

HEIDEGGER'S NOTION OF TRUTH IN *BEING AND TIME*

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Heidegger 'bilginin nesnesi ile uyuşması' şeklinde tanımlanan geleneksel hakikat kavramını bu tanımın arkaplanında bulunan varsayımlara geri götürür. Herhangi bir hakikat iddiasında ortaya çıkan şey, temelde, nesnenin tezahürü olduğu için, hakikat tezahür (ifşa) olarak anlaşılmalıdır. Tezahür (ifşa) öncelikli olarak nesnelere tezahür (ifşa)'ünün arkaplanı olarak dünyanın¹ tezahürüne işaret eder. Heidegger'e göre, yeni bir nesnenin keşfedilmesi tümüyle gizli olan bir nesnenin keşfedilmesi şeklinde gerçekleşemez; fakat hareket noktasını dış görünüşte benzeşen bir tezahürden alır. Bu demektir ki, nesnelere, belli bir tarzda zaten keşfedilmiş ve aynı zamanda örtük bir durumdadırlar. Onlar örtük bir durumda oldukları için, 'ifşa' ya da bir şeyi 'açma' olarak hakikat daima nesnelere kendilerinden elde edilmelidir. Buna göre, Dasein (Orada-varlık)² hem hakikat (ifşa) içinde hem de hakikat-dışı (yani henüz kendisini ifşa etmemiş varlık) 'nda bulunur.

Bununla birlikte, "ifşa yolu ancak bunların [hakikat ve hakikat-dışı] arasını ayırttığı zaman başarılı" dediği zaman, Heidegger neyi kastetmektedir? Bizler hakikat ve hakikat-dışı'ni ayırt ettiğimiz zaman 'ifşa'yı nasıl gerçekleştirebiliriz? Bu iddiayı ileri sürerken, Heidegger hakikat ve hakikat-dışı'ni kendisiyle ayırt ettiğimiz ve böylece ifşa'yı gerçekleştirdiğimiz bir (hakikat) ön-kavramına sahip olduğumuzu kabul etmiş olmuyor mu? Şayet durum bu ise, her yeni ifşa (açma) kendisini

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¹ Heidegger 'Dünya' kavramını ile özellikle varlığın tarihsel tezahürleri üzerinde oluşan beşeri tecrübeler yani kültür dünyasını kastetmektedir.

² Dasein kavramıyla Heidegger insanın 'Dünya'da kendine özgü varoluş tarzına işaret eder. Buna göre insanın varlığı (Dasein) Dünya'dan ve Dünya da insanın varlığından bağımsız olarak kavranamaz. Hermenötik daire (hermeneutic circle) metaforuyla işaret edilen bu karşılıklı bağımlılık varlığın tezahürünün ve insan kavrayışının tarihselliğini gösterir.

hakikat ön-kavramından ayıran bir özelliğe sahip olmuyor mu? Bu çalışmamızda şunu iddia edeceğiz: Açma ya da ifşa olarak hakikat varlıkları (nesnelere) kendi orijinallikleri ve tarihsellikleri içinde ortaya çıkarmak olduğu için ifşa olarak her hakikat tezahür eden nesnenin orijinalligi açısından kendisine özgü niteliklere sahiptir.

Hakikatın zamansallığı (temporality) aynı zamanda bilginin zamansallığını ortaya koyar. Açıkçası ön-kavram yeni hakikate aracılık edemez, zira yeni hakikat ön-hakikatı sınırını göstermek suretiyle olumsuzlar. Böylece sınırlılık, fanilik (finiteness) sadece bizim tarihsel ufumuzun sınırlı oluşundan değil, aynı zamanda hakikat ön-kavramımızın sınırlarını gösteren yeni hakikatın orijinalliğinden kaynaklanır. Her ne kadar paradoxal görünse de, bu gerçek yüzündendir ki, hakikat kendi zeminini kuran bir hareket olarak ortaya çıkar. Bununla birlikte, eski hakikat (hakikat ön-kavramı) ile yeni hakikat arasındaki boşluk ya da süreksizlik problemi hala ortadadır.

Heidegger'de hakikat ön-kavramı ile yeni hakikat arasında dahili bir gerilim vardır. Ne var ki, Hegel'in Kant'ın numen ve fenomen ayırımına getirdiği itirazı kullanacak olursak, sınırın farkında olmak zaten bu sınırın ötesine gitmektir. Bu demektir ki, her yeni ifşa (hakikat) eski ifşa (hakikat)'ın sınırını gösterir ve bizim bu sınırın ötesine gitmemizi ve kendisini tanımamıza imkan verir. Bu nedenle, Heidegger'e göre hakikat, Gadamer'in diliyle, nesnenin bizzat kendisini göstermesidir.

Heidegger leads the traditional conception of truth as the agreement of knowledge with its object back to "its unthought presuppositions."³ Since what is demonstrated in the assertion is solely "the Being-uncovered of the entity itself," truth must be understood in terms of disclosedness. Disclosedness refers primarily to the world's disclosedness as the ground of the uncoveredness of entities. According to Heidegger, the discovering of anything new is never done on the basis of having something completely hidden, but takes its "departure rather from uncoveredness in the mode of semblance."⁴ This is to say that entities have, in a certain way, been uncovered already, and yet they are still disguised. Since they are disguised, truth as uncoveredness must always be captured from entities. Therefore, Dasein is both in the truth and in untruth.

³ Otto Pöggeler, *Martin Heidegger's Path of Thinking*, trans. D. Magurshak and S. Barber (NJ: Humanities Press International, Inc., 1987), p. 71.

⁴ M. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), p. 265

However, what does Heidegger mean when he asserts that “the way of uncovering is achieved only in distinguishing between these [truth and untruth]”?⁵ How can we achieve discovering by distinguishing truth from untruth? In this argument does not Heidegger accept that we have a fore-conception of truth by which we distinguish between truth and untruth, and thus achieve discovering? And if this is the case, does not new uncoveredness have a feature by which it differs from the fore-conception of truth? This paper will argue that since truth as uncoveredness is to discover entities in their originality (and historicity), every truth as uncoveredness has also a specific feature in terms of the originality of the entities uncovered.

In Heidegger’s hermeneutics, ‘fore-conception’ of truth refers both to the fact that uncoveredness of beings is grounded in the ‘world’s disclosedness’ and to the basic characteristic of Dasein as ‘uncovering.’ Precisely because of this fact, as Versényi puts it, in Heidegger’s philosophy man and world can never be separated or even discussed in separation.⁶ Accordingly, since Dasein exists as being-in-the-world, it is always already dwelling with some being, that is, the uncoveredness of such beings is equiprimordial with the being of Dasein and its disclosedness.⁷ Out of this inseparability between man and world, it follows that entities can never be true in themselves; what makes them true is the fact that they enter into a relationship with Dasein in terms of Being-discovering and Being-discovered. From this perspective, Heidegger’s contention that “‘Dasein is in the truth’ states equiprimordially that ‘Dasein is in untruth’” can be taken to mean that Dasein is always aware of the boundary where truth differs from untruth. If this is the case, we can argue that just as we know that we are in truth since we have a fore-conception of truth, so we know that we are in untruth since we have a fore-conception of untruth.

However, this does not mean certainly that the fore-conception of truth is discrete from that of untruth. But rather this distinction reflects only the inner tension between ‘disclosedness’ and ‘closedness’ in the concept of truth itself.⁸ For that reason, there is no total concealment and total revealment but, as Pöggeler argues, “truth is a co-presence of

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Lazslo Versényi, *Heidegger, Being, and Truth* (New Haven: Yale University Press: 1966), p. 14.

⁷ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 264.

⁸ In this context, Heidegger argues that “to be closed off and covered up belongs to Dasein’s facticity.” *Ibid.*, p. 265.

unconcealment and concealment, a process of instituting and withholding of ground.”⁹ Since truth enters always into a ‘limited opening,’ to bring “something into the light is to cast an aspect of it into shadow.”¹⁰

At this point to maintain both that ‘truth is co-presence of unconcealment and concealment’ and that ‘untruth is coveredness’ seems to be puzzling. How can we explain that ‘untruth’ is both ‘closedness’ and ‘present’ at one and the same time? If untruth as coveredness is the absence of truth as uncoveredness, how can absence be described as present? It seems that the argument for the co-presence of truth and untruth cannot be restricted only to temporal co-existence, since it presupposes that the presence of truth is not at the same level as that of untruth. If this is the case, the co-presence of truth and untruth must be both temporal and spatial co-presence. In our view, this spatio-temporal ‘co-presence’ of truth and untruth cannot be understood if we do not look at it as manifesting the internal continuity between them.

From this perspective, we can argue that Dasein can uncover entities only by following this inner continuity which takes its departure from the limited disclosedness of entities. Accordingly, to follow the inner continuity is to suppose that untruth is also truth to be uncovered. To put it another way, to be aware of untruth is to propose a future (or possible) truth. If, as Tugendhat remarks, “disclosure is to be understood as an occurrence that is actively related to its opposite closedness or concealment”¹¹ there must be a circular relation between truth and untruth. Since we take our “departure... from uncoveredness” we realize that “entities... are disguised,” but insofar as we are aware of untruth we can snatch entities “out of their hiddenness.”¹² Since we have a fore-conception of truth we approach entities in their hiddenness, and insofar as we approach such entities in their hiddenness we can release their truth, i.e., uncover them.

However, if, since we have a fore-conception of truth, we snatch entities in their hiddenness, how do we realize the difference between the fore-conception of truth and new discoveredness? In other words, if Dasein is Being-uncovering, i.e., discovering is a process, how does Dasein

⁹ Pöggeler, “Metaphysics and Topology of Being in Heidegger,” trans. P. Amad, *Man and World* 8, no. 1 (1975), p. 10.

¹⁰ Robert J. Dostal, “The Experience of Truth for Gadamer and Heidegger: Taking Time and Sudden Lightning,” in *Hermeneutics and Truth*, edit. B. Wachterhauser (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1994), pp. 49-50.

¹¹ Erns Tugendhat, “Heidegger’s Idea of Truth,” in *Hermeneutics and Truth*, p. 88.

¹² Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 265.

appreciate the new occurrence of truth? The significance of this question shows itself if we look at it from the point of view of the internal tension or circular relation between truth and untruth. Accordingly, is the new occurrence of truth only a different aspect of a vicious circle or, reversely, is it a new manifestation which occurs in a circular process?

At this level we can say that if the act of uncovering is a process, then the uncoveredness of anything new should introduce itself as a manifestation of this process. In other words, even if uncoveredness is the truth itself, every new uncovering should transcend or widen the horizon of the truth which has occurred before. If this is the case, the internal tension and the continuity (circular relation) between truth and untruth should not be a vicious circle. This is because we have a fore-conception of truth that we are faced with untruth and every new uncoveredness becomes a fore-conception for further uncovering.

When Heidegger remarks that, through uncovering, entities become "accessible in themselves to Dasein,"¹³ he refers to the fact that truth is grasping the *originality* of anything behind the semblance or cover. In this context, he also argues that "Dasein should... defend it [that which has already been uncovered] *against* semblance."¹⁴ By this he means that Dasein should preserve the originality of uncovering in discourse and language.

From this perspective, it can be argued that if every truth is finite, i.e., limited, and uncovering is a process, then originality of uncoveredness refers to nothing else than the distinctive aspect and uniqueness of a being uncovered. This is to say that since no discovering can be reduced to another discovering and replaced by another truth, so every truth as discoveredness has its own feature, scope and limit.¹⁵ Heidegger's argument that "disclosedness is essentially factual" calls our attention also to the limit and uniqueness of every occurrence of truth. Precisely because of this fact, we refer to the original feature of disclosedness by means of different words. For instance, when we associate the name 'Newton' with the 'laws' we not only mention that 'Newton first discovered them,' but also, and more importantly, refer to the fact that the truth of these laws has

¹³ *Ibid.*, 269.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 265.

¹⁵ As can be seen, by 'irreducibility of original discoveredness' we mean both that discoveredness cannot be reduced to another discoveredness *behind* it (for instance, since a symptom considered as discoveredness can be reduced to another discoveredness *behind* it, it is not original discoveredness) and that it cannot be reduced to another discoveredness *before* it, i.e., it is not a *repetition* of what is already known.

been preserved (or handed down to us) in the originality of its discoveredness. For that reason, through language entities become accessible in their originality to Dasein.

However, the originality here should not be confused with the originating moment of uncovering or with the way the author understood what he uncovered. The 'originality' refers to the fact that the identity of the entity uncovered cannot be based on something else since the distinctive aspects and features of the uncoveredness cannot be reduced to anything else.¹⁶ Since every uncoveredness is finite and thus a phase in the endless process of uncovering, discontinuity or difference is intrinsic to the identity itself. To put it another way, identity is not something to which different aspects can be reduced and thus with respect to which difference between the aspects disappears. Rather since the continuity of uncovering is grasped in terms of the occurrence of the discontinuities, identity and difference reflects the internal conflict between force and resistance within the entity itself. While the intrinsic force is the basis of the *revelment* of an entity, the intrinsic resistance to this force is the basis of the *limited* revelation. As indicated above, we refer to this conflict when we argue that *revelment* is the revelation of the *irreducible*, unique nature of each aspect of the entity. From this perspective, since there is a counterbalance between intrinsic force and intrinsic resistance within the uncovered entity we perceive a unity (or identity) as the continuity between its distinctive aspects or features.

In other words, identity reveals itself in the opposite but complementary functions of the aspects of the entity. By opposite but complementary functions, we refer to the fact that though every aspect (uncoveredness) has its own distinctive and irreducible nature, it becomes a step upon which further uncoveredness can be based. Heidegger refers to this function by 'fore-conception.' From this perspective, the co-presence of coveredness and uncoveredness does not mean that what is known previously becomes unknown when an entity reveals its new aspect. Rather, it means that since every uncoveredness is original and irreducible to another uncoveredness, it cannot be subsumed under one general concept which reflects the timeless identity of the entity.

From this perspective, coveredness or hiding itself does not

¹⁶ Thus since, in the originality of discoveredness, what "is" comes into the There (Da), Newton's laws, for instance, cannot be reduced to anything else. Here Newton's laws do not stand as secondary representation of what "is," rather through it reality comes to its own truth.

necessarily mean that when one aspect of the entity comes to the fore its other aspect is obscured. But it refers primarily to the fact that the identity of the entity reveals itself always in a finite, limited way. Therefore, just as fore-conception paves the way for further (new) uncoverings, so the new uncovering makes us anticipate future uncoverings. Thus 'hiding' is not a total darkness behind the light (revealedness) but reflects the infinite possibilities or the depth of the future which invites Dasein to itself. For that reason, the temporality (finitude) of truth as uncoveredness refers also to the temporality (historicity) of identity. In this sense, the identity carries with itself the determinacy of the present (the said) and the indeterminacy of the future (the unsaid). In other words, the identity of a text cannot be realized without anticipating the future.

If our analysis of Heidegger's concept of truth and identity is correct, we can also say that the metaphor of sudden lightening which Heidegger employs in order to characterize the unexpected, surprising nature of truth must refer not only to the temporality (the suddenness of the moment) of truth but also to the original and distinctive features of uncoveredness itself. This is so because, if the every occurrence of truth as an interplay of the way in which Being sends itself and its withdrawal were not the occurrence of the new uncoveredness in its originality (irreducibility) and thus in its surprise character, it would be only a mere repetition of what occurred before. In this case, since we would have been already in the same light, i.e., familiar with it, we could not even recognize the *occurrence* of the truth and the argument for sudden lightening would be an empty one.¹⁷

However, how can one solve the puzzle of the relation between fore-conception and the surprise character of truth? Since we have fore-conceptions, we can anticipate or project into the future and thus uncover entities. However, on the other hand, we argue that every truth is distinctive and thus surprises us.¹⁸ In this case, we accept that truth does not occur exactly in the way we anticipated. It is beyond our control and always transcends our expectations. It reveals itself as the negation of our previous conceptions in the sense that it always reflects the narrowness of our fore-conceptions.

¹⁷ Dostal understands by Heidegger's metaphor of sudden lightening only the temporality (the suddenness of the moment) of truth. See, Dostal, "The Experience of Truth," pp. 47-58.

¹⁸ The relation between the fore-conception and the occurrence of the new truth is called 'hermeneutic circle.' When Heidegger talks about the productive nature of the hermeneutic circle he seems to refer to this dialectic between fore-conception and new truth. Hence he convinces us that it is not a vicious circle as noted above.

In conclusion, the temporality of truth is also the recognition of the temporality of our knowledge. Obviously this is to say that a fore-conception cannot mediate the new truth since the new truth negates the mediation of fore-conception by reflecting its limit. Thus finiteness comes not only from the limit of our historical horizon but also out of the originality of the new truth which limits our fore-conception of truth. However paradoxical it may seem, it is precisely because of this fact that truth occurs also as a self-grounding movement. Nevertheless, the problem of the gap (the discontinuity) between the old truth (the fore-conception) and the new truth remains open.

As we noted above that there is an internal tension between the fore-conception and the new truth. What was indicated there is the fact that, to use Hegel's objection to the Kantian distinction between noumenon and phenomenon, to recognize the limit is already to have gone beyond it. This is to say that every new uncoveredness reflects the limit of the old uncoveredness (fore-conception) and thus makes it possible for us to go beyond this limit and to recognize itself. Therefore, Heideggerian truth, to use Gadamer's language, is the self-presentation of the thing itself.

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