of knowing it arises only in such things as dream-writings and Oedipus Rex.

Again, a question arises for Freud which leads to the most interesting point of contention concerning Freud and Heidegger. The parallel question in Heidegger had been: why does Heidegger not simply concede that the Being he describes in his work is simply Being-for-

consciousness instead of Being as it is in-itself? Here we ask Freud: why does Freud not simply concede that psychoanalysis is an exercise of creative stipulation which might yield interesting conclusions about an individual's subjectivity? Of course, Freud's general body of work would not attest that psychoanalysis yielded merely loose, wishy-washy conclusions and general conjectures about one individual. Rather, Freud has consistently endeavored to demonstrate such universal structures i.e. the death drive, the life instinct, the tripartite nature of the mind, etc. What Freud wants and seeks is the Unconscious as the true psychical reality of the mind in general, not merely the secretive thoughts of a certain client or patient. Much like Heidegger, he is seeking the objective, essence-in-itself, Being in general, which seems to be at odds with the methodology by which this thing-in-itself is acquired: creativity, poetry, self-reflection, interpretation, reading and writing.

As in Heidegger, the Paradox presents two problems for Freud, one epistemic and one ontological. The epistemic problem is the less critical of the two, which simply calls into question how it may be possible that an artistic relation (poesis in Heidegger, or the Schiller-esque poetic state of mind) is pre-requisite to the discovery of an objective being-in-itself. For if we consider the artistic relation in the ways that Heidegger and Freud describe it in their own words, we are forced to ask if in poesis, or dream-writing, certain arbitrary or unrelated content arises. We are told that Being and the Unconscious are independent things-for-themselves, *discoverable*—and therefore *extent* prior to discovery or even discovery-as-interpretation. Yet it would seem that the artistic relation would allow for human invention entirely unrelated to this prior existence. For instance, if the Unconscious exists in any one way, x, it may be that our artistic relating to x, either in psychoanalytic dream-writing or poesis, yields a plethora of arbitrary inventions which have utterly no relation to x as it is in-itself. Of course, this would



only be the case if *x* is in-itself, wholly independent of our artistic relating to it. If the nature of the Unconscious or of Being were dependent on our relating, then this problem would never arise. Nevertheless, both thinkers insist upon its independence—hence the first problem of the Paradox.

The second, less soluble problem of the Paradox is related to the first, though with greater emphasis on the ontological status of the Unconscious. Is the Unconscious itself something created or discovered? Do we invent it as a pure heuristic tool to describe reality? Or rather, does it exist prior to our study of it? Freud seems to say it's both, much like Heidegger wishes for the concept of Being to also occupy this dual nature. In both cases, psychoanalysis and phenomenology wish to uncover or uproot what is hidden and concealed behind the veils of apparent being (consciousness in the former case and ontical being in the latter case). But in the uncovering of this hidden *thing*, it seems that this *thing* itself is created by the seeker. Therefore, the *thing*, which our philosophers insist exists in-itself, is both existent prior to our seeking of it, and created as a result of our seeking of it.

#### **v.        Underground Pathways**

Where it seemed impossible to untangle the Paradox in Heidegger, the nature of the subject matter here does lend itself to a possible resolution. In the previous chapter, I hinted that a possible solution to the Paradox found in Heidegger is if the Being discovered by Dasein in the excavating and work of unconcealment done by phenomenology is *Dasein itself*. In the case of psychoanalysis, the unconcealed object is the self itself. Freud himself anticipates the questions we posed in the previous section, namely, how psychoanalysis saves itself from the possibility of arbitrary dream-writing. For if in recalling dreams, we enter into a state of consciousness in which “ideas rush in pell-mell,” it must be admitted that certain ideas could be entirely unrelated

or arbitrary to the task at hand (discovering the Unconscious). This is the epistemic problem that arises from the Paradox in Freud, but Freud does have an answer to this. It is from this point of departure that I shall lead into my earlier thesis: that a theory of the unconscious does lend itself towards a resolution of the Paradox.

Freud reformulates our question in the following way: “Is it not more probable that new trains of thought have arisen in the course of the analysis which had no share in forming the dream? ...it is no doubt true that some trains of thought arise for the first time during the analysis”.<sup>54</sup> Here is precisely the epistemic problem. If new thoughts arise during psychoanalysis which have no relation to the goal of probing the subject’s unconscious, then how can one suggest that the artistic Schillerian relation is the appropriate one to approach analysis? After all, the Schillerian relation not only makes no attempt to suppress these arbitrary new thoughts but encourages them to rush forward without relent.

How does Freud respond to this criticism? He seems to outright reject the possibility of arbitrary thoughts, saying that any idea which arises in psychoanalysis has relevance and importance in the project. He writes:

“But once can convince oneself in all such cases that these new connections are only set up between thoughts which were already linked in some other way in the dream-thoughts. The new connections are, as it were, loop-lines or short-circuits, made possible by the existence of other and deeper-lying connecting paths. It must be allowed that the great bulk of the thoughts that are revealed in analysis were already active during the process of forming the dream...”.<sup>55</sup>

In this passage, we find Freud suggesting that ostensibly arbitrary ideas or relations all have their origin in the internality of the Unconscious. These ‘loop-lines’ and ‘short-circuits’ emerge from

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 298

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 298

‘deeper-lying connecting paths.’ All of this seems like a graphical representation of the psychical landscape that Freud is trying to paint: namely, that in the Schillerian relation in which arbitrary thoughts seem to arise, these thoughts are only made possible by and with reference to the unconscious itself. Freud concludes that these seemingly arbitrary thoughts “were already active during the process of forming the dream.” Hence, these thoughts which seem to have no relation to the unconscious content of the subject, are in fact of the utmost relevance, if they are revealed and emergent through this Schillerian relation and processed through Freud’s method.

Precisely because the Unconscious is, unlike the ostensible nature of Being, utterly internal to the subject, there arrives the possibility for a resolution to the Paradox. Its central point of contention is how something can be both objective, in-itself and existent prior to interpretation, whilst also being a being interpreted, created and artistically conceived. The unconscious seems to allow for this possibility specifically because of Freud’s map of the psyche noted above. For in the Schillerian relation in which dreams are written, interpreted and ideas arise in flood, this creative endeavor ultimately diverts the attention of the analyst and the dreamer towards actual underlying content through these subterranean pathways. These pathways allow for the conceptual bridge between creation and discovery, for as the dreamer creates their dream in writing and interprets their dream in reading, they are at the same time revisiting thoughts and circuits which Freud believes had been active in the formation of the actual dream-experience. This allows for a solution to the epistemic problem posed by the Paradox, but what does it say about the ontological one? What does this mean for the Unconscious as an object both existent prior to discovery, yet also one whose existence is contingent upon the interpretation and creation of the subject? Furthermore, what does this mean for Being in general, which also seems to have this dual-faced existence? In the final chapter of

this work, I shall at last unite these concepts as one in order to provide a solution to the problem at hand. We will find that the Unconscious, the true psychical reality, is also simply the twin head of the true physical reality, or Being in general, and that the two exist as a single *thing* or *non-entity*. This singularity is what will bring resolution to the Paradox in general and leave us with an understanding of Being that is contextualized with the concept of selfhood.

## Chapter III

### Being and Itself

#### i. Existence as a Kind of Thinking

What exists? And more importantly, what does it mean to exist? I pose these questions here in the broadest and most banal sense.<sup>56</sup> Heidegger's intuition was to "take as our clue our everyday Being-in-the-world."<sup>57</sup> in order to arrive at a possible answer to these ancient questions. What one inevitably finds with Heidegger is that the world is constituted by a vast array of beings, each of which possess both its character as an entity and a more hidden essential Being. This is to say that there appears for us the entity of certain mundane objects and events: clouds passing through on a windy day, the touch of a lover or the executioner's blade falling on a man. Such instances are, at the very surface of their apprehension, beings in the ontical sense—with their ontological Being invisible to us in immediate perception. The Being of such events can only be understood when they are brought proximally close to us by virtue of *thinking about them*.

This seems to be Heidegger's thesis in his ruminations on the concept of Dasein as a *deseverant*. He writes,

"Desevering amounts to making the farness vanish—that is, making the remoteness of something disappear, bringing it close".<sup>58</sup> But one must interpret this closeness as a closeness with that thing's Being. Heidegger gives the example: "When, for instance, a man wears a pair of spectacles which are so close to him distantly that they are 'sitting

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<sup>56</sup> For Heidegger, the term 'existence' is more significant and utilized in a more precise manner than what is understood generally by the phrase. An interpretation of this can be found in the first chapter. Here however, I am using the word in the way that it is commonly understood: what is the case?

<sup>57</sup> Heidegger. *Being and Time*, 95

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid*, 139

on his nose,' they are environmentally more remote from him than the picture on the opposite wall".<sup>59</sup>

The closeness of the spectacles here is merely ontical, amounting to nothing but the literal distance between the pair of spectacles and the observer. They are close "distantially" in Heidegger's sense.<sup>60</sup> But they are "environmentally more remote from him than the picture on the opposite wall." Here we see that the observer, insofar as they are actually *looking at* and *paying attention to* the perceived picture, the picture is more proximally close to them than the actual glasses which are distantially closer. It is no doubt that Heidegger believes phenomenology, his self-acclaimed method of describing Being, to be the best and most efficient way at bringing the Being of beings as proximally close as possible. And thus, once one is brought into a close proximity with Being through phenomenology, that is ostensibly when one arrives closest to the Truth—as they lie ever proximal with what is revealed from that which shows itself as itself.

The closeness of Being comes about through our thinking. We may remember the phrase analyzed earlier, 'Dasein's providing,' as the same concept. Dasein's Being is that which, by its essential nature, brings closer the proximity of Being to itself. If we ask the question 'What exists?' and we expect an ontological answer, then it may be said that 'what exists is the Being that has been brought proximally close to us by virtue of our being-in-the-world.' To rephrase—what exists is what we think.<sup>61</sup> Quite tautologically, to exist is to be a Being. What it means to exist is to be a Being that has become unconcealed, or a Being with the potentiality of being unconcealed. But to be unconcealed means to be revealed to Dasein. Again, it is in the cognition

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid, 141

<sup>60</sup> As a note of clarification, 'distantially' means the quality of literal distance between objects. Being proximal does not equate to being distantially close, for what is proximal to Dasein is that which is *thought of* by Dasein.

<sup>61</sup> The central premise of German Idealism in general.

of Dasein that Being is created and discovered—but how is this possible? For if Being is something to be discovered and brought proximal, then it must have existence (in *any* sense) prior to this discovery. If, on the other hand, Being is something which requires Dasein's thinking in order to be brought into unconcealment in the first place, then Heidegger can no longer hold to Being as absolute Being, but rather being-for-consciousness. Holding fast for the sake of argument to both antagonistic positions, we must say that Being is something that is both created and discovered. Hence, let us tentatively follow that to exist is to be something both created and discovered.<sup>62</sup> As has been stated in the first chapter, this can be nothing more than a metaphysical absurdity, unless it is possible that the Being which is brought proximal to Dasein is none other than Dasein itself, in its unconscious and essential form.

From all that we have analyzed in Freud, it is clear that the Unconscious exists also as that which is created and discovered, at least if we are given the term as defined on psychoanalytic grounds. Let us recall that the dream-object for Freud was quite literally the created text of the dreamer themselves. This already permits us some possibility of identifying Being and the Unconscious as possessing a similar structure of being—that of being both created and discovered. But what allows us to understand them as the same thing in general?

To answer this question, let us return to *The Question Concerning Technology*. This essay of Heidegger's is paramount to understanding phenomenology, for it is there that we find an actual account of Being in Heidegger's sense of the term<sup>63</sup>, precisely the Being of technology.

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<sup>62</sup> The ontological problem of the Paradox: how can something be both created and discovered? Yet from our analysis thus far, existence itself is that which is created and discovered.

<sup>63</sup> One might object here that I am conflating Heidegger's understanding of the essence of technology as the Being of technology. However, simply because Heidegger never refers to 'Being' in the essay does not mean that we cannot make a reasonable inference that the essence of technology described is not also technology's Being. The account of technology's 'essence' given is remarkably similar in structure to the account of the 'Being' of entities (equipment) found in *Being and Time*. The essence of technology lies in seeing nature as standing-reserve and the

Upon analysis of this account of Being, we find that what the Being of technology is, is not actually some *substance* or *universal Form*, but rather a *mode of perception* which acts to interpret the world unguided by the conscious will. Heidegger describes his interpretation of the Being of technology as the following:

“The essence of technology lies in Enframing. Its holding sway belongs within destining. Since destining at any given time starts man on a way of revealing. Man, thus under way, is continually approaching the brink of the possibility of pursuing and pushing forward nothing but what is revealed in ordering, and of deriving all his standards on this basis”.<sup>64</sup>

The *essence* of technology in this case is evidently contrary to the definition of the word *essence* in any pre-Heideggerian philosophy. Whereas one might consider the essence of technology to be the set of qualities or terms by which any particular may be said to be belonging to the universal class *technology-as-such*, Heidegger accounts for the essence of technology, rather, as “a way of revealing.” Enframing is, simply put, a way of revealing which gives the standard over to consciousness such that its perceptual cognition brings to proximity nothing more than the Being of entities as standing reserve. One might imagine a practical example of this idea as follows: When a neurologist protests that human emotion is nothing more than a play of the chemical interactions of the brain, they have not identified a universal truth of Being-as-such, but rather it is Enframing (as a mode of revealing) which brings to the neurologist’s proximity *nothing more* than the play of chemical interactions. What emotion is at its undermost level, its *Being*, has not yet been probed consciously, but rather unconsciously, the paradigm of Enframing reveals the real in such a way that only the interpretation of the world as standing reserve is brought to the fore of consciousness.

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Being of entities lies in seeing objects as equipment. Given this, as well as the etymological similarity of the words ‘essence’ and ‘Being’, there should be no further objection to reading the essence of technology as an explication of technology’s ‘Being’ in Heidegger’s sense.

<sup>64</sup> Heidegger. *The Question Concerning Technology*, 26



Furthermore, it must be noted that it is not consciousness' own will and intention that the real is revealed in accordance with Enframing. Heidegger writes,

“Thus when man, investigating, observing, ensnares nature as an area of his own conceiving, he has already been claimed by a way of revealing that challenges him to approach nature as an object of research, until even the object disappears into the objectlessness of standing-reserve. Modern technology as an ordering revealing is, then, no merely human doing”.<sup>65</sup>

The most interesting idea here is it is *man* who “has already been claimed by a way of revealing...” –e.g. by Enframing. Enframing takes hold of man and its mechanisms reveal Being to him on the terms of Enframing. The ordering revealing which interprets the world is thus “no merely human doing.” What are we to make of this Enframing then? The essence of technology, Enframing, or the Being of technology, is no “human doing.” But then who or what is the cause of the ordering revealing? If it is not man that *does* unto nature that interpretation which approximates it as standing reserve, what is the source of this approximation and revealing?

My answer to this is simple: it is the Unconscious. When Dasein enters into its contemplation of the world, what stabilizes and determines the manner of its ordering is, it must be admitted, wholly subliminal. For it is no consciously determined condition that the neurologist interprets the Being of emotions as merely the play of mechanical parts, but rather the destining of what is revealed by Enframing. The corporation that deforests acres of land for its own profit does not do so with the conscious ontologizing of the area as standing reserve, but rather, its understanding of ‘*what the land is*’ is wholly removed from its own “doing.” I therefore propose that what Heidegger identifies as the essence of technology, and indeed the Being which may be revealed from any phenomenological investigation, is an unconscious force.

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid, 19

It is the Unconsciousness in general that claims us into its way of revealing which is no merely human endeavor.

One might object at what I mean when I identify this notion of Enframing as an unconscious force. Certainly, this strays heavily from Freud, for whom unconscious forces were instinctive urges in some way, i.e. such as the desire for sex or death. If what I am saying is that Enframing is an unconscious force, then I am admitting to the idea that certain modes of revealing the real must rightly be identified as belonging to the same sphere. While the notion of the Unconscious having a direct affect in the perceptual re-ordering of reality is not present in Freud, such an idea is not absent from psychoanalytic writing in general. In his work *The Psychology of the Unconscious*, Carl Jung identifies two kinds of thinking—not dissimilar to Heidegger’s two kinds of revealing, Enframing versus Poesis. While I shall put forward Jung’s concepts here to draw them in relation with Heidegger, I must make clear that I am not identifying these as parallel terms, for they obviously differ in significant ways. The first kind of thinking, Jung writes, is “directed or logical thinking... a thinking which adjusts itself to actual conditions, where we, expressed in other words, imitate the succession of objectively real things, so as that the images in our mind follow after each other in the same strictly causal succession as the historical events outside of our mind”.<sup>66</sup>

This is clearly a concept of thought concerning nothing more than the ontical. The “succession of objectively real things” or “historical events outside of our mind” means an ontical account of the world as it is in its successive appearance. The passing of the day to night is such an “objectively real” thing that this type of thinking concerns. It is this type of thinking,

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<sup>66</sup> Jung, C. G., and Beatrice M. Hinkle. *Psychology of the Unconscious*. Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2002.14

naturally, that must lead to the destining of the real as brought about by Enframing, in which what is given by the conceptual necessities of technology are thought to be “objectively real things.” But I make this comparison not to suggest that Jung had conceived of such a possibility in his work, but rather to suggest that the unconscious encompasses more than merely instinctual drives, but also *modes of thinking*. The second type of thinking which Jung considers is explicitly a matter of the unconscious. Jung writes:

“This sort of thinking does not tire us; it quickly leads us away from reality into phantasies of the past and the future. Here, thinking in the form of speech ceases, images crowd upon image, feeling upon feeling; more and more clearly one sees a tendency which creates and makes believe, not as it truly is, but as one indeed might wish it to be. The material of these thoughts which turns away from reality, can naturally be only the past with its thousand memory pictures. The customary speech calls this kind of thinking ‘dreaming’.”<sup>67</sup>

This second type of thinking, which Jung also characterizes as “mythological”,<sup>68</sup> bears a striking resemblance to the Schillerian relation which Freud posited, though this should be of no surprise given that Jung literally describes this kind of thinking as “dreaming.” And naturally, one would be inclined to draw an equally compelling comparison with Heidegger’s Poesis. Indeed, the invocation of images crowding upon images, feelings upon feelings, gives weight over to what one might imagine Heidegger to envision as the proper poetic relation one ought to have with the world to reveal its authentic Being. But whereas Jung characterizes this as a “turn[ing] away from reality,” it is possible to understand this relation in Heidegger as a turn towards reality—if by ‘reality’, we mean ontological *Being*.

If one is not convinced by such a comparison, then we need to look no further than what Jung *and* Heidegger turn to as their example *par excellence* of this relation. Jung writes, “The

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 21

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 24

phantastical activity of the ancient mind created artistically *par excellence*. The object of the interest does not seem to have been to grasp hold of the ‘how’ of the real world as objectively and exactly as possible, but to aesthetically adapt subjective fantasies and expectations”.<sup>69</sup> Jung also praises the “richness and immense power of life of Grecian mythology”.<sup>70</sup> Short of the additional proposition that ancient Greek culture adapted subjective expectations, at least, this mirrors identically the end of *The Question Concerning Technology* where Heidegger posits ancient Greece as the “outset of the destining of the West” when “the arts soared to the supreme height of the revealing granted them”.<sup>71</sup> Heidegger specifically uses this, akin to Jung, to offer as a counterpoint against a certain kind of thinking (Enframing in Heidegger’s sense, directed thinking in Jung’s), in which consciousness’ relation to the world is not concerned with something ontical, but something of a transcendental quality. No doubt Heidegger’s praise of ancient Greece is also to imply that where their culture was able to bring the presence of authentic Being<sup>72</sup> close to proximity, the advent of the modern day has rid the world of this beauty. This can be seen with reference to the following two lines:

“They [the Greeks] brought the presence of the gods, brought the dialogue of divine and human destinings, to radiance”<sup>73</sup>

This line, with reference to the past, characterizes it with this concept of “radiance,” which we can only take to mean the emanation of the feeling of Being—the splendor of being attuned to essence itself, i.e. Plato’s sun, the light of God, etc. The true meaning of this undoubtedly

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<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 25

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 24

<sup>71</sup> Heidegger. *The Question Concerning Technology*, 19

<sup>72</sup> The concept of ‘authentic Being’ here simply means the approximation of Being that is of a higher value in Heidegger’s philosophy. Whilst Enframing too brings the Being of the world closer to consciousness’ proximity, it does so in terms of standing reserve, which Heidegger characterizes negatively. The revealing done by poesis, for Heidegger, is of a higher value and the Being which it approximates ought to be preferred.

<sup>73</sup> Heidegger. *The Question Concerning Technology*, 34

mystical characterization is of no real consequence. What is of consequence is when and how this radiance is ostensibly lost.

“Not only have the gods and the god fled, but the divine radiance has become extinguished in the world’s history. The time of the world’s night is the destitute time, because it becomes ever more destitute”.<sup>74</sup>

The time in which Heidegger is writing is the destitute time, the time of the death of god, the time of modern technology. Hence, the extinguishing of divine radiance is correlative to the time of the danger of Enframing. The culture which had Poesis as its primary vehicle had brought radiant Being closest to itself and Heidegger calls this “yielding to the holding-sway and the safekeeping of truth”.<sup>75</sup>

To summarize for the sake of organizational clarity, the Being which appears out of the everyday is, when probed psychoanalytically, the same force as the Unconscious itself. Our pathway into this idea lies in the fact that the examples of Being which we can find in Heidegger, whether Being in terms of standing reserve or Being in terms of radiant divinity, are ultimately *psychologically* constituted by unconscious kinds of thinking. Such kinds of thinking enable a cultural epoch to either bring the “presence of the gods,” or the “destitute time.” In effect, what we see is that the kind of thinking dominant in an era has a transcendental effect on the era at large, constituting the character of that era and determinant of its worldhood. Heidegger calls the achievement of Grecian culture the “safekeeping of truth.” But what kind of truth is this? Certainly not what Jung would consider “objectively real things.” The mythology of ancient Greece which he lavishes with such praise is the pure inventiveness of fantasy. Jung describes the ancient fantastical attitude thusly: “The naïve man of antiquity saw in the sun the great Father

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<sup>74</sup> Heidegger, Martin. *Poetry, Language, Thought*. New York: Perennial Classics, 2001. 89

<sup>75</sup> Heidegger. *The Question Concerning Technology*, 34

of the heaven and the earth, and in the moon the fruitful good Mother. Everything had its demons: they animated equally a human being and his brother, the animal... Thus arose an idea of the universe which was not only very far from reality, but was one which corresponded wholly to subjective fantasies".<sup>76</sup>

But for Heidegger, this straying "very far from reality" amounts to the safe-keeping of truth. The echo of the Paradox hitherto disclosed comes ringing in: for we are left to wonder how Heidegger conceives of the inventiveness of creative "wholly subjective" fantasy as the "safekeeping of truth." If we can reformulate this instance of the Paradox with our tentative hypothesis that Being is the Unconscious, then the answer comes closer to clarity. For if Being is, in truth, the authentic internality of the subject, then in the wild and ecstatic poesis of the Greeks where their fantastical dreams rush out in Schillerian madness, the unconscious of the poetic Greek is brought to the fore, not merely as inconsequential fiction but as the worldhood of ancient Greece itself. It is here that Jung again finds himself in dialogue, for he wrote, "When an idea is so old, and is so generally believed, it is probably true in some way and indeed, as is mostly the case, *is not literally true, but is true psychologically*".<sup>77</sup> Here Jung allows us to unite phenomenology and psychoanalysis with this possible solution, that the safekeeping of truth possible by Poesis is not *literally* truth in the sense that there were indeed divinities living on Mount Olympus, but rather *psychologically true*. What does this mean?

Our idea is that the Being brought within Dasein's proximity is Dasein itself, as its unconscious self, and in this sense we are enabled to say that the Greeks had achieved the safekeeping of a psychological truth—namely that they came into a bountiful dialogue with their

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<sup>76</sup> Jung., 25

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 9

Unconscious and treated it with such aesthetic concern that all its untame and boundless energies were transfigured into Heidegger's notion of "radiance"—the "presence of the gods." Their subjective fantasies, which are no doubt subjectively *created*, became objective reality by virtue of a type of thinking, a type of concern, in which Being becomes discovered as what it is in-itself. But this in-itself is nothing more than Dasein itself.

## ii. Resolving the Paradox

The interpretation of Being that identifies it as the Unconscious allows for a possible resolution to the Paradox, while simultaneously enriching the potentialities of psychoanalysis as a discipline. For if Being and the Unconscious are one and the same, then it follows that insights into the nature of the Unconscious also bear relevance into the nature of Being. One can see this holding precedence already in the formulation of the will to power in Nietzsche (i.e. that the psychological will to power is also ultimate reality as such). Thus, there are two immediate consequences to the interpretation of the concept of 'Being' as the Unconscious: firstly, that the Paradox problematic in phenomenology becomes resolved, and secondly that psychoanalysis is enriched in its possibilities. In this section, we shall give special attention to the former conclusion.

There can be no lucid understanding of what 'Being' is in phenomenology unless it is understood as being ontologically identical to the Unconscious, by which I mean the structure and content of the mind that is internal to the subject—the self in-itself. This thesis of Being resolves the Paradox in the same way in which the Paradox is self-resolved in psychoanalysis: that the creation of content acts also as discovery, precisely because the object being discovered is the self and it is from the self that one creates. In psychoanalysis, the Paradox is no issue because it is the Unconscious (the creating mind itself) that is also working to produce the

content which rises to the surface when one interprets their dreams. Hence what is produced, either in the writing of the dream or in the analysis of it, is produced from the Unconscious as its ultimate source. One may easily see, therefore, how the Unconscious may be something created *and* discovered—for clearly it is through creation that it can be discovered at all and it is able to exist in this metaphysical superposition precisely because it exists, not as something inextricably removed from the human subject, but *as the human subject itself* in its ultimate psychical reality. Psychoanalysis discovers the internal truth of the self by allowing the self to unravel it-self through creation. Quite literally, in the Schillerian relation posited by Freud and the ‘indirect thinking’ posited by Jung, the Unconscious shows itself as itself and in-itself to the foreground of consciousness.

With this in mind, let us now turn to Being and phenomenology—and how it might be said that Being shows itself from-itself and as-itself, whilst also being created from Dasein in a manner such as poesis. We may again use Heidegger’s example of Hellenic Greece as our guide through this resolution to the Paradox, for it is clear that the inventiveness of Grecian mythology is purely creative, yet it is also that which keeps safe the truth. No doubt, one would regard any other sort of inventiveness, not as the safekeeping of truth, but as flights of fantasy—i.e. such as the mythos of J.R.R Tolkien’s world or any other fictitious universe. Does Middle Earth now also count as the safekeeping of truth? And how can fiction be considered more powerful in the approximation of Truth towards consciousness than the *discovery* of objective facts? Heidegger seems to posit that the fantasy of Olympus was, in some way, *truer* in its capacity to bring Being to proximity than modern science and technology which he regards as Enframing. But this mythology is something conjured by the Greeks with wholesale artistic license, or to put it



colloquially, they ‘made it up.’ No doubt, it seems absurd that one could simply ‘make up’ the safekeeping of truth.

But akin to the manner in which an individual’s dream is ‘made up’ and seemingly arbitrary, both in the way that it presents itself to consciousness and in the way that it is interpreted by consciousness, the world that the ancient Greeks invented brings with it greater significance than what appears at first glance. Certainly, what the Greeks discovered with their mythos was not anything physically real, such as the discovery of scientific truths, but rather *psychologically real* in Jung’s sense and it must be in this sense that they can be regarded as the safekeepers of truth. The truth that was kept in their interpretation of the world as the dwelling place of divinity is not the truth of *literal facts*, but rather, the feeling and approximation of Heidegger’s ‘radiance’—the beauty of a world where every facet of existence beheld itself with a teleological character. The Being that the Hellenic Greek unraveled was a *psychological state*: a hermeneutic mood in which they understood the world *as* something transcendental. This account is also shared by Nietzsche in *The Birth of Tragedy*:

“It was in order to be able to live that the Greeks had to create these gods from a most profound need... The same impulse which calls art into being, as the complement and consummation of existence, seducing one to a continuation of life, was also the cause of the Olympian world which the Hellenic ‘will’ made us of as a transfiguring mirror.”<sup>78</sup>

Here, we can draw from Nietzsche another instance in which the creativity of the poetic soul also translates into the safekeeping of psychological truths. “It was in order to be able to live,” Nietzsche writes, that the internality of the Greek subject had to be satisfied in such a manner. Their aestheticism was a “profound need”—an “impulse,” and it must be admitted that such characterization does not grant the Hellenic poet any *conscious* or *intentional* will. Out of

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<sup>78</sup> Nietzsche, Friedrich, and Walter Kaufmann. *The Birth of Tragedy*. Toronto: Random House, 1967. 30

necessity and impulse did Olympus arise, much like the revealing of the real as standing reserve which is no merely human doing. These “construct[ed] deities” are called the “completion and consummation of existence,” and were a necessity to life in general. What are we to make of this “consummation of existence”? Assuredly, such a notion correlates well with that idea of Heidegger’s, that the Greek mythos had brought the safekeeping of truth. But this truth is indeed existential and for Nietzsche, this Olympian world is the way in which the “Hellenic will” beheld itself in a “transfiguring mirror.”

This characterization of Greek mythology is immensely insightful and fits perfectly into our thesis that the Being which the Greeks had brought to proximity was none other than the Unconscious itself—or the internality of the Greek subject itself. For what we find is that this lofty ‘Being’, which Heidegger can only give reference to in terms of the sublime aesthetic achievements of ancient Hellenism, is indeed a manner of beholding or interpreting. One might say it is a style of contemplation, a mode of relation, or a way of thinking about the world. But this kind of thinking which brings us close to Being is rather, for Nietzsche, a “transfiguring mirror” which the Hellenic will held up before itself. In this sense, what these ancients discovered in poesis was not the external truth of matter, i.e. such as a physicist’s so called ‘theory of everything,’ but rather a transcendental Truth of Being—a mirror held up to the self.

Nietzsche again characterizes the Truth (which we may interpret in a Heideggerian lens as *Being*) as the reflection of a mirror in the final aphorism of the unofficial publication of his notes entitled *The Will to Power*. He writes, “And do you know what ‘the world’ is to me? Shall I show it to you in my mirror? This world: a monster of energy, without beginning, without

end...”<sup>79</sup> Nietzsche goes on to give a rhetorical account of his metaphysics as such, that this world and all peoples in it are “will to power—and nothing besides!”<sup>80</sup> But what are we to make of the opening of this summary of his views on the nature of all existence, all Being? That which he shows the truth of reality, is shown through “my mirror.” If we have any right at all to assume that Nietzsche is repeating motifs between these two instances of the term (and the context of both implies as much), then what we see is that the true nature of Being, formerly contextualized as the light of aesthetics and latterly as the will to power, are in both cases *reflections of the self*. But in terms of psychoanalysis, the ultimate reality of the self is the Unconscious.

Returning now to the Paradox of the creation and discovery of Being, Being is that which exists as something latent, prior to discovery, but also *coming into existence* only at the point of creation—for Being is fundamentally that which lies dormant in the mind. The unraveling of phenomena which is the project of phenomenology is really an unraveling of the *mind itself*, such that Being becomes revealed in the same way that the Unconscious is revealed in psychoanalysis. For instance, if we re-examine Heidegger’s example of the hammer, we can readily see that what is diagnosed as the hammer’s Being is not some set of properties or descriptions that might yield its definitional *hammeriness*, i.e. hardness, shape, form, materiality, etc—but rather that it is a perception on the part of Dasein’s approximations, i.e. the Being of hammers as equipment. Equipment in this sense is not something physical, but rather it describes a mental ordering and more specifically, an unconscious mental ordering—for it is not within Dasein’s intentional consciousness that the hammer is given over to the Being of equipment, but rather that Dasein immediately and *instinctually* (or to use Nietzsche’s term, ‘impulsively’)

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<sup>79</sup> Nietzsche, Friedrich, and Antholy M. Ludovici. *The Will to Power*. London: George Allen & Unwen LTD.1924. 431

<sup>80</sup> Ibid, 432

brings the hammer into proximity as such. What is discovered in phenomenology, in the example cases of the hammer, Enframing and Greek mythology is not something *physically true* but rather *psychologically true*. Hence, the Paradox may now be resolved in the same way psychoanalysis resolves itself in Freud's stipulation of the 'underground pathways' passage. As Dasein purports itself to analyzing the world in phenomenology, or through obtaining its Being in poetry, the world reveals itself as it is in-itself to consciousness by virtue of the fact this 'world' *is* Dasein itself. We reveal ourselves to ourselves, naturally as ourselves, when we uncover the nature of Being—for naturally it is we ourselves who *are* the nature of Being. The unconsciousness of the human subject, or the Unconscious as such, which represents the metaphysical *reality* of the mind, is Being.

After the number of parallels now drawn and at last with this precedence of thought already established or alluded to in Nietzsche, we may properly call Being the reflection of the Unconscious and it is this idea that shall bring closure to phenomenology and psychoanalysis. For now, the former may be understood as an exegesis, not merely of the phenomenal structures of perception, but also of the mode of cognition which the mind is possessed by in terms of its perception (i.e. Enframing or Poesis). The latter may now be understood also as a diagnosis, not merely of the true psychological reality of the mind, but that its psychological insights also provide the possibility of probing into the world which we perceive—the external, not the external as it may be understood materially and empirically, but as that which we experience and interpret phenomenologically. Though in practice, such a new formulation has not yet been attempted and this work itself is no attempt at this, our task that such a thing may be justified *ontologically* is now completed. Perhaps there may now be psychoanalysts who dissect the mind in order to

unravel the mysteries of Being, or phenomenologists who unravel the truth of the self in their dealings with the everyday world.

### iii. Dream Within A Dream

It is now after the seas have thrown us ashore that our voyage is concluded. But even as we set foot on the beach, everything lying behind us is engulfed in such misty haze. Has a word penetrated the reader's mind? Or has everything already dissolved into the depths? The present continues to become the past and the sand which holds us aloft sinks to the nether. The merciless tides of morning have never ceased in perishing away our nightly visions. Yesterday becomes yesteryear and yesteryear becomes a bygone era until the entirety of human life and accomplishment will return to the eternal void and that spark of the Absolute that remains at our navel shall come once more into reunion with our midnightly Mother. Alas, have all our days been a dream? Alas, oh God! Is all that we see or seem but a dream within a dream?

It is now that 'reality' must be reinterpreted, re-understood, and Poe's devastating proposition must be taken with a hemlock's sip of seriousness—for the implications of what we have explored reach far beyond the prison of self-satisfying philosophy. I aim to give the reader what all readers of philosophy deserve: the existential consequences of thought and a renewed interest in the enigmatic nature of *life*. To this end, what we find with our thesis that Being is the Unconscious is the following: That which is given to be real, our 'waking life' of the *feeling* of reality, is nothing more than the ontical closedness of the mind in the thoughts of its own self-delusion. The so-called 'real world' which is spoken of colloquially with such discernment and severity is always concerned with materiality, detached physicality—sexless sensuality. What

does the lay-person characterize as ‘the real world’? Daily life, the struggle for income and food, the Sisyphean toil of the mundane with seldom and all too hedonistic respites. And the intellectual fares no better in their response. ‘The real world?’ replies the academic, ‘Certainly you needn’t think too hard on that! The real world is calculable, measurable, observable, and all has already been put to order by the redemption of Almighty *mathematics* on the cross! Why if you don’t believe in gravity as the *real*, you merely need to take a leap of faith!’ When one sees how such men live, one must ask—where is the *Glory*?

This adoration for the commonplace notion of ‘reality’ is problematized by Nietzsche in the following account:

“Though it is certain that of the two halves of our existence, the waking and the dreaming states, the former appeals to us as infinitely preferable, more important, excellent and worthy of being lived, indeed as that which alone is lived—yet in relation to that mysterious ground of our being of which we are the phenomena, I should, paradoxical as it may seem, maintain the very opposite estimate of the value of dreams. For the more clearly I perceive in nature those omnipotent art impulses, and in them an ardent longing for illusion, for redemption through illusion, the more I feel myself impelled to the metaphysical assumption that the truly existent primal unity, eternally suffering and contradictory, also needs the rapturous vision, the pleasurable illusion, for its continuous redemption”<sup>8182</sup>

This ‘real world’ of wakefulness, in which objects are encountered as entities and nothing-besides, in which events and peoples are encountered as passing states of immediate perception, is so commonly held as “that which alone is lived.” As though *life* only had meaning and persistence through ‘the real’ in its own terms of what ‘reality’ even means. Following Nietzsche, I shall here propose two existential truths: That *life* and the ‘real world’ is a dream

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<sup>81</sup> Nietzsche. *The Birth of Tragedy*, 45

<sup>82</sup> It must be admitted that this passage of Nietzsche’s serves not only as a guidepost for the arguments to follow, but also as a foreshadowing and precursor to this work in general. For here Nietzsche calls into question the “mysterious ground of our being of which we are the phenomena,” which can only be read as the latent potentiality of phenomenology and psychoanalysis’ unity—that Being and the Unconscious must be brought together as that “truly existent primal unity.”

and more importantly, that dreams are of a higher value than the waking state of so-conceived ‘sobriety.’

On the first proposition, I shall clarify my precise meaning which itself is two-fold. That life itself is a dream, or rather that the ‘real world’ is a dream, I mean to say that what is given to be apparent to us in conscious waking perception is, upon phenomenological analysis, revealed to be a force of unconscious ordering and destining in which the ‘real’ is revealed by some ‘will’ beyond the scope of consciousness. Man walks through life as the world perpetually and immediately reveals itself to him, outside his cognitive intent or willing, and *believes in* what is revealed to him as the *absolutely real*. He forgets the phenomena and considers the apparent, that which has become unconcealed, as the absolute.<sup>83</sup> It is in this sense that Heidegger accuses us of forgetting the question of Being and why phenomenology is needed in the first place—in order to bring to light that the ontology of the everyday is neither obvious nor given and that *its meaning* has become lost to us in general. In poetic translation, Heidegger shows us that we are dreaming and that even when we are most certain of our lucidity, even when all the world seems to appear before us in shining morning light, we are still clouded by miasma of dreams. In fact, it is when the dreamer believes they are not dreaming that they are engulfed by illusion the most. As such, when our caricature lay person has accepted that their life is tantamount to their duty to their family, or their job, their devotion to state or church, and believes in such existential structures as though it were ‘real life’ itself, they have lost all semblance of the question of Being and has accepted such phantasms as though they were Being itself.

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<sup>83</sup> I am using the phrase ‘phenomena’ here in Heidegger’s redefinition of the term, which we closely analyzed in Chapter I. Phenomenon in this sense means that which shows-itself, i.e. the hammer as such or the artwork as such.

Yet, the idea that reality is a dream yields a second, more fulfilling meaning. Let us recall what Jung had written on the type of thinking he called “indirect thinking.” He wrote, “The material of these thoughts which turns away from reality, can naturally be only the past with its thousand memory pictures. The customary speech calls this kind of thinking ‘dreaming’.” Here, we can draw a direct bridge between poesis and dreaming, as if the Schillerian attitude that one must adopt in Freud in order to recall their dreams were not enough. It is this kind of thinking, ‘dreaming,’ the mythological *alethia* which reveals the real in terms of transcendental forms, which Heidegger would consider the safekeeping of truth. So in this second meaning of the idea—that reality is a dream—we find an inversion of the first meaning. The first signification of this notion that life is a dream calls into question the severity and ‘realness’ of the waking sobriety of the everyday optical perception. The second signification, if we are to be clear on its meaning, should rather be rephrased thusly: that dreams are reality. For this kind of thinking, what “customary speech calls... dreaming,” which Jung constituted as a turn “away from reality,” actually turns out to be a revealing of the real in which the destiny of man is brought to radiance. Precisely because Being is the Unconscious can we consider art, poetry, creativity, fantasy and the excess of the cognitive free play of the imagination *to yield the most potential in the accessing of Truth*. It is only when the Unconscious is allowed to unfurl itself, to reveal itself as it is in-itself, that Being, the essence of all that *is*, blossoms from the night like the coming of a starlit Spring.

The ultimate insight here is that no matter your ideology, your history, your relationship with worldhood in general, or your philosophical beliefs, however conscious or unconscious those beliefs may be—you *are dreaming*. The Truth that is revealed to you, what is real for consciousness on its surface perception, what is ‘true’ in the benign sense, is the product of



unconscious ordering—and one may be fooled by this deception (the first signification of the idea) or one may utilize and take reign of this deception for one's own existential satisfaction (the second signification of the idea). In the first instance, the reality that appears before consciousness is, when analyzed phenomenologically, actually a dream. In the second instance, the dream that consciousness has allowed to surface to the fore of its revealing, its aesthetic *will*, becomes reality.

Nietzsche's transvaluation of dreaming over the wakefulness of 'real life' is tantamount to a foreshadowed ideation of the second signification of the formula: dreams are reality, and the consummation of this idea as an ethic. For it is in the world of art that one arrives at the noblest formulation and possibility of Truth and it is in this relation, that of creation, that Being becomes discovered. As Being, or Truth in general, arrives to the lucidity of our consciousness through the arts, the product of our creative efforts also returns us to ourselves, for it is the Unconscious that is the source and muse of the artist's creation. The Unconscious, the realm of the mind in-itself, is what arrives on the canvas like a descent of valkyries, and in the creation of the work of art, Being becomes revealed as what it is in-itself. The self, and thereafter the 'world', becomes transfigured in light of this mirror as man and 'God' enter into matrimony. Alas, with the union of Being and the Unconscious, man-as-artist is now condemned with the role of an absent heaven and the possibility of the meaning of existence is now limited only by the infinitude of our imagination. Just as surely as daylight must dawn with the morrow, so too is there no redemption of Being without the dreamer. Adieu, let us dream on.

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