



POLITICS
AND TRUTH
Heidegger, Arendt and
the Modern Political Lie

Anna-Karin Selberg

Niklas
Crensen

SÖDERTÖRN PHILOSOPHICAL STUDIES

The series is attached to Philosophy at Södertörn University. Published in the series are essays as well as anthologies, with a particular emphasis on the continental tradition, understood in its broadest sense, from German idealism to phenomenology, hermeneutics, critical theory and contemporary French philosophy. The commission of the series is to provide a platform for the promotion of timely and innovative philosophical research. Contributions to the series are published in English or Swedish.

Cover image: *A Dream Image*, Niklas Nenzén.

POLITICS
AND TRUTH
Heidegger, Arendt and
the Modern Political Lie

Anna-Karin Selberg

Södertörns högskola

Subject: Philosophy
Research Area: Critical and Cultural Theory
School of Culture and Education



Södertörns högskola
(Södertörn University)
The Library
SE-141 89 Huddinge

www.sh.se/publications

© Anna-Karin Selberg

Cover image: Niklas Nenzén, *A Dream Image*
Cover: Jonathan Robson
Graphic Form: Per Lindblom & Jonathan Robson

Printed by Elanders, Stockholm 2021

Södertörn Philosophical Studies 31
ISSN 1651-6834
Södertörn Doctoral Dissertations 190
ISSN 1652-7399
ISBN 978-91-89109-66-7 (print)
ISBN 978-91-89109-67-4 (digital)

For Inez, Bettie and Niklas

Abstract

In 2016, the year of Brexit and the election of Trump as the 45th president of the USA, the Oxford Dictionary named “post-truth” the word of the year. Since then, a flood of books, newspaper articles, academic papers and political speeches have been published on the phenomenon of post-truth, alternative facts and post-fact politics. In the debate about post-truth it is generally assumed that facts, truth and truthfulness have ceased to be relevant to politics. However, questions are seldom raised about: the *role* of truth-claims in politics; why facts at all matter in political contexts; how truth and facts are related to reality or what we even mean with words such as fact, truthfulness and lies in the field of politics, in the first place. A general aim of the present study is to shed light on these questions. Not, however, by engaging directly in the debate about post-truth, but by investigating the relation between politics and truth in the philosophical work of Hannah Arendt and Martin Heidegger.

In 1945 Arendt suggested that fascism had invented a way of “*lying the truth*”. She later came to call this invention the modern political lie, seeing it as one of the key elements that crystallized into the event of totalitarianism. The present study explores the paradoxical relation between politics and truth in totalitarian movements, which, in non-totalitarian forms and contemporary democracies, has reinvented itself. Parts of Arendt’s analysis are implicit but can be made explicit against the background of Heidegger’s political writings from the 1930s. Heidegger is not an advocate of the modern political lie, nonetheless his writings from the 1930s, while a member of the National Socialist party, reflect aspects of the paradoxical relation between politics and truth in totalitarian movements. Studying Heidegger and Arendt together can therefore shed light on the specific problems that Arendt addressed regarding truth and lying in politics.

The present study investigates not only the relation between politics and truth in Heidegger and Arendt respectively, but also the relation between their works. Starting out in Heidegger’s early works from the 1920s, it shows that there is a proto-political aspect in his early articulations of truth as *aletheia*. The study then explores the central role of truth in his political writings from the 1930s. Against the background of Heidegger, Arendt’s works on the modern political lie are analyzed, both with respect to the central place she assigns to the lie in her writings on totalitarianism, as well as to how the lie is invented anew, in non-totalitarian and democratic forms. It also investigates the concept of truth developed by Arendt in works after *The Origins of Totalitarianism* and argues that her later writings

on truth should be seen partly as developing out of her writings on the lie. Ultimately, the concept of truth in Arendt's thinking ends up putting into question the otherwise rigid divisions she deployed in her writings, e.g., the distinctions between the public and the private, the social and the political.

Key Words: Post-truth, alternative facts, modern political lie, totalitarianism, Heidegger, Arendt, truth, politics, image-making, myth, art, facts.

Contents

Acknowledgements.....	11
CHAPTER 1	
Introduction.....	13
I. Aim and Orientation of the Present Study.....	13
II. Disposition.....	22
III. Survey of Research.....	28
CHAPTER 2	
A Community of Breakup: Truth and Politics in Heidegger’s Early Thought..	39
I. The Question of the Present: Rethinking Philosophy in Light of World War I.....	39
II. A Community at the End of Time: Heidegger’s Interpretation of Paul...	45
III. Grounding of Political Dasein in the Truth.....	54
IV. The Situation as the Site of a Historical People in <i>Being and Time</i>	68
Summary.....	78
CHAPTER 3	
The State as a Work of Art.....	81
I. The Politics of Beginnings.....	81
II. Aestheticization of Politics.....	88
III. Truth as Struggle between Concealment and Unconcealment.....	93
IV. The University as “Middle” in the State.....	101
V. The Work of Political Space.....	110
VI. Background and Context to the Parallel Lecture Courses on Hölderlin and Hegel.....	114
VII. The State’s Place in Hegel’s System.....	117
VIII. The “Metaphysical Site” Revealed by Hölderlin.....	122
IX. Heidegger’s Leader vs. Hegel’s Prince.....	126
X. The Myth of a Jewish World-Conspiracy.....	132
Summary.....	138

CHAPTER 4

The Modern Political Lie..... 141

- I. The Problem of Politics and Truth..... 141
- II. The Affinity of Lying and Political Action..... 147
- III. Modern Lying 152
- IV. The Modern Lie as an Action of Replacement..... 161
- V. Truth and the Space of Appearances 169
- VI. Contemporary Lying in Politics..... 175

Summary..... 188

CHAPTER 5

Limit and Resistance: Arendt's Concept of Truth..... 191

- I. The Tension Between Truth and Politics 191
- II. The Politicization of Facts in Modernity..... 195
- III. The Concept of Truth: Heidegger vs. Arendt..... 197
- IV. Factual Truth 203
- V. Factual Truth-Telling in Relation to Modern Lying..... 211
- VI. Philosophical Truth 217
- VII. Philosophical Truth-Telling as Demonstration 228
- VIII. The Test of Philosophy's Reality..... 235
- IX. The Tension Between Thinking and Action 238

Summary..... 243

Concluding Remarks 247

References..... 257

Acknowledgements

My warmest gratitude to Sven-Olov Wallenstein and Cecilia Sjöholm. I enjoyed every minute of supervision with you. Thank you Sven-Olov for your engagement, your comments and for encouraging me to go in unknown directions. Thank you Cecilia for all of your stimulating suggestions and creative perspectives on philosophy in general, and Arendt and Heidegger in particular.

Academic life is sometimes dull, but at times it is put to the test in unexpected ways. My deepest thanks therefore to Fredrika Spindler and Marta Edling. If there are free intellectuals in the world, then you two are. Without your generosity and straight forward attitude there would have been no dissertation.

A special thanks also to Peter Trawny for reading and commenting on an early draft as well as to Marina Vishmidt for insightful comments on one of the chapters.

David Payne, I am so grateful for your readings, creative solutions, suggestions in the margin and last-minute comments. My gratitude also to Per Lindblom and Jonathan Robson for excellent work with the graphic form.

Jonna Bornemark, Jenny Sundén, Maria Lönn, Nicholas Smith and Camilla Larsson: thank you so much for your relentless support and feedback on the thesis. My heartfelt gratitude also to Fredrik Svenaeus for constructive comments and to Anders Bartonek, Ulrika Björk and Anna Victoria Hallberg for your commitment. A warm thanks to Ewa Rogström, whose generosity I will never forget.

The thesis has benefited greatly from discussions with colleagues at the seminar at Södertörn University: Erik Bryngelsson, Johan Sehlberg, Charlotta Weigelt, Gustav Strandberg, Lovisa Andén, Karl Lydén, Krystof Kasprzak, Ramona Rat, Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback, Carl Cederberg and Hans Ruin.

I also want to thank Stiftelsen Helge Ax:son-Johnson for two very welcome grants.

There is a life outside of philosophy too and I am deeply grateful for all of the intellectually stimulating discussions I have had with Per Wadman. Helena Boberg, Vendela Fredricson and Daniel Karlsson: thank you so much for all of our intellectual – and non-intellectual – adventures.

Finally, love supreme to my partner Niklas Nenzén who made the cover image. I dedicate this book to you and to my daughters Inez and Bettie, who have had enormous patience with the philosophy monster.

Anna-Karin Selberg

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

I. Aim and Orientation of the Present Study

When vice president Kamala Harris held her first speech to the nation on the 8th of November 2020, after Joe Biden was projected winner of the 2020 USA presidential election, she declared a victory for truth: “You chose unity and decency, science and yes – truth!” The defeated, sitting President Donald Trump – who built his 2016 election campaign partly around the slogan “The truth can’t be suppressed no more!” – reacted with new accusations of voter fraud, suggesting to his voters that the truth about the election would soon be revealed.

Harris’ and Trump’s rhetoric reflect a situation where questions of truth, lie and the relation between politics and truth have come to occupy a central place in political debate, to the point of sometimes more or less dominating it. In 2016, the year of Brexit and the election of Trump as the 45th president of the USA, the Oxford Dictionary named “post-truth” the word of the year. According to the Oxford Dictionary, post-truth denotes “circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief.” Since then a number of books, newspaper articles and academic articles have been published on the phenomenon of post-truth, alternative facts and post-fact politics. Johan Farkas and Jannick Shou have recently remarked that the scholarly and political literature on post-truth has grown into a veritable industry.¹ In

¹ Johan Farkas and Jannick Shou, *Post-Truth, Fake News and Democracy: Mapping the Politics of Falsehood* (New York and London: Routledge, 2020), p. 3. Just to mention a few publications on post-truth, see H. Sidky, *Science and Anthropology in a Post-Truth World* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2020); Jennifer Baldwin, *How to Navigate Post-Truth and Alternative Facts* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2020); Stuart Sim, *Post-Truth, Skepticism and Power* (London/Berlin/New York: Springer Nature, 2019); Paul Rapa-cioli, *Good Sweden, Bad Sweden: The Use and Abuse of Values in a Post-Truth World*

works on post-truth it is generally assumed that facts, truth and truthfulness have ceased to be of relevance in politics. The alt-right movement in general and Trump in particular, are recurring examples in the literature on post-truth. In his book *Post-Truth*, Lee McIntyre for instance underlines post-truth as a condition in which “truth has been eclipsed” and is considered “irrelevant” in politics.² Bruce McComiskey goes a bit further in *Post-Truth Rhetoric and Composition*, suggesting that in post-truth circumstances there is a “lack of any relationship to facts, realities, and truths among political rhetors and their rhetorical performances.”³ The careless indifference and resilience towards truth, he claims, is characteristic not only for post-truth politicians, such as Trump, but also for their audience: “even the audiences have no concern for facts, realities, or truths”.⁴

Claims like this, however, themselves display a certain remoteness from reality as they do not take the paradoxes and contradictions of what is referred to as post-truth politics into account. What is interesting in the case of Trump is that his 2016 presidential campaign built an image of a candidate with what I have elsewhere discussed as “truth-capital”.⁵ He spoke directly to the people on Twitter, making both explicit and implicit appeals to supposedly suppressed truths, held back by a “crooked” elite. In so far as we listen to his followers, they did not see him as a liar, or as indifferent to reality and truth. Quite the opposite. To them he was a candidate speaking the truth against a “corrupt establishment” and “fake news” – something that didn’t seem to change as journalists fact-checked his statements and exposed his lies.

(Stockholm: Volante, 2018); Michael A. Peters, Sharon Rider, Mats Hyvönen and Tina Besley (ed.), *Post-Truth, Fake News: Viral Modernity and Higher Education* (New York: Springer Publishing, 2018); C. G Prado (ed.), *America’s Post-Truth Phenomenon* (Westport: Praeger Publishers Inc, 2018); Sean Pillot de Cheney, *The Post-Truth Business: How to Rebuild Brand Authenticity in a Distrusting World* (London: Kogan Page Ltd, 2018); Lee McIntyre, *Post-Truth* (Cambridge, Mass. and London: The MIT Press, 2018); Steve Fuller, *Post-Truth: Knowledge as a Power Game* (London: Anthem Press, 2018), Bruce McComiskey, *Post-Truth Rhetoric and Composition* (Logan: Utah State University Press, 2017); Evan Davies, *Post-Truth: Why We Have Reached Peak Bullshit and What We Can Do About It* (New York: Little, Brown and Co, 2017); Åsa Wikforss, *Alternativa fakta: Om kunskapen och dess fiender* (Stockholm: Fri tanke, 2017).

² McIntyre, *Post-Truth*, p. 5.

³ McComiskey, *Post-Truth Rhetoric and Composition*, p. 12.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁵ Anna-Karin Selberg, “The Contemporary Art of Lying” in *Eurozine*, May, 2019. (Available at Eurozine.com and Publicseminar.org. Last checked 2021-03-18).

In the debate about post-truth, questions are seldom raised about the paradoxical *appeal* to truth in post-truth politics. Nor is the question asked whether there are different *kinds* of truth-claims in politics, what *role* truth-claims can play in politics, why facts at all matter in political contexts, how truth and fact are related to reality or what we even mean with words such as fact, truthfulness and lies in the field of politics. A general aim of the present study is to shed light on these questions. Not, however, by engaging directly in the contemporary debate about post-truth, but by investigating the relation between truth and politics in two philosophers: Martin Heidegger and Hannah Arendt. If Heidegger's political writings from the 1930s and Arendt's post-war analysis of totalitarian movements are studied together, a set of paradoxical problems surrounding politics and truth become visible. Significantly, these problems can take non-totalitarian forms within contemporary democracies.

Why, then, should we read Heidegger and Arendt together? Heidegger's concept of truth as disclosure is seen as one of his most important contributions to philosophy. He began developing it in lectures and essays shortly after World War I, in a time of political crisis. This period, referred to in the literature as his early phase, has for the most part been understood as a more or less apolitical period in his thought. Here, however, I will show that his early articulations of the problem of truth – of its historical interpretation, of true discourse and the authentic mode of being – are raised in relation to a post-war generation, as well as in relation to political Dasein and a historical people. This is to say, then, that a proto-political, and sometimes a more explicitly political, theme appears already in his early writings, where truth is given the role of awakening a generation and gathering a people – and true discourse in its “originary” sense grounds a community in the truth. During the 1930s, when Heidegger became a member of the Nazi party and was actively engaged in the political transformation of Germany, truth came to occupy a central place in his political writings. What he sees in the National Socialist movement is not party politics in a traditional sense, but politics engaged by truth and in truth. During this period, he turns to the poetry of Hölderlin and the work of art, and sees the poet as revealing in advance the truth of the German people. True discourse, this study will show by developing Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe's argument in his work on the role of myth in Heidegger,⁶ is now given the mythical role of

⁶ Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, *Heidegger and the Politics of Poetry*, trans. Jeff Fort (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2007), p. 10-11.

revealing the people's origin. It is an origin which is not behind them in a remote past but can be taken up and appropriated in the present as a political task. Even if Lacoue-Labarthe does not comment on Heidegger's notion of truth – instead he investigates the role of art in his political thought – it is nonetheless clear that for Heidegger Hölderlin is the poet who reveals in advance “the truth of a people”.⁷ If the mythical role Heidegger assigns to truth and true discourse in his writings from this period are explored, his works can be used as a lens, revealing paradoxical aspects of the relation between politics and truth in totalitarian movements that can appear again, in different contexts and under other circumstances.

After the second world war Arendt analyzed the event of totalitarianism in *The Origins of Totalitarianism*.⁸ This systematic and groundbreaking analysis was preceded by essays from the 1940s in which she suggested that fascism had invented a new form of political lie.⁹ She later came to call this form of lie the modern political lie – though for the sake of convenience I will use this expression when referring to her early works also. Heidegger cannot be seen as a proponent of the political lie, as identified by Arendt. All the same, if we read Heidegger and Arendt together the phenomenon of modern lying can be understood as expressing a problem surrounding the very relation between politics and truth that manifests also in Heidegger – while aspects of the lie that remained implicit in Arendt's writings can be further developed. A key element in her analysis of modern lying is that the lie cannot be understood on a level of representation, i.e. as deliberate misrepresentations of reality in order to deceive. Commentaries on the lie in Arendt have stressed this: the modern lie is a relation to reality that does not misrepresent but replaces, and even destroys, reality itself.¹⁰ Here I will

⁷ Martin Heidegger, *Hölderlin's Hymns "Germania" and "The Rhine"*, trans. William McNeill and Julia Ireland (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014), p. 126.

⁸ Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York/London: Harvest, 1979).

⁹ Hannah Arendt, “The Seeds of a Fascist International” in *Essays in Understanding*, ed. Jerome Kohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1995), p. 146; Hannah Arendt, “Approaches to the ‘German Problem’” in Hannah Arendt, *Essays in Understanding*, ed. Jerome Kohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1995), p. 111.

¹⁰ See Jacques Derrida, “History of the Lie: Prolegomena” in *Without Alibi*, ed. Kamuf (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002), p. 40-42; Peg Birmingham, “A Lying World Order: Political Deception and the Threat of Totalitarianism” in *Thinking in Dark Times: Hannah Arendt on Ethics and Politics*, eds. Roger Berkowitz, Jeffrey Katz and Thomas Keenan (New York: Fordham University Press, 2010), p. 73-74; Cathy Caruth, “Lying and History” in *Thinking in Dark Times: Hannah Arendt on Ethics and Politics*, eds. Roger Berkowitz, Jeffrey Katz and Thomas Keenan (New York: Fordham University Press, 2010), p. 82.

develop a related, but unexplored aspect of the lie that comes to the fore if it is studied against the background of Heidegger's political writings – namely the lie's relation to truth.

True discourse in Heidegger's writings from the 1930s has a performative dimension. Not only does it reveal but it enacts and accomplishes the destiny of a people in advance. This is the point where the role of truth in his political works can be said to reflect aspects of the relation between politics and truth in totalitarian movements. Arendt addressed this relation in her writings on the lie, but often only implicitly. What can be made explicit and developed in her works on the lie, if they are read against the backdrop of Heidegger, is how the lie is presented in the form of truth-claims that acquire a performative and prophetic dimension, predicting a future to come. This dimension of the lie will be explored in the present study, where I will investigate a paradoxical aspect of truth-claims in totalitarian politics: they short-circuit or even destroy the sense of truth and facts in political contexts.

For Arendt, however, this never meant that we live in a situation where politics has become indifferent to truth and facts. On the contrary, what she called the modern political lie is one that makes use of the truth and politicizes the truth. For this reason, we must ask about how truth and facts are *positioned* in the political realm, and in relation to politics. In the last chapter of this study, I will show that this work was undertaken by Arendt after *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. In the 1954 lecture "Philosophy and Politics",¹¹ the 1967 essay "Truth and Politics"¹² and the section in the *Denktagebuch*¹³ entitled "Wahrheit und Politik", where the relation between truth and politics is discussed at length, she develops her own concept of truth as disclosure quite distinct from Heidegger's. A common claim made is that Arendt was skeptical, or even hostile toward the use of truth-claims in politics.¹⁴ Others, on the other hand, have stressed that she saw factual

¹¹ Hannah Arendt, "Philosophy and Politics" in *Social Research*, vol 57, no 1 (1990).

¹² Hannah Arendt, "Truth and Politics" in Hannah Arendt, *Between Past and Future: Eight Exercises in Political Thought* (New York/London: Penguin Books, 2006).

¹³ Hannah Arendt, *Denktagebuch* Bd I-II (München/Berlin: Piper, 2002).

¹⁴ Jürgen Habermas for instance claims that Arendt's political thought admits of no distinction between true and false opinions. (Jürgen Habermas, "Hannah Arendt's Communications Concept of Power" in *Hannah Arendt: Critical Essays*, eds. Lewis Hinchman and Sandra Hinchman [Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994], p. 225.) According to Chantal Mouffe "Arendt was absolutely right to insist that in the political sphere one finds oneself in the realm of opinion, or '*doxa*', and not in that of truth, and that each sphere has its own validity and legitimacy." (Chantal Mouffe, *The*

truth as vital to politics.¹⁵ This study shows that an interpretation of these seemingly contradictory levels of her thought becomes possible if we consider that her works on truth are developed partly against the background of the lie.

In studying Heidegger and Arendt together, my purpose is therefore not primarily to compare their thought. Arendt has often been compared to Heidegger in ways that sometimes tends to reduce her interaction with other thinkers, thereby obscuring the influence on her thought from parts of the philosophical tradition foreign to Heidegger. However, when it comes to the relation between truth and politics, reading their works together can reveal a problem that sheds light on the present – a problem which is unthought in Heidegger and to some extent implicit in Arendt. The implicit level of her analysis can be made explicit and developed if her works are studied in relation to Heidegger, since aspects of the problem of truth and politics in totalitarian movements that her writings address are themselves present in his political writings.

What is especially distinctive about Heidegger's and Arendt's thought is that both thinkers reveal the *complexity* of truth in relation to politics, and the *ambiguous* position truth has in politics. Not only were Heidegger and Arendt interested in the role of truth in politics, they also sought to think the specificity of politics proper, conceived by both of them as the initiation of a beginning, though their respective understandings of a politics of beginning differ markedly. For Heidegger political beginnings must be rooted in truth. Truth has a grounding function; gathering the masses into a

Return of the Political [London: Verso, 1993], p. 14.) Alain Badiou also reads Arendt along this line, but harshly condemns this standpoint, arguing that politics in Arendt "only concerns public opinion", and therefore "it goes without saying that the theme of truth is excluded from it". (Alain Badiou, *Metapolitics*, trans. Jason Barker, [London: Verso, 2005], p. 13.) A similar view of Arendt's treatment of the relation between truth and politics, although expressed in different ways can be found for instance in Ronald Beiner, "Rereading 'Truth and Politics'" in *Philosophy and Social Criticism*, vol. 3, no 1-2 (2008) and more recently in Frida Buhre, *Speaking Other Times: Hannah Arendt and the Temporality of Politics* (Uppsala: Uppsala University Press, 2019), p. 106-110.

¹⁵ See for instance John S. Nelson, "Politics and Truth: Arendt's Problematic" in *American Journal of Political Science*, vol. 22, no. 2 (1978), p. 278; Maurizio Passerin D'Entrèves, "Arendt's Theory of Judgment" in *The Cambridge Companion to Hannah Arendt*, ed. Dana Villa (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 257; Annabel Herzog, "Reporting and Story-telling: Eichmann in Jerusalem as Political Testimony" in *Thesis Eleven*, no 69 (2002); Linda Zerilli, "Truth and Politics" in *Theory and Event*, vol. 9, no. 4 (2006), § 40-41; James Phillips, "Between the Tyranny of Opinion and the Despotism of Rational Truth: Arendt on Facts and Acting in Concert" in *New German Critique*, no. 119 (2013); Peg Birmingham, "A Lying World Order", p. 74-76.

people, truth is that through which a people can appear and enduringly maintain itself as a people. Truth is thus tied to the specificity of politics proper, seen by Heidegger as the opening up of a historical beginning. In Arendt's works, on the other hand, truth does not play the role of rooting or grounding, but rather circumscribes the *limit* of politics. Both factual and philosophical truth are developed by her as limits to, and of, politics. This is interesting not least since Arendt is often criticized for having imposed sharp distinctions between the private and the public, as well as between the social and the political, in precisely her attempt to think the specificity of politics. However, her own concept of truth seems to undermine the rigidity of these distinctions to be found in her works. In fact, her writings on truth can in a productive way, challenge the rigid distinctions she herself had drawn between the private and the public, the social and the political. The rigidity of her conceptual distinctions left their trace in the concrete political judgments she made, for instance in claiming that desegregation in the U.S. was not to be treated as a political but as a social problem.¹⁶ In this study I will show that her own notion of truth opens up a different way for thinking the limits of the political, one in which the limits are no longer seen as a priori givens, but appear as dynamic limits that are always open to contestation and transformation. Truth in Arendt thus reveals the inherent contestability of the limits of politics, as well the constitutive plurality of political life, though to a degree she was not always capable of acknowledging.

The aim of this study is thus to contribute to the research on Heidegger and Arendt respectively, as well as to research on the relation between their works. The relation between truth and politics in Heidegger's early thought is an unexplored area, principally because his writings from this period are for the most part seen as apolitical, or even anti-political.¹⁷ The general approach in monographs on the concept of truth in early Heidegger has been to situate his early articulations of truth as *aletheia* and his criticism of the correspondence theory of truth primarily within the context of his

¹⁶ Hannah Arendt, "Reflections on Little Rock" in Hannah Arendt, *Responsibility and Judgment*, ed. Jerome Kohn (New York: Schocken Books, 2003). The Little Rock case will be discussed in Chapter 5 of this study.

¹⁷ Arendt herself has contributed to the conception of Heidegger's early period as apolitical, for instance in the 1946 essay "What is Existential Philosophy?" Here she claims that the authentic self in Heidegger's *Being and Time* is radically separated from a community, and thus is not developed by Heidegger in relation to communal existence. (Hannah Arendt, "What is Existential Philosophy?" in Hannah Arendt, *Essays in Understanding 1930–1954: Formation, Exile and Totalitarianism* [New York, Schocken Books, 1994], p. 181.)

critique of the theoretical attitude and its unquestioned claim to objectivity and universality, which does not necessarily apply to the object of philosophical research.¹⁸ The aim of the present study, however, is to show that the question of truth and true discourse is raised in his early works also in relation to a generation, to political Dasein and a historical people. Here a proto-political, and sometimes also a more explicitly political, theme becomes manifest. This will be investigated in relation to truth as *aletheia* and his early outlines to true discourse.

When it comes to his writings from the 1930s, the question of the political in Heidegger has received extensive attention. Since he understands truth during this period as disclosure of a beginning in the history of being, the notion of truth often operates in the background in monographs on the political in Heidegger, such as Miguel de Beistegui's *Heidegger and the Political Dystopias*¹⁹ and Florian Grossner's *Revolution denken: Heidegger und das Politische 1919 bis 1969*.²⁰ However, there is scope for a more thorough investigation of the *role* of truth and true discourse (seldom addressed in the secondary literature) in his political writings, and also the relation between politics and truth in his works. With the relatively recent publications within the *Gesamtausgabe* of such textual material as the 1934–1935 seminar “Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*”²¹ and *Black Notebooks*²² new sources have become available that shed light on these questions, and these will be explored in the present study. Developing Lacoue-Labarthe's argument on myth in Heidegger's political writings, I will investigate the mythical role of truth and true discourse in his writings from this period.

In the reception of Arendt, the relation between truth and politics has received considerable comment, though I would argue the complexity of

¹⁸ Daniel O. Dahlstrom, *Heidegger's Concept of Truth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 1-47; Denis McManus *Heidegger and the Measure of Truth: Themes from his Early Philosophy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 17-20.

¹⁹ Miguel de Beistegui, *Heidegger and the Political Dystopias* (London/New York: Routledge, 2005).

²⁰ Florian Grossner, *Revolution denken: Heidegger und das Politische 1919 bis 1969* (C.H. Beck: München, 2011).

²¹ Martin Heidegger, “Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*”, trans. Andrew Mitchell, in *On Hegel's Philosophy of Right. The 1934–1935 Seminar and Interpretive Essays*, eds. Peter Trawny, Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback and Michael Marder (New York: Bloomsbury, 2014).

²² Martin Heidegger, *Ponderings II–VI: Black Notebooks 1931–1938*, trans. Richard Rojcewicz (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2016); Martin Heidegger, *Ponderings VII–XI: Black Notebooks 1938–1939*, trans. Rickard Rojcewicz (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017); Martin Heidegger, *Ponderings XII–XV: Black Notebooks 1939–1941*, trans. Rickard Rojcewicz (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017).

this topic has not attained the attention it deserves. On the one hand, there is a pervasive and previously unexplored theme in her works on the modern political lie that reveals how truth-claims function in totalitarianism. While in part this argument is implicit, it can be made more explicit if her works are read together with Heidegger. On the other hand, there is a different level in her thought where, in works after *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, she developed her own concept of truth as disclosure, one quite distinct from Heidegger's.

While articles on the modern political lie have stressed the lie as a relation to reality, this study investigates it also as a relation to truth. Through close readings of her works on the lie, I will examine the lie as a paradoxical relation to truth that short-circuits and destroys the sense of both truth and fact in political contexts. Here, my aim is also to situate the lie within the wider context of Arendt's thought, in particular in relation to plurality, the space of appearances and her notion of politics as beginning. Since she saw the lie as a phenomenon that can evolve and renew itself, its mutation in non-totalitarian contexts will be investigated primarily by interpretations of her reports from the trial of Eichmann²³ and the essays "Truth and Politics" and "Lying in Politics".²⁴ Here a version of modern lying appears which is highly relevant today, such as, for example, when public relations methods and communication techniques are utilized on a political scene that is dominated by mass media.

When it comes to Arendt's writings on truth after *The Origins of Totalitarianism* – such as in "Philosophy and Politics", "Truth and Politics" and the *Denktagebuch* – some have stressed her skepticism about truth-claims in politics, while others have acknowledged the weight she placed on factual truth. My purpose here is to show that an interpretation of these seemingly contradictory levels of her thought can be made if the modern political lie is seen as the background against which her thoughts on truth play out. What often seems to escape the attention of Arendtian scholars is that she saw the relation between politics and truth as one of both tension and conflict. The modern political lie is one way in which this tension comes to express itself, and it is partly in relation to the lie that she develops her own notion of truth. Thus, one central purpose of the present study is to

²³ Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* (New York: Penguin Books, 1994).

²⁴ Hannah Arendt, "Lying in Politics" in Hannah Arendt, *Crises of the Republic* (New York: Harcourt Brace and Company, 1972).

investigate previously unexplored aspects of her writings on truth, aspects that become manifest once it is recognized that for Arendt, a field of tensions opens up as soon as factual and philosophical truths are introduced into the political realm. This is the point where her notion of truth differs markedly from Heidegger's – differences that will be explored in this work. Interestingly it is also where her own concept of truth reveals the limits of politics as more dynamic and contestable than she would otherwise have been happy to admit.

II. Disposition

Chapter 2 addresses the relation between politics and truth in Heidegger's early writings through close readings of central works from this period. Chapter 3 investigates the role of truth in his political writings from the 1930s, primarily the phase between 1930 and 1938. Chapter 4 treats Arendt's analysis of the modern political lie and chapter 5 develops the concept of truth emerging in her writings after *The Origins of Totalitarianism*.

Chapter 2

The chapter explores the extent to which Heidegger's first formulations of the problem of truth – the problem of its historical interpretation, of true discourse and the authentic mode of life – are developed in relation to a “generation”²⁵, to Dasein as a “*Being-in-the-polis* [*Seins-in-der-polis*]”²⁶ and in relation to the historical people discussed in § 74 in *Being and Time*.

In order to investigate this link the chapter takes what Heidegger calls the question of the present as a clue. His lecture courses on ancient and Christian thinkers were written shortly after the end of World War I, in a time of political and economic instability. Returning to the past, he also turns to his generation, stressing that historical research is always also a question of the living present: “The situation of expository interpretation, of the understanding appropriation of the past, is always the situation of the

²⁵ Martin Heidegger, “Phenomenological Interpretations with Respect to Aristotle: Indication of the Hermeneutical Situation”, trans. Michael Baur (trans. modified by Theodore Kisiel and Thomas Sheehan) in *Becoming Heidegger: On the Trail of His Early Occasional Writings, 1910–1927*, eds. Theodore Kisiel and Thomas Sheehan (Seattle: Noesis Press, 2010), p 167; Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (Albany: State University Press, 1996), p. 385.

²⁶ Martin Heidegger, *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, trans. Robert D. Metcalf and Mark B. Tanzer (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009. E-book.), p. 91, 117, 122. (Trans. modified.)

living present.”²⁷ The past is the object of philosophical destruction of layers of sedimented meaning, determining the present. As such historical research should not be seen as the return to a lost origin: “The destruction [of philosophy’s history] is rather the authentic path upon which the present must encounter itself”.²⁸ The “continual question”²⁹ that must be asked, he emphasizes, is the question of the present.

If this question is taken to be a clue in how to understand his early works, then we can interpret Heidegger as trying to articulate the *ethos* of a post-war generation. One example here is his 1920–1921 interpretation of Saint Paul in the lecture course *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*.³⁰ His reading of the figure of Paul is oriented around the problem of his authentic mode of life – a mode of life where Paul stands at “the end of time”, enacting an “end-of-time-facticity” in relation to the congregation.³¹ Here themes and concepts, such as “the situation” and the authentic “givenness” of self and world, which will soon become key concepts in his articulation of truth as *aletheia*, are developed in relation to the constitution of a community at the “end of time”, united in hope and waiting for an uncertain future.

The chapter investigates how the link between questions of givenness and community in the lecture course on Paul are preserved when he turns to Aristotle in order to articulate truth as *aletheia*. Here proto-political and political themes become visible already from the beginning of his writings on truth. In the 1924 speech “Being-There and Being-True According to Aristotle”,³² which focuses on political rhetoric and truth in Aristotle, the problem of truth is situated in the Greek *polis* and is addressed by way of a discussion about the various modes of political speech. In *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, also from 1924, the human being’s authentic *ethos* is seen as carried out in the *polis*, in the being-with-one-another of a community, *koinonia*. This is why ethics and political science are not the study of two isolated phenomena for Aristotle, as Heidegger interprets him: ethics, the study of the human being’s *ethos*, belongs to political science, as

²⁷ Heidegger, “Phenomenological Interpretations with Respect to Aristotle”, p. 155.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 169.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 169.

³⁰ Martin Heidegger, *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, trans. Matthias Fritsch and Jennifer Anna Gosetti-Ferencei (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010).

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 98.

³² Martin Heidegger, “Being-There and Being-True According to Aristotle (Interpretations of *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book VI)”, trans. Brian Hansford Bowles in *Becoming Heidegger: On the Trail of his Early Occasional Writings, 1910–1927*, eds. Theodore Kiesel and Thomas Sheehan (Seattle: Noesis Press, 2010).

does rhetoric, since rhetoric is the bringing-to-language of *ethos*, of the authentic course of life in the *polis* as a being-with-one-another which constitutes a communal world, *koinonia*.³³

The chapter explores how Heidegger's early outlines of true discourse and the concept of truth as *aletheia* are developed in relation to a community and generation, and to what extent the question of truth is inscribed in the attempt to formulate what he in *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy* calls a "fundamental possibility [*Grundmöglichkeit*] for Being-in-the-*polis* [*Seins-in-der-polis*]"³⁴ I argue that political and alethic themes in his early essays and lecture courses are taken up in *Being and Time* and on this basis I investigate the role of truth for § 74-75 where the authentic mode of being is described as coming to endurance in the constitution of a historical generation and people.

Chapter 3

During the 1930s, Heidegger rethinks his concept of truth as *aletheia* and writes his most explicit political works; for instance "On the Essence and Concept of Nature, History and State"³⁵, "Hegel's Philosophy of Right", *Hölderlin's Hymns "Germania" and "The Rhein"* and *Black Notebooks*, where themes such as the political, the state and the National Socialist state are developed. Chapter 3 investigates the central place he assigns to truth in his political writings from this period, when he sees a radical "disclosive questioning"³⁶ in the National Socialist uprising. "*The essence of truth*", he states in *Black Notebooks*, "must [...] be transformed".³⁷ For him the National Socialist movement is politics struggling for a historical beginning. To "win back the beginning"³⁸ is a question of truth, and the accomplishment of an urgent transformation in the essence of truth. "The essence of being is truth (*aletheia*); therefore truth is to be questioned disclosively in its ground and origin."³⁹

³³ Heidegger, *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, p. 91, 125, 209, 219.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 91. (Trans. modified.)

³⁵ Martin Heidegger, "On the Essence and Concept of Nature, History and State" in *Nature, History, State 1933-1934*, trans. Gregory Fried and Richard Polt, eds. Gregory Fried and Richard Polt (New York: Bloomsbury, 2015)

³⁶ Heidegger, *Ponderings II-VI*, p. 47.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

The chapter takes its starting point in the 1930 essay “On the Essence of Truth”,⁴⁰ the 1931–1932 lecture course *The Essence of Truth*⁴¹ and the 1933 lecture course *Being and Truth*.⁴² Here truth is reformulated with respect to his early works and understood from out of a history of being. It is thought in relation to Heraclitus in *Being and Truth* as a poetic struggle, *Kampf*, between concealment and unconcealment.⁴³ Developing Lacoue-Labarthe’s writings on myth in Heidegger, I will investigate the transformation of truth Heidegger sees as urgent, as well as the role of truth and true discourse in revealing and accomplishing a world-historical struggle between beginning and end. It is a struggle which is the people’s origin – an origin that is not behind them in a remote past but can be assumed in the present as a mission and task. The chapter explores how myth becomes effective in awakening and summoning a people and the role of the university, during Heidegger’s period as head of the University of Freiburg, in this process.

Special attention is paid to Heidegger’s turn to the work of art after resigning as head of the University of Freiburg. In 1934–1935 Heidegger held the lecture course on *Hölderlin’s Hymns “Germania” and “The Rhein”* in parallel with “Hegel’s Philosophy of Right”, which was a seminar on Hegel’s political thought. By following the movement enacted in these lecture courses, the chapter investigates Heidegger’s understanding of what could be called a “space-work”, and how this idea is performed by Heidegger himself. A political space is thus revealed in his courses, whereupon the state itself emerges a work of art and the leaders as seers in the state, projecting the “truth of a people” in advance. Here the problem of politics and truth appears in Heidegger’s writings, reflecting aspects of the relation between politics and truth in the National Socialist movement.

Chapter 4

If we read Arendt’s writings on the modern political lie against the background of Heidegger’s political works from the 1930s then an implicit layer of her analysis (not properly acknowledged in the literature) becomes manifest and can be further developed. The chapter interprets essays

⁴⁰ Martin Heidegger, “On the Essence of Truth”, trans. John Sallis, in *Pathmarks*, ed. William McNeill (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

⁴¹ Heidegger, *The Essence of Truth*, trans. Ted Sadler (London/New York: Continuum, 2002).

⁴² Martin Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, trans. Georg Fried and Richard Polt (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2010).

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 72–79.

written by Arendt before the publication of *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, such as “Approaches to the German Problem” and “The Seeds of a Fascist International”, where the lie is a central theme. It shows how the lie is taken up in *The Origins of Totalitarianism* and developed as one of the key elements that according to Arendt crystallized into the event of totalitarianism. Following Jacques Derrida, Peg Birmingham and Cathy Caruth, I address the modern political lie as a phenomenon that cannot be understood as a form of deception deliberately misrepresenting state of affairs by covering over or distorting reality.⁴⁴ While Derrida, Birmingham and Caruth develop the lie in relation to reality, I investigate it also as a relation to truth.

This level of Arendt’s analysis is often implicit but can be made explicit. It shows the paradoxical way in which truth-claims can function in totalitarian regimes, where they acquire a performative and prophetic dimension predicting the future. The chapter investigates this aspect of the lie in relation to reality and facts. It situates the modern lie in the wider context of Arendt’s political thought and develops its meaning in relation to her definition of realness, as well as in relation to her understanding of politics as beginning. This is important in order to be able to discuss the problematic of politics and truth as expressed in the lie, as well as how the lie can appear also in non-totalitarian forms, and under non-totalitarian conditions. Its re-appearance in contemporary democracies is explored in the last sections of the chapter, where I interpret Arendt’s reports from the trial of Eichmann and her analysis of the “Pentagon Papers” in the essay “Lying and Politics”.

Chapter 5

The last chapter argues that Arendt developed her own notion of truth in works after *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. One of the reasons for why relatively little has been written about her concept of truth, although the weight she placed on factual truth has received much attention in commentaries, is probably that her comments on truth are scattered among her works; which is to say, truth is discussed in a casual rather than systematical manner and, indeed, her comments on the relation between truth and politics sometimes seem contradictory. However, if her writings on truth

⁴⁴ Derrida, “History of the Lie”, p. 40-42; Birmingham, “A Lying World Order”, p. 73-74; Caruth, “Lying and History”, p. 82.

are seen against the background of the lie, a systematicity becomes visible. In commentaries on truth in Arendt it is seldom noted that she saw the relation between politics and truth as one of tension and conflict. The lie is a marginal but extreme way in which this tension comes to express itself. By exploring the tension between truth and politics as an inherent aspect of her concept of truth, I follow James Phillips and Peg Birmingham in arguing that Arendt developed factual truth as constituting a *limit vis-à-vis* politics. By extension, through close readings of the 1954 lecture “Philosophy and Politics”, the section in the *Denktagebuch* entitled “Wahrheit und Politik” and the 1967 essay “Truth and Politics”, I also investigate philosophical truth as constituting a limit phenomenon in relation to politics.

In general, I will develop Arendt’s concept of truth as a response to the problem of politics and truth, which becomes manifest in Heidegger’s writings and in the phenomenon of modern lying. If truth in Heidegger’s work during the 1930s cannot be distinguished from a political beginning and is rather seen as a political mission, then Arendt sees truth as introducing a tension and limit in the political sphere, as well as with respect to concrete political events. The chapter explores her concept of factual truth and philosophical truth as well as factual and philosophical truth-telling. These topics are investigated in relation to Heidegger’s notion of truth, as well as in relation to Derrida’s comments on truth in his essay on the lie. Philosophical truth and philosophical truth-telling in Arendt is also explored in relation to Michel Foucault’s late works on truth and truth-telling in antiquity. Foucault’s interpretation of philosophical truth-telling in antiquity, as presented in *The Government of Self and Others*⁴⁵ and *The Courage of the Truth*,⁴⁶ has certain affinities with Arendt’s discussion of truth in Socrates, and can therefore serve to further illuminate her understanding of philosophical truth. For instance, Foucault sees Socratic truth-telling as taking place in relation to politics, yet in so doing it introduces an indispensable tension within political life. Just as with Arendt, Foucault sees this tension as confronting Socrates with a conflict regarding how truth can be communicated in the political sphere, a conflict that admits no solution.

The chapter also discusses how truth in Arendt constitutes a point in her own writings where the sharp and rigid distinctions she imposed between

⁴⁵ Michel Foucault, *The Government of Self and Others: Lectures at the Collège de France 1982–1983*, trans. Graham Burchell (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011. E-book.)

⁴⁶ Michel Foucault, *The Courage of the Truth: Government of Self and Others II*, trans. Graham Burchell (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011. E-book.)

the private and the public, the social and the political cannot be maintained. Both factual and philosophical modes of truth open up a play of possibilities by revealing the inherent contestability of the borders of the political realm – in so far as the reality of these borders are recognized and acknowledged.

III. Survey of Research

Heidegger

Besides the two classical studies on Heidegger's concept of truth, *Der Wahrheitsbegriff bei Husserl und Heidegger*⁴⁷ by Ernst Tugendhat and *Heidegger's Concept of Truth* by Daniel O. Dahlstrom, there are several monographs on the notion of truth in Heidegger,⁴⁸ as well as innumerable shorter commentaries beyond the scope of an overview. When it comes to the political dimension of his thinking the research has expanded to a point where it can hardly be surveyed and is no longer possible to fully account for.⁴⁹ However,

⁴⁷ Ernst Tugendhat, *Der Wahrheitsbegriff bei Husserl und Heidegger* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1970).

⁴⁸ See for instance McManus *Heidegger and the Measure of Truth*; Mark A. Wrathall, *Heidegger and Unconcealment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011) and Haim Gordon and Rivca Gordon, *Heidegger on Truth and Myth: A Rejection of Post-modernism* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2006).

⁴⁹ See for instance Donatella di Cesare, *Heidegger and the Jews: The Black Notebooks* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2018); Peter Trawny, *Heidegger and the Myth of a Jewish World Conspiracy*, trans. Andrew J. Mitchell (Chicago/London: The University of Chicago Press, 2015); Peter Trawny, *Freedom to Fail: Heidegger's Anarchy*, trans. Ian Alexander Moore and Christopher Turner (Cambridge/Malden: Polity, 2015); Alexander S. Duff, *Heidegger and Politics: The Ontology of Radical Discontent* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015); David J. Gauthier, *Martin Heidegger, Emmanuel Levinas, and the Politics of Dwelling* (Lanham/New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2011); Florian Grossner, *Revolution denken*; Emmanuel Faye, *The Introduction of Nazism into Philosophy in the Light of the Unpublished Seminars of 1933–1935* (New Haven: Yale University, 2009); Miguel de Beistegui, *Heidegger and the Political Dystopias*; Charles Bambach, *Heidegger's Roots: Nietzsche, National Socialism and the Greeks* (Ithaca/London: Cornell University Press, 2003); Julian Yong, *Heidegger, Philosophy, Nazism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Viktor Fariás, *Heidegger and Nazism* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989); Pierre Bourdieu, *The Political Ontology of Martin Heidegger* (Cambridge: Polity, 2005); Rüdiger Safranski, *Martin Heidegger: Between Good and Evil*, trans. Ewald Osers (Cambridge Mass./London: Harvard University Press, 1998); Jacques Derrida, *Of Spirit. Heidegger and the question*, trans. Geoffrey Bennington and Rachel Bowlby (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991); Richard Wolin, *The Politics of Being: The Political Thought of Martin Heidegger* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990); Theodor W. Adorno, *The Jargon of Authenticity*, trans. Kurt Tarnowski and Frederic Will (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973); Richard Wolin (ed.), *The Heidegger Controversy: A Critical Reader* (Cambridge Mass./London: MIT Press, 1993); Tom Rockmore (ed.), *The Heidegger Case:*

the particular research relevant for this study focuses on the *role* of truth in his political writings and the *relation* between truth and politics in his thought. This is a dimension of his thought that has not been thoroughly investigated. Monographs dedicated to a study of Heidegger's notion of truth tend to leave aside political themes, and although the question of truth often remains in the background of studies that focus on the political dimensions of his works, much is still left to develop surrounding the role of truth and true discourse in his political writings.

This is especially the case in so far as Heidegger's early works are concerned, given that this period is for the most part seen as his apolitical phase. In his study, *Revolution denken: Heidegger und das Politische 1919 bis 1969*, on Heidegger's concept of the political, Florian Grossner for instance leaves out Heidegger's early lecture courses on Paul and Aristotle in his chapter on the political in the early Heidegger, concentrating his discussions instead on *Being and Time*.⁵⁰ In the present work, however, I argue that Heidegger's first articulations of the problem of truth in lecture courses and essays on Paul and Aristotle are related to the questions of: (i) the generation arising out of the first world war; (ii) Dasein as a "being-in-the-polis": (iii) the idea of a historical community of a people. In order to investigate this topic, extant studies on the idea of *ethos* in his early works have been helpful, since they often explore the relation between truth and the authentic mode of being of Dasein. Here William McNeill's *The Glance of the Eye*⁵¹ and *The Time of Life*,⁵² Angus Brook's *The Early Heidegger and*

On Philosophy and Politics, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992); Arleen B. Dallery, Charles E. Scott, and Holley P. Roberts, (eds.), *Ethics and Danger: Essays on Heidegger and Continental Thought* (Albany: State University Press, 1992); Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, *Heidegger and the Politics of Poetry*; Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, *Heidegger, Art and Politics*, trans. Chris Turner (Cambridge, Mass: Basil Blackwell, 1990); Mireille Calle-Gruber (ed.), *Heidegger, Philosophy, and Politics: The Heidelberg Conference. Jacques Derrida, Hans-Georg Gadamer and Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe*, trans. Jeff Fort (New York: Fordham University Press, 2016); Jürgen Habermas, "Work and Weltanschauung: The Heidegger Controversy from a German Perspective" in *Critical Inquiry* 15/2 (1998); Herbert Marcuse, "Heidegger's Politics: An Interview", in *Marcuse: Critical Theory and the Promise of Utopia*, eds. Robert Pippen et al. (South Hadley, Mass.: Bergin and Garvey, 1987).

⁵⁰ Florian Grossner, *Revolution denken*, p. 222.

⁵¹ William McNeill, *The Glance of the Eye: Heidegger, Aristotle and the Ends of Theory* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999).

⁵² William McNeill, *The Time of Life. Heidegger and Ethos* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006).

Ethics,⁵³ Diana Aurenque's *Ethosdenken. Auf der Spur einer ethischer Fragestellung in der Philosophie Martin Heideggers*⁵⁴ deserve to be mentioned, as well as more recently Antonio Cimino's *Enactment, Politics and Truth: Pauline Themes in Agamben, Badiou, and Heidegger*.⁵⁵

However, since research on the authentic mode of life and *ethos* in early Heidegger often downplays political themes in his thought,⁵⁶ what I found instead was that the topic was addressed in research dedicated to Heidegger's understanding of rhetoric. In the anthology *Heidegger and Rhetoric*,⁵⁷ Theodore Kisiel's contribution "Rhetorical Protopolitics in Heidegger and Arendt",⁵⁸ along with Nancy S. Struever's essay "Alltäglichkeit, Timefulness, in the Heideggerian Program",⁵⁹ comment on the role of political rhetoric in relation to the disclosure of a community in Heidegger's 1924 lecture course *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*. Michael Ehrmantraut's study, *Heidegger's Philosophic Pedagogy*⁶⁰ is also interesting regarding the question of the political in early Heidegger. Ehrmantraut addresses both the disclosive and performative elements in Heidegger's method, demonstrating the extent to which the philosophical method indicates a concrete historico-political situation, from which possibilities for existence are to be retrieved.⁶¹

⁵³ Angus Brook, *The Early Heidegger and Ethics: The Notion of Ethos in Martin Heidegger's Early Career* (Saarbrücken: Dr. Müller, 2009).

⁵⁴ Diana Aurenque, *Ethosdenken. Auf der Spur einer ethischer Fragestellung in der Philosophie Martin Heideggers* (Freiburg/München: Verlag Karl Alber, 2011).

⁵⁵ Antonio Cimino, *Enactment, Politics and Truth: Pauline Themes in Agamben, Badiou, and Heidegger* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2018).

⁵⁶ The essay "Apportioning the Moment: Time and *Ethos* in Heidegger's Reading of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* and *Rhetoric*" by William McNeill is an exception. Here McNeill comments on Heidegger's 1924 lecture course *Basic Concepts in Aristotelian Philosophy*, suggesting that *ethos* in Heidegger is a "being-in-the-polis", understood as *koinonia* or community. (McNeill, "Apportioning the Moment: Time and *Ethos* in Heidegger's Reading of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* and *Rhetoric*" in McNeill, *The Time of Life*, p. 80.)

⁵⁷ Daniel M. Gross and Ansgar Kemmann (eds.), *Heidegger and Rhetoric* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005).

⁵⁸ Theodore Kisiel, "Rhetorical Protopolitics in Heidegger and Arendt" in *Heidegger and Rhetoric*, ed. Daniel M. Gross and Ansgar Kemmann (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005).

⁵⁹ Nancy S. Struever, "Alltäglichkeit, Timefulness, in the Heideggerian Program" in *Heidegger and Rhetoric*, ed. Daniel M. Gross and Ansgar Kemmann (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005).

⁶⁰ Michael Ehrmantraut, *Heidegger's Philosophic Pedagogy* (London/New York: Continuum, 2010).

⁶¹ *Ibid*, p. 14.

When it comes to Heidegger's writings during his period as a member of the National Socialist party, the discussion about his political engagements and the extent to which it is reflected in his philosophy began already in the 1930s.⁶² As I mentioned previously, truth as disclosure often constitutes the background against which Heidegger's understanding of the political is discussed; this is the case, for example, in works such as Miguel de Beistegui's *Heidegger and the Political Dystopias* and Florian Grossner's *Revolution denken*. However, the role of truth in his political writings is

⁶² A debate for instance issued in the Swiss press, following a lecture on art Heidegger held in 1936 in Zurich. By this time he was somewhat of an international celebrity, and the lecture in Zurich was reviewed by Heinrich Barth in *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*. Barth introduced his report with the following words, referring to Heidegger's period as rector at the University of Freiburg: "Obviously we should regard it as an honor that Heidegger delivers a lecture in a democratic state, seeing that – at least for a time – he was regarded as the philosophical spokesman of the new Germany." (Heinrich Barth, "Vom Ursprung des Kunstwerkes. Vortrag von Martin Heidegger", p. 197 in *Heidegger und der Nationalsozialismus, vol 1, Dokumente*, eds. Alfred Denker and Holger Zaborowski [Freiburg/München: Karl Aber, 2009]). Emil Staiger replied to his report, arguing that Barth had issued a "political warrant" on Heidegger, in order to renounce his philosophy, not on philosophical but political and personal grounds. According to Staiger, one should not confuse spheres: Heidegger could still be a great and important thinker, despite his possible political and personal failures. (Emil Staiger, "Noch einmal Heidegger" in *Heidegger und der Nationalsozialismus, vol 1, Dokumente*, eds. Alfred Denker and Holger Zaborowski [Freiburg/München: Karl Aber, 2009]). Later the same year Heidegger travelled to Rome and gave a lecture on Hölderlin. Karl Löwith, who had emigrated from Germany, was also invited to speak. In his memoirs Löwith later described the encounter with Heidegger, who was his former teacher. Commenting on the controversy in the Swiss press, Löwith suggested that he could not agree with either Barth or with Staiger: his opinion was that Heidegger's "partisanship in favor of National-Socialism agreed in essence with his philosophy." (Karl Löwith, *My Life in Germany before and after 1933: A Report*, trans. Elizabeth King [Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994], p. 60.) According to Löwith, Heidegger confirmed this in their conversation – the reason for his political engagement was not to be sought in his person, but in his philosophy. The positions Barth, Staiger and Löwith/Heidegger represent have been repeated in the various debates that have followed since then, when documents, new volumes in the *Gesamtausgabe*, as well as new biographical material have been published, such as Hugo Ott's biography on Heidegger, which was published in German in 1988. (Hugo Ott, *Martin Heidegger: A Political Life*, trans. Allan Blunden [London: Fontana, 1994]). The publication of the *Black Notebooks*, however, leaves little doubt regarding Heidegger's own understanding of the relation between his thinking and his political engagements during the 1930s. To him National Socialism represents the possibility of a radical historical, philosophical and political beginning – for him it was a break not only with liberalism, but also with what he saw as the metaphysical history of being. For several years after his abdication as head of the University of Freiburg he saw National Socialism as a possibility to realize a turn in the history of being, though he always remained critical of parts of its ideology and the way the regime developed.

seldom addressed as a theme in its own right, and thus there is scope for a more thorough investigation.

In *Heidegger on Truth and Myth*, Haim Gordon and Rivca Gordon argue that Heidegger approached myth as revealing ethical truths about human existence, but leave the question of the possible political implications of both truth and myth in Heidegger unexplored. For this issue, Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe's works on myth in Heidegger are important, though he does not discuss truth in anything more than short comments and passing remarks. In *Heidegger, Art and Politics* and *Heidegger and the Politics of Poetry* he argues that the role Heidegger assigns to the work of art in the 1930s is the mythical role of inscribing an origin in the people. In this study, I shall further develop Lacoue-Labarthe's argument, suggesting that the role of truth and true discourse in Heidegger's political thought is key for understanding how myth can become effective in awakening and gathering a people to assume their origin as a political task. Peter Trawny's *Heidegger and the Myth of a Jewish World Conspiracy* and Donatella di Cesare's *Heidegger and the Jews: The Black Notebooks* are also important in this context given that both address myth and conspiracy theories in *Black Notebooks*.

Among recently published works on the notion of the political in Heidegger are several anthologies including commentaries on *Black Notebooks*, a central work for the question of truth in Heidegger's political writings. These commentaries have provided valuable background and context to *Black Notebooks*.⁶³

Arendt

Arendt is widely recognized as one of the most important political thinkers to emerge within the twentieth century, with now commentaries reaching a number well beyond the scope of this present overview of relevant literature. While her theories of action and judgment are often acknowledged as original, they have nonetheless yielded quite divergent and conflicting interpretations. Some have adjudged Arendt's work harshly, claiming that it partakes in a reactionary and elitist phantasy about the splendor of the

⁶³ Hein Berdinesen and Lars Petter Storm Torjussen (eds.), *Heideggers testamente: Filosofien, nazismen og de svarte heftene* (Oslo: Dreylers forlag, 2019); Andrew J. Mitchell and Peter Trawny (eds.), *Heidegger's Black Notebooks: Responses to Anti-Semitism* (Columbia: Columbia University Press, 2017); Ingo Farin and Jeff Malpas (eds.), *Reading Heidegger's Black Notebooks 1931–1941* (Cambridge Mass.: MIT Press, 2016.)

Greek *polis*, with little relevance to contemporary political thought. Others have seen her as an important source in the recovery of traditional concepts, such as Jürgen Habermas who saw Arendt as renewing the Aristotelian concept of *praxis*.⁶⁴ However, there has also been an interesting and important reframing of Arendt's political thought. Rather than stressing the relevance of her thought in recovering and renewing categories in Western, political thinking, her thought has been brought into dialogue with thinkers such as Nietzsche, Benjamin, Marx, Heidegger and Derrida, all of whom tried in different ways to critically overcome the problematical categories that had organized the western tradition.

In *Hannah Arendt – Life is a narrative*, Julia Kristeva for instance reads Arendt as a political commentator devoted to the “dismantling of metaphysics”.⁶⁵ Although critical of Arendt's conception of politics for being predicated on a certain rigidity of a priori givens – such as the distinction between the social realm and the political realm – Seyla Benhabib's *The Reluctant Modernism of Hannah Arendt*,⁶⁶ Bonnie Honig's *Political Theory and the Displacement of Politics*⁶⁷ and Hanna Fenichel Pitkin's *The Attack of the Blob: Hannah Arendt's Concept of the Social*⁶⁸ are in general sympathetic to Arendt as a theorist that opens up new possibilities for political thought. Meanwhile Linda Zerilli has stressed the importance of Arendt's theory of judgment for democratic and feminist theorizing in *Feminism and the Abyss of Freedom*⁶⁹ and *A Democratic Theory of Judgment*.⁷⁰ In *Arendt and Heidegger: The Fate of the Political*⁷¹ and *Politics, Philosophy, Terror: Essays*

⁶⁴ Jürgen Habermas, “Hannah Arendt: On the Concept of Power” in Jürgen Habermas, *Philosophical-Political Profiles*, trans. Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1985), p. 174.

⁶⁵ Julia Kristeva, *Hannah Arendt – Life is a Narrative* (Toronto/Buffalo/London: University of Toronto Press, 2001.)

⁶⁶ Seyla Benhabib, *The Reluctant Modernism of Hannah Arendt* (Lanham/Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield, 2003.)

⁶⁷ Bonnie Honig, *Political Theory and the Displacement of Politics* (Ithaca/London: Cornell University Press, 1993).

⁶⁸ Hanna Fenichel Pitkin, *The Attack of the Blob: Hannah Arendt's Concept of the Social* (Chicago/London: The University of Chicago Press, 1998.)

⁶⁹ Linda Zerilli, *Feminism and the Abyss of Freedom* (Chicago/London: The University of Chicago Press, 2005.)

⁷⁰ Linda Zerilli, *A Democratic Theory of Judgment* (Chicago/London: The University of Chicago Press, 2016.)

⁷¹ Dana Villa, *Arendt and Heidegger: The Fate of the Political* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996.)

on the *Thought of Hannah Arendt*,⁷² Dana Villa reads Arendt as an agonistic and post-metaphysical thinker. Steve Buckler's *Hannah Arendt and Political Theory: Challenging the Tradition*,⁷³ develops the methodological implications of Arendt's work, by exploring the constitutive tension inherent in the relation between thinking and acting, something that separates her work from classical political philosophy which sought to lay out the transcendental ground of politics. Kathryn T. Gines provides a systematic account of Arendt's anti-black racism in *Arendt and the Negro Question*,⁷⁴ yet also acknowledges her philosophical and political legacy.

Several, important works have explored Arendt's concept of natality, principal among these is Peg Birmingham's *Hannah Arendt and Human Rights: The Predicament of Common Responsibility*,⁷⁵ where natality is seen as an event that bears within itself its own rule or principle. Accordingly, the principle of political action is manifested in the performing act itself, at once embedded in history and introduced as a gap within the political sphere that cannot be recovered. Cecilia Sjöholm's *Doing Aesthetics with Arendt: How to See Things*⁷⁶ develops an understanding of natality based on how Arendt explores a sense of realness in her writings. This sense of realness entails the sensing of a multifaceted, heterogenic reality that in itself contains inconsistencies and gaps, distinguished by Sjöholm from the thought of an underlying unmediated reality. Recently, Frida Buhre has investigated the political imaginaries of time in Arendt as connected to natality in *Speaking Other Times: Hannah Arendt and the Temporality of Politics*.

Although questions of truth, lying, as well as the relation between truth and politics, are notable by their absence in many of the abovementioned examples of Arendtian exegesis, they nonetheless open up possibilities for how the issue of truth can be examined and articulated in her work. In general, Arendt is seen neither as a foundationalist nor as an anti-foundationalist, but as a political theorist providing resources for thinking the contingent conditions for political beginnings. It is precisely within this

⁷² Dana Villa, *Politics, Philosophy, Terror: Essays on the Thought of Hannah Arendt* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999.)

⁷³ Steve Buckler, *Hannah Arendt and Political Theory: Challenging the Tradition* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012).

⁷⁴ Kathryn T. Gines, *Hannah Arendt and the Negro Question* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014).

⁷⁵ Peg Birmingham, *Hannah Arendt and Human Rights: The Predicament of Common Responsibility* (Bloomington/Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2006.)

⁷⁶ Cecilia Sjöholm, *Doing Aesthetics with Arendt: How to See Things* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015).

context that Arendt's rendering of the problem of politics and truth, by way of her analysis of the modern, political lie, can be formulated.

Given the central place that the problem of truth and politics occupies in Arendt's works, it remains a surprisingly unexplored topic. Having said this, there are several articles and shorter commentaries worthy of special mention. The modern political lie has for instance been explored in Jacques Derrida's "History of the Lie", Peg Birmingham's "A Lying World Order", and Cathy Caruth's "Lying and History".⁷⁷ In pointing out that Arendt saw the modern political lie as introducing a novelty in the history of the concept and practice of the lie, Derrida situates the lie in relation to her concept of politics as beginning, though chooses not to explore this path. Birmingham and Caruth provide more detailed and nuanced accounts that address the lie within the wider context of Arendt's thought. If Birmingham argues that the lie is a key element in Arendt's analysis of totalitarianism, Caruth investigates the non-totalitarian version of lying that Arendt discussed in her analysis of the "Pentagon Papers" in "Lying and Politics", and develops the lie in relation to her notion of politics as beginning. Whereas Derrida, Birmingham and Caruth primarily investigate the lie as a relation to reality, I will analyze it also as a relation to truth.

As I mentioned previously some scholars have suggested that Arendt left little or no room for truth-claims in politics,⁷⁸ while others have pointed out the relevance she assigned to factual truth.⁷⁹ However, there are also important contributions that point out that Arendt identified a problem of truth, and that her thought on truth should be seen in relation to this. John S. Nelson stresses that her acknowledgment of the importance of factual truth should be seen in light of totalitarian politics and its contempt for facts.⁸⁰ In a chapter dedicated to Arendt's idea of truth in *A Democratic Theory of Judgment*, Linda Zerilli suggests that Arendt worried about the dogmatic

⁷⁷ See also La Caze, "It's Easier to Lie if you Believe it Yourself: Derrida, Arendt and the Modern Lie", *Law, Culture and the Humanities*, vol 13, no 2 (2017); Martin Jay, "Pseudology: Derrida on Arendt and Lying in Politics" in *Essays from the Edge: Parerga and Paralipomena* (Charlottesville/London: University of Virginia Press, 2011).

⁷⁸ Habermas, "Hannah Arendt's Communications Concept of Power", p. 225; Mouffe, *The Return of the Political*, p. 14; Badiou, *Metapolitics*, p. 13; Beiner, "Rereading 'Truth and Politics'", Buhre, *Speaking Other Times*, p. 106-110.

⁷⁹ Nelson, "Politics and Truth" p. 278; D'Entrèves, "Arendt's Theory of Judgment", p. 257; Herzog, "Reporting and Story-telling"; Zerilli, "Truth and Politics", § 40-41; Phillips, "Between the Tyranny of Opinion and the Despotism of Rational Truth"; Birmingham, "A Lying World Order", p. 74-76.

⁸⁰ Nelson, "Politics and Truth: Arendt's Problematic", p. 270-274.

character of absolute truth-claims in politics, since it ends up introducing a standard of truth foreign to the political realm.⁸¹ Zerilli thus emphasizes how Arendt developed a contingent notion of truth as suited to this realm.⁸² Corinne Enaudeau's essay "Hannah Arendt: Politics, Opinion, Truth" is also valuable to the present study.⁸³ She suggests that Arendt's notion of truth should be seen in the context of totalitarian politics and its attempt to treat factual truth as rational truth, i.e. as principles for action and movement governing society.⁸⁴ Here I will explore a different problem, namely the paradoxical way in which truth-claims function in totalitarian politics, arguing that Arendt's notion of truth can be seen partly as a response to this problem through her examination of the modern political lie.

Several scholars have stressed the importance of Heidegger's notion of truth for Arendt; she for instance saw the public realm as a site of disclosure, and often used the concepts disclosure and revelation in her works.⁸⁵ This study, however, also explores the differences between Arendt's and Heidegger's notion of truth. There are few commentaries on this topic, but Jeffrey Andrew Barash for instance points out that Arendt's notion of truth as disclosure differs from that of Heidegger since she sees the public realm as a condition for objectivity and impartiality, whereas Heidegger conceived of the public world in *Being and Time* as blocking access to truth in its "originary" mode.⁸⁶ In "Between the Tyranny of Opinion and the Despotism of Rational Truth", James Phillips makes the important observation that Heidegger sees the essence of truth as freedom, while Arendt

⁸¹ Zerilli, *A Democratic Theory of Judgment*, p. 126, 161.

⁸² See also Zerilli, "Truth and Politics".

⁸³ Corinne Enaudeau, "Hannah Arendt: Politics, Opinion, Truth", trans. Dorothee Bonningkat, in *Social Research*, vol 74, no. 4 (2007).

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 1032, 1034.

⁸⁵ Sergio Belardinelli, "Martin Heidegger und Hannah Arendts Begriff von 'Welt' und 'Praxis'" in *Zur philosophischen Aktualität Heideggers*, eds. Dietrich Papenfuss and Otto Pöggler (Frankfurt: Vittorio Klosterman, 1990); Villa, *Arendt and Heidegger*, p. 130-139; Andrew Brennan and Jeff Malpas, "The Space of Appearance and the Space of Truth" in *Action and Appearance: Ethics and the Politics of Writing in Hannah Arendt*, eds. Anna Yeatman, Phillip Hansen, Magdalena Zolkos and Charles Barbour (New York/London: Continuum, 2011), p. 49; Trevor Tchir, "Daimon Appearances and the Heideggerian Influence in Arendt's Account of Political Action" in *Action and Appearance: Ethics and the Politics of Writing in Hannah Arendt*, eds. Anna Yeatman, Phillip Hansen, Magdalena Zolkos and Charles Barbour (New York/London: Continuum, 2011), p. 56-59; Zerilli, *A Democratic Theory of Judgment*, p. 120.

⁸⁶ Jeffrey Andrew Barash, "The Political Dimension of the Public World: On Hannah Arendt's Interpretation of Martin Heidegger" in *Hannah Arendt: Twenty Years Later*, eds. Larry May and Jerome Kohn (Cambridge Mass.: MIT Press, 1997).

does not.⁸⁷ The present study will develop the extent of these differences in Heidegger and Arendt, as well as considering other important differences in their respective treatments of truth.

There are also commentaries in the literature on Arendt's interpretation of truth in Socrates, for the most part focusing on Socrates as a figure that made the city "truthful" by improving the citizen's judgments, helping them to form their own perspective on the world and at the same time also to establish a common world.⁸⁸

In general, however, much is left to explore both with respect to the problems of politics and truth that Arendt identified, as well as with respect to the original concept of truth she developed. In the present study I will stress her view on the relation between politics and truth as one of *tension*, developing her notion of truth with respect to the tension truth inserts in the political sphere, and in relation to concrete political events. In "Philosophy and Politics", philosophical truth is for instance discussed by Arendt from out of the fragile tension it introduces in the political sphere, while in "Truth and Politics" both factual and philosophical truth are seen as limits and points of resistance with respect to politics. For this question, Peg Birmingham's essay on the modern lie, "A Lying World Order", and James Phillips' comment on truth in Arendt, "Between the Tyranny of Opinion and the Despotism of Rational Truth" are important as they stress her notion of factual truth as limit.⁸⁹

Two comparative studies of Arendt and Heidegger that should be mentioned are Jacques Taminiaux's *The Thracian Maid and the Professional Thinker: Arendt and Heidegger* and Dana Villa's *Arendt and Heidegger: the Fate of the Political*. The question of truth is not a central theme in their commentaries, but Taminiaux contrasts Arendt's interpretation of truth in "Philosophy and Politics" with Heidegger's, while Villa addresses the dis-

⁸⁷ James Phillips, "Between the Tyranny of Opinion and the Despotism of Rational Truth", p. 99.

⁸⁸ Valeria Pashkova and Mikhail Pashkov, "Truth and Truthfulness in Politics: Rereading Hannah Arendt's Essay 'Socrates'" in *Philosophy Today*, vol. 62, no. 2 (2018), p. 450-458; Zerilli, "Truth and Politics", § 36-37; Dana Villa, "Arendt and Socrates" in *Politics, Philosophy, Terror*, p. 207-208; Jacques Taminiaux, *The Thracian Maid and the Professional Thinker: Arendt and Heidegger*, trans. Michael Gendre (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997), p. 177-178.

⁸⁹ Birmingham, "Lying in Politics", p. 75; Phillips, "Between the Tyranny of Opinion and the Despotism of Rational Truth", p. 97.

close aspect of Arendt's conception of politics.⁹⁰ In that sense they provide an important context and background for the discussion about truth and the relation between politics and truth in Heidegger and Arendt.

⁹⁰ Taminiaux, *The Thracian Maid and the Professional Thinker*, p. 170-186; Villa, *Arendt and Heidegger*, p. 89-99.

CHAPTER 2
A Community of Breakup: Truth and Politics in
Heidegger's Early Thought

I. The Question of the Present:
Rethinking Philosophy in Light of World War I

The period from the early 1920s to 1927, when *Being and Time* was published, is the time when Heidegger makes his first outlines to the criticism of truth as correspondence and begins to articulate an understanding of truth in terms of *aletheia*. It has often been understood as more or less an apolitical phase in his thought, and the theme of truth in his writings has for the most part been interpreted within the general framework of his criticism of the theoretical attitude and what he began to see as an inherited Greek and Christian determination of being as eternal presence. Daniel O. Dahlstrom for instance stresses the theoretical attitude and what he calls “the logical prejudice” – the presupposition that truth primarily is the object of a proposition – as the background to Heidegger’s early treatment of truth.¹ Denis McManus’ study of truth in early Heidegger situates the question of truth in relation to Heidegger’s criticism of the theoretical attitude, seen as presupposing a subject – object relation.² Other studies, addressing topics besides truth in Heidegger’s early works – such as that of faith, practical versus theoretical thinking and ethics – have suggested that these lecture courses are apolitical or that Heidegger in general “depoliticizes” ancient and early Christian thinkers, such as Aristotle and Paul.³

¹ Dahlstrom, *Heidegger's Concept of Truth*, p. 1-47.

² McManus, *Heidegger and the Measure of Truth*, p. 17-20.

³ See for instance Cimino, *Enactment, Politics and Truth*, p. 98; Aurenque, *Ethosdenken*, p. 306; Jacques Taminiaux, “Heidegger and praxis” in *The Heidegger Case: On Philosophy and Politics*, ed. Tom Rockmore and Joseph Margolis (Philadelphia: Temple Uni-

In this chapter, however, I will show that there are important, unexplored proto-political and explicit political dimensions to his early works, which are linked to the question of truth. They are important not least for understanding Heidegger's political writings in the 1930s, where the question of truth occupies a central place. As we will see, there is a certain continuity between his early works and his writings in the 1930s, even though questions and concepts from his early period are rethought and become the object of several shifts and turns.

The question of a revolutionary community, I would argue, is for instance central for understanding what is at stake in his 1920–1921 interpretation of Saint Paul in the lecture course *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*.⁴ A key issue in this lecture course is the givenness of self, world and the communal world. Though Heidegger never thematizes truth in his interpretation of Paul, givenness and self-givenness were cornerstones in Husserl's definition of truth in § 138 of *Ideas*.⁵ Several concepts appearing in the

versity Press, 1992), p. 188-207. See also Florian Grossner's study of the political in Heidegger (Grossner, *Revolution denken*, p. 222.)

⁴ There is a large, contemporary debate in philosophy on the interpretation of Paul, and how the legacy of Paul can be actualized today. According to Alain Badiou, Paul is a revolutionary thinker, delineating a universal subject as bearer of a universal truth, which shatters both the Judaic Law and the traditional understanding of the Greek *logos*. (Alain Badiou, *Saint Paul. The Foundation of Universalism*, trans. Ray Brassier [Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003]; Alain Badiou, "St. Paul, Founder of the Universal Subject" in *St Paul among the Philosophers*, eds. John D. Caputo and Linda Martin Alcoff [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009]). Giorgio Agamben instead situates Paul's letters within the Judaeo-Christian tradition and stresses them as belonging to a time when Judaism and Christianity were not yet distinct and fully separate. He reads them as belonging to early Jewish messianism, and the messianic abolition of the law, seeking to render the law inoperative. (Giorgio Agamben, *The Time that Remains. A Commentary on the Letter to the Romans*, trans. Patricia Dailey [Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005]). Slavoj Žižek suggests, contrary to Agamben, that the standard notion of Paul as founder of Christianity is justified, since the center is shifted with Paul from Christ's acts and teachings to the redemptive quality of his death. (Žižek, Slavoj, *The Puppet and the Dwarf: The Perverse Core of Christianity* [Cambridge: MIT Press, 2003]; "From Job to Christ: A Paulinian Reading of Chesterton" in *St Paul among the Philosophers*, eds. John D. Caputo and Linda Martin Alcoff [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009]). None of them comment on Heidegger's interpretation of Paul, but according to Antonio Cimino's study *Enactment, Politics and Truth* Heidegger's, Badiou's and Agamben's interpretations are related in prioritizing *pistis* over the letter – an interpretational strategy seen by Cimino as depoliticizing important themes in Paul.

⁵ Edmund Husserl, *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy*, trans. W. R. Boyce Gibson (London/New York: Routledge, 2012). In § 138 Husserl defines truth as correspondence or agreement between an intending act and the object intended. However, as such truth is defined from out of the self-givenness of

lecture course on Paul, such as the situation, later became central for Heidegger's concept of truth. In the interpretation of Paul, the situation is seen as opening access to the authentic givenness of self, world and the communal world. It comes to presence in and as the constitution of a radical Christian community at "the end of time", and is preserved in the community's anxious waiting and hope for an uncertain future, released as a cut in the present itself. Another example, where explicit political themes are linked to the question of truth, is the speech "Being-There and Being-True According to Aristotle", written in 1923, which focuses on political rhetoric and truth in Aristotle. The paper was delivered in 1924 in various cities in the Ruhr-Rhine valley. The industrial Ruhr-Rhine valley was an area of intense political and economic turbulence: it had recently been occupied by French army units and the Weimar parliamentary government had funded a general strike there. In his talk Heidegger discusses the problem of truth – the problem of its historical interpretation, as well as the problem of how speech can be grounded in truth – by turning to the various modes of political speech found in the Greek *polis*. He investigates the grounding of political speech in truth, locating the speech-situation within the *polis*. Here the thought of a political community grounded in truth emerges for the first time, though it is not thematically laid out as such. A third example, also from 1924, is the lecture course *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*. In these lectures, large parts of the conceptual framework of *Being and Time* are already in place, and significantly human Dasein is described as a "being-in-the-*polis*".⁶

In this chapter, what Heidegger refers to as the question of the present will be used as a way of indexing the link between problems of truth and community in his early writings. His early works were written shortly after the end of World War I, in a time of crises and break-up. In essays and

beings, that is, from out of their presentation of themselves to consciousness. Truth in a *strict* sense is a qualified mode of self-givenness: it is a qualified way in which beings come to presence, from out of themselves and as they are, to the subject in various conscious acts. It is the moment when an object is given in full presence, as a whole and as it is, in full identity with itself and in full correspondence with how it was intended in the act, such as a judgment or thought. This mode of self-givenness is defined by Husserl as *adaequatio*, as full correspondence or agreement with thought and object. In comparison to the definitions in *Logical Investigations* (Edmund Husserl, *Logical Investigations*, trans. J. N. Findlay [London/New York: Routledge, 2001]) he now understands this occurrence as an ideal and limit-concept, possible to think, but never possible to fully accomplish in a finite intellect. (Husserl, *Ideas*, Book I, p. 311-313.)

⁶ Heidegger, *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, p. 91, 117, 122.

lecture courses he repeatedly turns to his generation, asking about philosophy's role in the present. He stresses a situation of crises that calls for philosophy to articulate itself anew: the object of philosophical and historical research is not a remote, nostalgic origin, but one's "own [*eigen*] facticity", "the facticity of one's own time and generation".⁷ What is at stake in the historical return to early Greek and Christian thinkers is not primarily the past, but the present: "Critique of history is always only the critique of the present."⁸ Returning to Paul and Aristotle, he does not search for a lost, historical possibility that can simply be assumed in the present – the past is also the object of a philosophical destruction, questioning layers of sedimented meaning determining the present.

Heidegger's generation had seen the Enlightenment ideals of Europe from the trenches: World War I was a technological war, where the ideals of efficiency, progress and science were set to work in the invention of new weapons and in the application of methods of mass-production for the purpose of warfare. In the post-war lecture courses, he can be seen as addressing the *ethos* of a post-war generation emerging in the present and stresses the urgency for his generation to articulate itself anew.⁹ As such his gesture is reminiscent of Kant's attitude in "Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?"¹⁰ – the essay Kant wrote in 1784 on request from the periodical *Berlinische Monatsschrift*. In "What is Enlightenment?"¹¹ Michel Foucault points out that Kant often approached historical phenomena by asking questions about origins and history's inner teleological ends. However, when confronted with the question "What is Enlightenment?" his approach was entirely different. For Kant the Enlightenment was a question about the present, about the here and now: What is the present, what happens today, what is this now to which I belong? From what position, in what kind of now, do I write – what is my place, in the present, as a thinker and writer? The Enlightenment was approached by Kant as a critical present, that is, a historical moment and process by which established

⁷ Heidegger, "Phenomenological Interpretations with Respect to Aristotle", p. 167.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 157.

⁹ The specific way in which Heidegger understands *ethos* will be discussed later on in conjunction with his reading of Aristotle, suffice it to say that by *ethos* we are not to understand a moral injunction.

¹⁰ Immanuel Kant, "An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?", trans. David L. Colclasure, in *Toward Perpetual Peace and Other Writings on Politics, Peace and History*, ed. Pauline Kleingeld (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006).

¹¹ Michel Foucault, "What is Enlightenment", trans. Catherine Porter, in *Ethics, Subjectivity and Truth*, ed. P. Rabinow (New York: The New Press, 1997).

traditions and forms of authority break up and break down. This is an event that philosophy inhabits, an event that at the same time philosophy commits itself to deciphering and interpreting; in the unfolding of a process to which philosophy belongs, philosophy must inquire into the meaning of such belonging. The question of the Enlightenment, therefore, is not a question of what “doctrine” or “tradition” one endorses – what is at stake is rather the meaning of one’s generation and community; what kind of “we” is emerging in the living present.¹²

While certainly having a different meaning for Heidegger than for either Kant or Foucault, the question of a “we” appearing in the present is actualized in the lecture courses on Paul and Aristotle I will discuss in this chapter. It is a question that evokes the heritage of Kant and the Enlightenment, though Heidegger also belonged to a generation of conservative revolutionaries who began defining themselves during this period by questioning liberalism, parliamentary democracy and enlightenment ideals, such as egalitarianism. In the years between the wars, he became an acquaintance of Carl Schmitt and Ernst Jünger, and his explicit political writings in the 1930s are clearly inspired by both thinkers. What is at stake in Heidegger’s critique of the tradition can therefore be seen as at once a way to continue the heritage from Kant, but also as a critical attitude directed toward Kant.¹³

In the essay “On the Essence of Truth” from 1930 the question of the present is raised again as a question of truth.¹⁴ Several years later he formulates philosophy as a critical questioning of the present, “*Was ist jetzt?*”, which has reality, *Wirklichkeit*, only in relation to the community of a people.¹⁵ It is within this context, in his repeated questions about the present – that is, about a generation and its possible emergence and its future direction – that Heidegger begins to formulate truth as *aletheia*, understood as the unconcealment of beings. He first undertakes this work in the essay

¹² See also Foucault, *The Government of Self and Others*, p. 12-14.

¹³ Returning to early Greek and Christian thinkers in the beginning of the 1920s, Heidegger remarks that Kant has for a long time been understood in opposition to Aristotle: he is seen as the decidedly critical philosopher that “shattered” the old metaphysics of empty speculation, whereas Aristotle has been relegated to the position of an uncritical, “naïve” philosopher. Yet Kant is “steeped” in Aristotelian conceptuality according to Heidegger. Returning to Aristotle therefore also becomes a way of criticizing the tradition from Kant. (Heidegger, *Phenomenological Interpretation of Aristotle*, p. 5).

¹⁴ Heidegger, “On the Essence of Truth”, p. 137.

¹⁵ Martin Heidegger, *Introduction to Philosophy: Thinking and Poetizing*, trans. Phillip Jacques Braunstein (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017), p. 4-5.

“Phenomenological Interpretation with Respect to Aristotle”.¹⁶ Yet, even if his early development of *aletheia* is grounded in an engagement with Aristotle, it is important to recognize how Aristotle is read through the filter of the problem of *parousia* in Saint Paul. For Heidegger, the phenomenon of *parousia* in Paul marks not only the second coming of Christ, but it also operates as a cut in the present, as a sudden revolution of the self, world and community. Several of the concepts and themes in the essay on Aristotle are concepts from the lecture course on Paul – such as the situation, the “standing” of Paul and the thought of factual life as opening itself to the givenness of the world in and as a community’s anxious struggle against a possible loss.

Heidegger’s critique of what he came to see as a Greek and Christian fixation with being as eternal presence is manifest already in his early articulations of truth as *aletheia*. This becomes visible once the question of the present is accounted for. Heidegger sees the authentic community as grounded in a cut in time. It is in this cut that history comes to an end and a different history begins. To ground a community in truth, I will show in this chapter, is for him not to actualize the state’s inner or ideal form. It is to accomplish an end of time, an end that has already arrived but cannot be experienced and come to presence in an enduring way unless a community responds to its call.

Here, I would argue, a theme appears that will be central for Heidegger’s political engagement and writings in the 1930s. In the lecture course on Paul, the religious proclamation can be seen as his first outline of true discourse. A discourse that does not represent but has a performative element, and perhaps even a prophetic structure. It reveals, in advance, a destined end which is “already here” and cannot be avoided. It is an end that cannot be experienced by the members of the congregation until a radical conversion of existence happens, which opens access to, and holds the congregation in an enduring experience of, the end. To respond to the proclamation is not to take up a cognitive content, but for the members of the congregation to accomplish the revolutionary transformation of their existence required for their “standing” at the end of time. This is at the same time the moment when a community is founded and a cut in time comes into the world a “second” time, in a lasting way as an enduring mode of givenness – i.e. as a way in which self, world and the communal world come

¹⁶ Heidegger, “Phenomenological Interpretation with Respect to Aristotle”, p. 175-177.

to presence and are given. Authentic discourse is speech that gathers a people and constitutes a community. It has a performative structure that reveals in advance a destined end, which, while positing something unavoidable, can only endure by virtue of the proclamation itself.

In the present chapter I will investigate the meaning of Heidegger's interpretation of the proclamation in relation to the community it constitutes. I will also examine how the performative structure of the proclamation is displaced, first to political rhetoric and true discourse in the "Ruhr-talk" and *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, and then to the call of conscience in *Being and Time*. In order to be able to do this I will begin, in section II, by discussing Heidegger's interpretation of the proclamation as constituting a community at "the end of time". In section III, I will turn to Heidegger's interpretations of Aristotle, and show that his first articulations of truth as *aletheia* are linked to the question of a generation, but also to the question of political Dasein and political speech in the "Ruhr-talk" and *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*. Here true discourse not only emerges for the first time as discourse grounding political Dasein in the truth, but it also grounds truth in a mode of being of political Dasein. Section IV investigates how the political dimension of Heidegger's treatment of truth and true discourse is taken up in *Being and Time*, where a historical people and generation is laid out in § 74 as constituted through "communication", *Mitteilung*, and "struggle", *Kampf*.

II. A Community at the End of Time: Heidegger's Interpretation of Paul

Before going into details about Heidegger's interpretation of Paul and Aristotle, it is interesting to note that political questions became important also to Husserl after the war. In letters to friends and colleagues, he emphasized the situation in Europe as calling for an "ethico-political renewal of humanity [*etisch-politische Erneuerung der Menschheit*]", as he formulated it in a letter to Winthrop Bell on the 11th of August 1920.¹⁷ In the period shortly after the war he also wrote a series of articles about the relation between philosophy and politics, published in the Japanese journal *Kaizo*, whose title means renewal. Here he explores philosophy as a "principle of renewal", drawing on the heritage from both Aristotle and Kant. He

¹⁷ Edmund Husserl, *Aufsätze und Vorträge*, Husserliana, Bd XXVII (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1989), p. xii.

investigates the political meaning of this principle as accomplished in the constitution of a communal world – more specifically, as the grounding of a community of a “higher order”, understood as a community founded on an ongoing, critical movement of disclosure.

However, Husserl and Heidegger have radically different ways of appropriating and developing the heritages of Aristotle and Kant. On the one side, Husserl can be understood as seeking to renew Aristotle, to whom the highest mode of life – *theoria*, the theoretical, philosophical life practicing wisdom, *sophia* – is a life in suspension from practical and political concerns. Developing the principle of renewal he can be seen as appropriating the *ethos* of *sophia*, understood by Aristotle as a life committed to truth, striving towards eternal disclosure, but he also renews it by suggesting that this *ethos* has a political significance, in constituting a “higher order” community. On the other side, there is Heidegger, who, as he declares in the “Ruhr-talk”, is not interested in bringing “about a renewal of Aristotelianism”,¹⁸ but turns to Aristotle in a movement of simultaneous destruction and appropriation that will “prepare the battleground for a radical engagement with Greek philosophy – the very philosophy in which we stand.”¹⁹

In Paul’s radicalization of the Aristotelian legacy, Heidegger sees a possibility of engaging with the question of givenness – i.e. how Paul, his world and his communal world are given, and preserved in authentic givenness. Givenness is thus a central theme in his reading of Paul, as part of the lecture course on *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*. Linked to this topic is the question of a community, united not by striving toward eternal ideals but by the collective recognition and affirmation of a break in history that needs to find material inscription in the present. Here, we can see an anticipation of what Heidegger would later criticize as a metaphysical ontology of presence – i.e. being conceived as eternal presence. But there is something else: Heidegger here also develops the positive possibility for a community to constitute itself in and as a break with this tradition. In the reiteration of the past, and through the retrieval of Paul, a caesura is introduced in the present that comes to endure when taken up and appropriated by a community.

In the lecture course on Paul, Heidegger emphasizes the “standing” of Paul, referring to Paul’s comportment in relation to *parousia*. *Parousia*, as

¹⁸ Heidegger, “Being-There and Being-True According to Aristotle”, p. 219.

¹⁹ *Ibid*, p. 219.

interpreted by Heidegger, is the second coming of Christ, arriving as a cut in the present itself. The standing of Paul in relation to this event is not as an epistemological search for knowledge, but a habitual mode of living and being in anxious waiting for *parousia*. If Husserl stands for a more traditional, naïve and idealistic faith in philosophy as accomplishing an eternal idea and grounding a community of a “higher order”, Heidegger searches for a different *ethos* in Paul, which is a mode of living and being where the community is sustained through its anxious openness to the unexpected event of God’s arrival. In his letters to the congregation, Paul reveals an end that cannot be avoided, but also a time to come. He communicates the “second” arrival of God to the members of the congregation as an event that is already here, but requires the congregation’s response in order to come to presence in an enduring way.

In his study of *ethos* in early Heidegger, Angus Brook suggests that an important but often ignored theme in Heidegger’s early lecture courses is how truth is *accessed* in philosophy and how philosophy can be kept in openness to truth, in the struggle against its possible loss. A qualified access to truth is provided, Brook claims, through the grounding of philosophy in a habitual mode of being or way of life, i.e. in an *ethos*, comportment or habitus, discussed by Brook as a life in faithfulness to truth.²⁰ Heidegger refers to this mode of being in his early lectures through the concepts “standing [*stehen*]”, “stance [*Stand*]”, “endurance [*Ständigkeit*]” and “comportment [*Haltung*]” – concepts that will remain throughout his thinking, and will become important not least in his political writings from the 1930s, although, most certainly, their meaning undergo shifts, with new variations introduced.

In the lecture course on Paul, Heidegger never discusses *parousia* as truth. However, as Denis McManus notes in his monography on truth in early Heidegger, his lectures on Paul are important in reframing the problem of truth. In stressing *parousia* as not an already given object, but as an event whose arrival requires a comportment on behalf of the congregation, McManus suggests that Heidegger can be seen as outlining his criticism of the theoretical attitude.²¹ *Parousia* is defined by Heidegger as a sudden break in the givenness of self, world and community – and as I mentioned earlier, givenness and self-givenness were important concepts in how Husserl sought to define truth. When *aletheia* is introduced in his

²⁰ Brook, *The Early Heidegger and Ethics*, p. 5.

²¹ McManus, *Heidegger and the Measure of Truth*, p. 19.

works on Aristotle, after the lecture course he gave on Paul, givenness is central to Heidegger's first definitions of truth as a movement from concealment to unconcealment, by which beings come to presence and are preserved.

The theme of Paul's "standing" refers to his mode of being – to his waiting, hope and passions – as that through which *parousia* is enduringly accessed. In this way, Paul is kept in openness to its event. His "standing" is his mode of being through which access is established and preserved to the authentic mode of givenness of self, world and the communal world. In this context, where Heidegger asks how Paul's openness to *parousia* is accomplished, the proclamation plays a central role. The religious proclamation, expressed in Paul's letter-writing to the congregations, announces the future arrival of *parousia*. It is a specific mode of discourse which communicates and shares, not a symbol or cognitive content, but the *ethos* and passions of Paul's anguished standing in his openness toward *parousia*. To receive the proclamation is not to take up a representation or cognitive content, rather it is to enter into a mode of life. As such the religious proclamation emerges as Heidegger's first articulations of true discourse, which is also seen as a mode of language and speech that constitutes a community.

Although he himself never uses this expression, Heidegger understands *parousia* as *apocalyptic truth* – not in the sense of a fearsome catastrophe, but in the sense of a sudden revelation of a rupture, conversion and end. *Parousia*, he suggests, is an event with a special meaning to the Christian that reflects a historical transformation. In classical Greek it refers to arrival and presence, in the Old Testament to the arrival of God on the Day of Judgment, and in late Judaism to the coming of Messiah, seen as God's representative. To the Christian, however, it has a different meaning according to Heidegger: *parousia* is "the appearing again of the already appeared Messiah".²² Although he does not comment on this, it should be noted that Plato uses *parousia* for describing the relation between the idea and its copy, the sensible particulars. *Parousia* refers to the presence of the idea in the thing, which, in turn, partakes in the idea through similitude. The New Testament, as interpreted by Heidegger, is in that sense an eschatological transposition of Plato's theory of ideas: the "second arrival" of Christ is the moment when he ascends to the sensible world, is present and takes part in it. According to Heidegger's interpretation, Paul does not comprehend

²² Heidegger, *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, p. 71.

parousia as an ideal in a remote future, an event that life gradually approximates in striving towards it: the proclamation reveals, in advance, the event of *parousia* as an unavoidable end, present in the finite world itself – yet its enduring presence there depends “upon how I live”.²³ *Parousia*, he says, is revelation of “*the facticity of the end of time [die endzeitliche Faktizität]*”.²⁴ It reveals a temporal end, unfolding in the present in an unavoidable way, yet requiring the recognition and struggle of a community in order to come into the world a “second” time, as enduring and real.

In the essay “Of an Apocalyptic Tone Recently Adopted in Philosophy”,²⁵ Jacques Derrida has commented on apocalyptic revelation of an end of time in relation to the constitution of a community. Although he understands this relation in a different way than Heidegger, there are also similarities, and his comments enlighten aspects of *parousia* that were important to Heidegger. The Greek word *apokalupsis*, Derrida points out by referring to André Chouraqui’s “Liminaire pour l’Apocalypse”, was used for translating words derived from the Hebrew *gala*. As such the apocalypse has the meaning of revealing, disclosing and uncovering something hidden and secret, rather than a terrifying disaster. He notes that it is a form of disclosure that opens not only – as the disclosure of Aristotle’s *sophia*, important to Husserl’s political writings – to vision and seeing, but to hearing. It is the revelation of an end, disclosed in a tone or voice to the ear, rather than something seen. The apocalyptic tone speaks from a lost place and time, or from a place and time to come – a place and time which is already here, folded in the present, but as a distant future. It is speech that has no message. The apocalyptic tone simply says “come [*viens*]”. It is the invitation of a caesura in time, a cut in the temporal fabric that has already arrived but must nevertheless be responded to. Derrida further comments that the apocalypse is a profoundly political motif. It is a seductive, mysterious voice that does not represent but calls forth a “true” community. Or rather, as Derrida puts it, it is a voice with a claim to the truth of the unveiling process itself – “the truth of truth.”²⁶ However, the apocalyptic tone is according to Derrida plural: it is not one, but a tone which has a

²³ Ibid, p. 75.

²⁴ Ibid, p. 98.

²⁵ Jacques Derrida, “Of an Apocalyptic Tone Recently Adopted in Philosophy”, trans. John P. Leavey, in *Oxford Literary Review*, vol 6, no 2 (2012).

²⁶ Ibid, p. 84.

wide spectrum of sounds, although it presents itself in terms of a fiction, of being the only and last true voice.²⁷

Although Heidegger never discusses *parousia* as apocalyptic revelation, he develops the theme of *parousia* not in relation to sight, but in relation to the Pauline proclamation, expressed in Paul's letter-writing, as a mode of discourse that does not represent. It indicates and has a "literary form" according to Heidegger.²⁸ *Parousia* is thus a phenomenon which is not accessed in cognition or sight, but through the proclamation: it is disclosed to the ear and received in listening.

On a general level, Heidegger stresses Paul as both radically situated and dependent: Paul "has" himself, encounters himself and "is" in a "surrounding world", in a "self-world" and "communal world".²⁹ For his own givenness Paul is constantly referred back to the givenness of a community and a world. It is because of this that he can easily lose himself and the present can close itself – which is why he encounters himself in constant, unrestful worry. Truth, Heidegger comments in the same lecture course, but this time in relation to St Augustine, manifests itself like a weight and burden that awakens anxiety since it can assume a "shell-like" form: it can close itself, like a mussel or shell.³⁰

The worry of factual life, its unrestful concern with its own givenness is thus a struggle against loss – life can lose itself, fall from itself and lose its access to the world. This theme is repeated in the following year's lecture course on Aristotle, as expressing the "movedness" of life: "The movedness of factual life can be provisionally interpreted and described as *unrest* [*Unruhe*]."³¹ *Unruhe* refers to a restless movement, but also to attunement or affect – and as such it is a receptive phenomenon. *Parousia*, as it is articulated in relation to Paul, is a phenomenon the human being must receive – a reception that occurs in anxiety: access to *parousia* requires "an entering-one-self [*Sich-hinein-Stellen*] into anguish. This distress is a fundamental characteristic, it is an absolute concern in the horizon of *parousia*".³² In proclaiming *parousia*, Paul speaks in advance, from a time to come: *parousia* is already here, yet it must constantly be "awaited". The standing of Paul in distress is the mode of being in which he awaits *parousia*, is prepared

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Heidegger, *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, p. 94.

²⁹ Ibid, see for instance p. 83-85.

³⁰ Ibid, p. 147.

³¹ Heidegger, *Phenomenological Interpretations of Aristotle*, p. 70.

³² Heidegger, *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, p. 67.

and invites this event – an invitation God rewards by coming to meet him in the arrival of an end of time. Paul’s anguished waiting, as Heidegger describes it, places him at the *site* of *parousia*: he “[s]tands ominously [*drohende*] in its site [*Stelle*]”.³³ Or rather, Paul’s mode of being is itself a site, which invites the arrival of *parousia* by accomplishing a radical conversion of existence as that through which access to *parousia* is established.

Waiting, Heidegger remarks in the appendix to the 1921–1922 interpretation of Aristotle, is “to stand fixed, ‘to be’ specifically bound, massive, ponderous”.³⁴ In the lecture course on Paul waiting is described as a struggle which does not postpone or delay but welcomes *parousia* as the moment when time comes to a standing still and a different, historical temporality is born. Waiting is a “compressed temporality”, as Heidegger expresses it in the lecture course on Aristotle, in which “there is no time for postponement.”³⁵

The “standing” of Paul – the unrestful waiting through which access to *parousia* is established – must be understood, according to Heidegger, as his relation to a community. This is the point in his lecture course where a proto-political theme emerges, one that is intimately linked to the question of givenness and how access to authentic givenness is accomplished. Paul “has” himself and, according to Heidegger, is only by “giving” himself to the congregation in the proclamation. He is who he is, as apostle, only in relation to the congregation. Heidegger expresses this relation, from the point of view of Paul: “*You* are also my hopes in the *parousia*. *You*, in what you have now become and are becoming, are so through my apostolic proclamation, my concerned enactment in regard to you, that is to say, *you are* my real *being*.”³⁶ Responding to the proclamation the members of the congregation do not take up a cognitive content in Paul’s speech, but accomplish a radical conversion of existence. The proclamation constitutes a community grounded in a mode of life, which lets a restless waiting come into the world, in an enduring way.

To clarify the “standing” of Paul, the meaning of the proclamation must be interrogated, Heidegger stresses, as it is expressed in Paul’s letter-writing to the congregations in Thessalonica and Galatia. How does Paul, in bringing *parousia* to language in the proclamation, stand with respect to the

³³ Ibid, p. 99. (Trans. modified.)

³⁴ Heidegger, *Phenomenological Interpretations of Aristotle*, p. 139.

³⁵ Ibid, p. 85.

³⁶ Heidegger, *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, p. 99.

communal world? In what sense does he “have” himself in relation to the congregation – and in what sense is the communal world given to him in the proclamation of *parousia*?

How does Paul, in the situation of a letter-writer, stand to the Thesalonians? How are they experienced by him? How is his *communal world* given to him in the situation of writing the letter? That is connected to the question, how *Paul* stands to this communal world. The *content* of the communal world is to be seen in its determination in connection with the *how* of the *relation* to this communal world. Thus we must draw out the basic determination of this relation.³⁷

The content of the communal world, he suggests, is reflected in “the how” of Paul’s relation to it in the proclamation. His way of standing in front of the congregation mirrors the content of the communal world, constituted in Paul’s address. Or, to formulate it differently: the proclamation has a *performative* element, it enacts the mode of life that invites the arrival of *parousia* and shares it with the community, thereby making possible *parousia*’s coming to enduring presence. It is discourse that constitutes a community and the *structure* of Paul’s communication; the “how” of his standing, is reflected in the community it constitutes. This is a central passage, to which I will come back in order to discuss what kind of community the proclamation founds, but for now it suffices to note that the proclamation, as it is interpreted by Heidegger, can be seen as an early version of what he later developed as true discourse in its authentic and “originary” mode. As such it has a performative structure. It announces the presence of a cut in time, which through the proclamation comes to presence, in an enduring way. The end is revealed to the congregation as a destiny that cannot be avoided yet requires the congregation’s response in order to come to presence. The word Heidegger uses for the performative element is accomplishment or enactment, *Vollzug*. What is enacted in the proclamation is the situation, which later, in *Being and Time*, is developed as the authentic mode of being for Dasein called “the *truth of existence*.”³⁸ In the lecture course on Paul, the situation is not to be understood as a series or order, nor as a historical period or epoch. It is the unity of a diversity, Heidegger says, but a unity that can only be indicated. As such it is a unity

³⁷ Ibid, p. 61.

³⁸ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 221.

that comes into being and is preserved through the proclamation that enacts the situation.

To grasp and understand what is thus communicated is not to receive a cognitive content, but to enact the situation: “‘Situation’ is thus for us something that belongs to understanding in the manner of enactment”.³⁹ It is enacted as a specific temporalization of factual life: to listen and respond to the proclamation is to accomplish the cut in history announced by Paul. It is to take up this cut itself as a mode of being and existence. The response of the congregation, therefore, is required for the event of *parousia* – it makes possible the coming to presence, in an enduring way, of the announced end.

In order to determine the unity of the situation, Heidegger stresses, we must ask how it is “*had*” in the proclamation, understood as Paul’s relation to the people, and the people’s relation to Paul.⁴⁰ “[T]he relation of the people before Paul to him is how *he* has them”.⁴¹ Paul, for his part, can have himself only in relation to the congregation: in the proclamation “he belongs [...] to them, stands now with them in their fate”.⁴² The proclamation is the unfolding of an end, but also of a beginning. It is a mode of speech calling forth a community: “*Communal-world* has arrived in this becoming at the situation.”⁴³ In the constitution of a community Paul is kept in the situation: his enduring access to *parousia* depends on the constitution of a community. What is decisive, Heidegger stresses, is “the How of the communication”.⁴⁴ Each of Paul’s letters has a “*situational structure*”⁴⁵, it is speech that grounds the congregation in the cut of time itself, as God’s sudden presence. In his speech, Paul keeps the congregation in openness to *parousia*, and the congregation’s response is at the same time constitutive for his own enduring openness to *parousia*.

According to Antonio Cimino’s study of Heidegger’s, Giorgio Agamben’s and Alain Badiou’s interpretations of Paul, Heidegger expresses an extreme “apolitical” attitude, in focusing solely on the performative enactment of Paul’s comportment. Prioritizing spirit, *pistis*, over letter, *nomos*, he neglects all questions of power-struggle and political interest in which

³⁹ Heidegger, *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, p. 63.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, p. 65

⁴¹ *Ibid*, p. 65.

⁴² *Ibid*, p. 101.

⁴³ *Ibid*, p. 99.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, p. 72

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, p. 99

Paul's letters are situated, as well as the significance of political orders – institutions, legal principles, political hierarchies, etc.⁴⁶ However, what Cimino does not discuss is in what sense Heidegger's apolitical attitude is also in the name of an attempt to think the constitution of a community, what the role of the proclamation is in relation to the congregation and what *kind* of community is constituted in Paul's address. I will come back to questions regarding what kind of community emerges in response to Paul's address, as interpreted by Heidegger, but in order to do so we must investigate how the performative structure of the proclamation is displaced not only onto political rhetoric, but also onto the philosophical method, when Heidegger turns to Aristotle. If we follow this displacement a performative mode of true discourse emerges, the enactment of which grounds a political community in the truth.

III. Grounding of Political Dasein in the Truth

When Heidegger turns to Aristotle in the years following his interpretation of Paul, the situation is a central theme, now defined as "evidence-situation"⁴⁷ and "situation of access".⁴⁸ In the situation, access is provided to factual life as the proper object of philosophy: "the object presents itself properly in its 'what' and in its 'how'".⁴⁹ It is described by Heidegger in the lecture course *Phenomenological Interpretations of Aristotle* as a mode of comportment, no longer communicated and shared by religious proclamation. The function and performative structure of the proclamation is now displaced onto the philosophical method of formal indication. What is indicated is the situation, seen as a comportment and mode of existing that comes into being only in so far as it is appropriated and enacted: "The possession of the comportment as a being *is*, and at the same time *is through*, the concrete appropriation of the object itself."⁵⁰

Heidegger now contrasts the situation to the theoretical attitude and offers the first outlines of his critique of the so called theoretical paradigm, with its claim to objectivity, scientificity and impartiality.⁵¹ The theoretical attitude arises from factual life, as a way in which factual life interprets

⁴⁶ Cimino, *Enactment, Politics and Truth*, p. 98.

⁴⁷ Heidegger, *Phenomenological Interpretations of Aristotle*, p. 28.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 90-91.

itself and its world, moves within this interpretation, temporalizes and spatializes itself. Factual life is characterized by its “movedness” and “*unrest* [*Unruhe*]”⁵² – a movedness which is presupposed, and enacted, in the theoretical attitude as a modification of life’s tendency to security and expressed in the abolition of distance and time.⁵³ The “movedness” of factual life is a way in which the world is given, which in abolishing distance and time, makes the world available as a series of objects for apprehension and representation. The theoretical attitude arises from this “movedness” and is a mode of givenness of life and world, which has “its own theoretical ways of claiming evidence, justification and validity”.⁵⁴ This mode of givenness, Heidegger comments, cannot be presumed as “the paradigm case of self-givenness.”⁵⁵ The “properly genuine givenness”⁵⁶ and the “possibility of access”⁵⁷ to genuine givenness is indicated as the situation and enacted in the questioning of factual life’s historical interpretation of itself.

In the 1922 essay bearing the same name, “Phenomenological Interpretations with Respect to Aristotle”, Heidegger for the first time defines truth as *aletheia*. He interprets the dianoetic virtues, listed by Aristotle in Book VI of the *Nicomachean Ethics*⁵⁸ as “ways in which the human soul ‘trues’, *aletheuein*, or ‘brings and takes beings as unveiled [*unverhüllt*] into the safekeeping of truth.”⁵⁹ The five dianoetic virtues are *techne*, *episteme*, *phronesis*, *sophia* and *nous*, understood by Heidegger as “habits’ of truth”.⁶⁰ “[A]s habits, each in its own way serves to maintain, preserve and conserve be-ing in its truth, taking being into custody and safeguarding its truth [*Seinsverwahrung*].”⁶¹ Through these habits beings become accessible, they are given in uncoveredness, disclosed and kept – “preserved” and “conserved” – in disclosure, as unconcealed. As such the “habits of truth” are also ways in which the soul, together with the beings that are uncovered, is disclosed and kept in disclosure. The soul “trues” in the sense of accomp-

⁵² Ibid, p. 70.

⁵³ Ibid, 90-91, 104.

⁵⁴ Ibid, p. 113.

⁵⁵ Ibid, p. 111.

⁵⁶ Ibid, p. 111.

⁵⁷ Ibid, p. 111.

⁵⁸ Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. David Ross (Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 1980).

⁵⁹ Heidegger, “Phenomenological Interpretations with Respect to Aristotle”, p. 175.

⁶⁰ Ibid, p. 175.

⁶¹ Ibid, p. 175.

lishing a disclosive movement that at once determines it and is “a ‘task’”.⁶² Heidegger thus understands “truing” as habitual comportments, and in that sense as *ethos* – as habitual ways in which factual life copes with the world and temporalizes itself in a movement of disclosure, also in its disinterested attitudes of pure apprehending and seeing.

The passage where *aletheia* is discussed prefigures his later definition of truth and his criticism of the correspondence theory in § 44 of *Being and Time*. In his discussion of *aletheia*, Heidegger delineates a certain historical context for which the category of truth was neither assigned to judgment nor understood as thought’s agreement with its object:

The usual appeal to Aristotle for the traditional doctrine of truth as something ‘occurring in the judgment’ and constituting an ‘agreement’ of thought with the object cannot be justified in his texts. There is no trace in Aristotle of truth as agreement, of *logos* as valid judgment, of a representational theory of cognition, or the epistemological monstrosity of ‘critical realism’.⁶³

The sense of *aletheia* in Aristotle, Heidegger suggests, simply means “being-there [*da-sein*] as unconcealed [*unverborgen*]”,⁶⁴ which is not primarily related to judgment, but refers to a disclosive movement by which the human being is not only determined but inhabits as a task, also. The dia-noetic virtues are habits “in which the soul possesses truth” in the sense of keeping itself in a disclosive movement, “safeguarding” itself and the beings it discloses “against possible loss.”⁶⁵

At the same time, his comments belong to a general attempt of “counter-acting” what he now sees as factual life’s fallen states. Fallen states become accessible *in* the situation. What it means to be in the situation is to take a stand, a seizing that makes factual life’s fallen states transparent, along with affording access to “the possibility of being seized by a movement that counteracts” these tendencies.⁶⁶ The situation provides access to an experience of “fallen” modes of life, an experience closed off in these states themselves.

In the following two years, Heidegger turns to Aristotle’s writings on rhetoric and politics in “Being-There and Being-True” – the speech he gave

⁶² Ibid, p. 177.

⁶³ Ibid, p. 176.

⁶⁴ Ibid, p. 176.

⁶⁵ Ibid, p. 177.

⁶⁶ Ibid, p. 162.

in the Ruhr-Rhine area – and *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*. In the “Ruhr-talk” truth is developed as *aletheia* while in *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, Heidegger explicitly locates the situation to the *polis*, now seen as something accomplished in political rhetoric and political speech. The performative structure of the religious proclamation is now transposed onto the *polis*; where authentic speech serves to ground a community in the situation. Here we can see how the thought of a political community, grounded in truth, emerges for the first time in his writings.

Theodore Kisiel notes that Heidegger’s interpretation of Aristotle in these lectures is also a confrontation with what he takes to be a Greek fixation with presence: Heidegger simultaneously appropriates and transforms Aristotelian concepts. In this confrontation, Kisiel suggests, Heidegger undertakes a philosophical destruction of political Dasein in its fallen, “everyday” and “average” mode of being in the *polis*, releasing a temporality of kairological time.⁶⁷

What is at stake in these lectures, however, is more than a confrontation with political Dasein in its “everyday” mode of being in the *polis*. If we follow the theme of the situation from Heidegger’s earlier lectures on Paul, where the situation was enacted as the constitution of a community in relation to Paul and in the address to a “generation” in the essay on Aristotle, the enactment of Dasein’s revolutionary temporality can itself be seen as the releasement of a positive possibility for Dasein as a “being-in-the-*polis*.”

A central theme in the “Ruhr-talk” is the question “*where* is truth? Where is it properly located [*Bodenständig*]? What is its native ground [*Boden*]?”⁶⁸ The words *Bodenständigkeit* and *Boden* are not yet related to a homeland or to Germany in Heidegger’s works, as they will during the 1930s. Nor is *Boden* or *Bodenständig* necessarily an allusion to “Blut and Boden”. They are words referring to ground and standing on a ground, as well as to rootedness and perhaps also, as Brian Hansford Bowles’ translation suggests, to rootedness in a native soil. *Bodenständig* expresses a specific temporality, endurance and continuity, *Ständigkeit*. As we will see in the next chapter, *Boden* and *Bodenständigkeit* are words that will occupy a central place in Heidegger’s political writings in the 1930s, though their meanings will be transformed with respect to his earlier works. In the “Ruhr-talk” they refer to the “ground [*Bodenständigkeit*] upon which truth

⁶⁷ Kisiel, “Rhetorical Protopolitics in Heidegger and Arendt”, p. 140-141.

⁶⁸ Heidegger, “Being-There and Being-True According to Aristotle”, p. 219.

is rooted”, but from which it can also be “uprooted”.⁶⁹ The ground upon which truth is rooted is not the judgment – as the traditional doctrine of truth, according to Heidegger, has presupposed.⁷⁰ Truth, *aletheia*, instead belongs to encountered and uncovered beings themselves.⁷¹ Dasein itself can be true, in the sense of a being which is disclosed and lives in a disclosive movement through which it can be both “rooted” and “uprooted”. “[B]eing true is thus a possible way that Dasein itself can be”,⁷² as he states in the “Ruhr-talk”. Not only can Dasein be grounded in truth, by virtue of enacting a disclosive movement, but truth can also be grounded in a process of disclosure, one that is dependent on Dasein’s mode of being and standing, so that it both comes to presence and endures in its authentic, and not its fallen, mode in the *polis*.

In the “Ruhr-talk”, Heidegger investigates those disclosive habits expressed in political speech. If the situation, seen as providing access to the authentic givenness of beings, was addressed in relation to the religious proclamation in the lecture course on Paul, it is now discussed in relation to grounded, *Bodenständig*, political speech as opposed to its “uprooted” counterpart. A central theme in the “Ruhr-talk” is how speech can be grounded, and in what sense truth is grounded in Dasein’s modes of being. By locating the speech-situation within the *polis*, Heidegger can be seen as searching for a mode of political speech that grounds a community in the authentic temporalization of truth, *aletheia*, itself.

In his comment on the “Ruhr-talk”, Kisiel points out that the text was written in the same year that Leo Schlageter was sentenced to death for leading a sabotage group in the Ruhr-Rhine area.⁷³ Schlageter was an ex-army officer and conservative revolutionary who joined the right-wing

⁶⁹ Ibid, p. 222.

⁷⁰ Ibid, p. 220.

⁷¹ Ibid, 225.

⁷² Ibid, 225. The discussion has close affinities with the discussion in *Plato’s Sophist*, a lecture course from 1924–1925, where *aletheia* is defined as “uncoveredness” and human Dasein as a being which “is in the truth”. (Martin Heidegger, *Plato’s Sophist*, trans. Richard Rojcewicz and André Schuwer [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003], p. 7, 17.) Truth is thus a determination of Dasein, in so far as Dasein lives in a disclosive movement, uncovering beings and itself. “To be true, to be in the truth, as determination of Dasein, means: to have at its disposal, as unconcealed, the beings with which Dasein cultivates an association.” (Ibid, p. 16.) That Dasein is determined by a disclosive movement is something that the correspondence theory presupposes, he now stresses, since it presupposes that the beings with which true judgments agree are at one’s disposal and available, and thereby disclosed. (Ibid, p. 17-19).

⁷³ Kisiel, “Rhetorical Protopolitics in Heidegger and Arendt”, p. 135-136.

Freikorps after the war. Having sabotaged a railroad in the Ruhr valley, which was occupied by the French, he was sentenced to death and shot on the 26th of May 1923; Schlageter became a martyr for the National Socialist movement. Ten years later Heidegger held a memorial service in his honor at the university of Freiburg. Attended by more than 1.000 students, he gave a speech on the steps to the university about Schlageter.⁷⁴ In the earlier “Ruhr-talk”, given in 1924, Schlageter is never mentioned. However, Kisiel points out, one of the speech’s central themes is political rhetoric and the reliving of historical, political deeds – such as that of Schlageter, which must have been fresh in the memory of Heidegger’s audience.⁷⁵

Heidegger’s general approach in the “Ruhr-talk” and *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy* is to read Aristotle’s works on ethics, politics, rhetoric and nature as fundamentally related. Ethics is the study of the *ethos* of the human being, defined as our habitual mode of being, our “self-conduct [*Sich-halten*]” and “comportment [*Haltung*]”.⁷⁶ It is a name for our way of “holding” ourselves in the ongoing disclosure of a world, our way of enduringly maintaining and encountering ourselves together with others in a world. As such, Heidegger explains, ethics studies the authentic mode of being of the human in the *polis*,⁷⁷ defined as its “being-in-the-*polis*”⁷⁸ – a concept which is an early version of “being-in-the-world”, one of the existentials in *Being and Time*. This is why ethics, for Aristotle, belongs to the study of the human being as a political being: ethics is knowledge of the human being in its authenticity, i.e. what it studies and seeks to detect is the possibilities for the human being’s authentic life-course in the *polis*, as a “being-with-one-another” in the sense of *koinonia*, community or communal world.⁷⁹

Rhetoric also belongs to the study of politics since, according to Aristotle, the human being is political in so far as it is the being endowed with the word. Heidegger stresses Hellenic political life as “lived in the oratory [*in der Reden lebten*]”.⁸⁰ Politics happens in speech, as strategies of

⁷⁴ Martin Heidegger, “Schlageter (May 26, 1933)” in *The Heidegger Controversy: A Critical Reader*, trans. Steven Galt Crowell, Joel Golb and William S. Lewis, ed Richard Wolin (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1993).

⁷⁵ Kisiel, “Rhetorical Protopolitics in Heidegger and Arendt”, p. 135.

⁷⁶ Heidegger, *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, p. 91, 125, 209. (Trans. modified).

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 125.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 91.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 125, 209.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 183. (Trans. modified.)

speech and oratory games. As such *logos* did not primarily mean judgment, concept or reason, but simply speech – and it was more than a verbal, discursive practice, according to Heidegger. It was a mode of being of the human that also included non-verbal passions and actions. What is spoken, shared and received in listening in the political speech-situation itself, is its *ethos* and *pathos*. As such speaking is essentially communication, *Mitteilung*, whose literal meaning in German is to share. What is shared with others in speech is the opening up of a common “here” and “now”: a communal world, *koinonia*, is constituted, disclosed and shared. “*Speaking is in itself communicating [Mitteilen]; and, as communication [Mitteilung], it is nothing other than koinonia.*”⁸¹

Speech is understood by Heidegger as the defining mode of being of human Dasein, and as such the human being is marked by a passive, receptive moment: listening is an aspect of speech. Stressing Aristotle’s definition of the human as *zoon logon echon*, the being endowed with the word, he understands the human being as at once “had” by speech and as “having” speech. Thus the human being is a political being, *zoon politikon*, since speech is addressed to another: in speech a community happens, and in speaking and listening the human being encounters itself in a world already saturated by language.⁸² Heidegger’s focus is precisely on speech as defining political Dasein [*Grundcharacter des Daseins als zoon politikon*]⁸³. Later, in a lecture course on Hölderlin from 1942, he will again stress Aristotle’s definition in the *Politics* of the human being as a political being. The often neglected reason behind Aristotle’s definition, he says, is that the human being “is a living being that has the word, which means: that being that can address beings as such with respect to their Being.”⁸⁴ As endowed with the word, the human being is someone for whom being is at stake, and a constant concern – a concern expressed in political life.

As suggested by Nancy S. Struever, Heidegger’s strategy in *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy* is to read Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* as revealing Hellenic political life.⁸⁵ As such rhetoric is not simply a formal discipline, it is more than a *techne* for manipulating speech. It “exists inside of politics

⁸¹ Ibid, p. 114.

⁸² Ibid, p. 50-56, 91-92, 179-181.

⁸³ Ibid, p. 178. (Trans. modified.)

⁸⁴ Martin Heidegger, *Hölderlin’s Hymn “The Ister”*, trans. William McNeill and Julia Davis (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), p. 81.

⁸⁵ Struever, “Alltäglichkeit, Timefulness, in the Heideggerian Program”, p. 106.

[*steht innerhalb der politike*]”,⁸⁶ as Heidegger formulates it, since it deals with possibilities of being for the being endowed with the word, and as such it reveals possibilities for political Dasein. He compares rhetoric to medicine, and the medical study of nature: like medicine, rhetoric does not address the individual, but something else. What it addresses is the possibilities of therapy, not of the individual, but of the nature and being of the speaking community. Rhetoric is political therapy although it differs from medicine in being more than a *techne*.⁸⁷ It makes “visible [*offenbar*]” a possibility or mode of being of Dasein, and as such it can make the “true [*Wahr*]” “perceivable [*sichtbar*]”.⁸⁸ As situated inside of politics, rhetoric is therefore not simply sophistry: it studies the nature of the human being as the being endowed with the word, in order to distinguish and detect its possibilities. As such it has the power to make visible a “fundamental possibility” for political Dasein: “*In the being of the human itself lies the fundamental possibility [Grundmöglichkeit] for being-in-the-polis.*”⁸⁹

As the being who at once “has” the word and is “had” by the word, Heidegger thus understands human Dasein in this lecture course as political to the core of its being. Moods, affects, action and habits are interpreted as ways in which Dasein is “had” and “moved” by a political world.⁹⁰ It always already finds itself in the *polis*, disclosed together with a political community. What he searches for, however, is not only, as Struever suggests in her essay, an understanding of the “everyday”, “average” mode of political Dasein as grounded in temporality.⁹¹ He stresses Aristotle as taking his starting point in the “everyday” mode of life in *polis* – but as Kisiel points out his interpretation of Aristotle is also inscribed in a confrontation with what he sees as a Greek metaphysics of presence.⁹² He approaches Aristotle as laying out the “everyday”, “average” mode of political Dasein – but this mode of being is simultaneously the object of a philosophical confrontation, prefiguring the philosophical destruction of the public world, its temporality and spatiality, in *Being and Time*. In *Being and Time*, the philosophical destruction of public Dasein seeks to remove sedimented and reified historical layers in Dasein’s self-understanding as being-with, i.e. as con-

⁸⁶ Heidegger, *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, p. 219. (Trans. modified.)

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 192-198, 202-203.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 202.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 91.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 201-202, 263-270, 288.

⁹¹ Struever, “Alltäglichkeit, Timefulness, in the Heideggerian Program”, p. 106.

⁹² Kisiel, “Rhetorical Protopolitics in Heidegger and Arendt”, p. 131-133.

stituted together with others, in a communal world. Through a confrontation with the “uprooted” mode of being of public Dasein, the situation is released as a more fundamental possibility for Dasein’s being-in-the-world and being-with, and is defined in § 74 as coming to presence in the constitution of a historical community and generation.

In *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy* it is by confronting “average” political Dasein as a mode of being-in-the-*polis* that the “fundamental possibility” for political Dasein, covered over by layers of reified experience, can come to presence. He emphasizes the aim of the lecture course as that of revealing the ground, *Boden*, from out of which the Aristotelian concepts grew and continue to stand, the ground in which they are rooted and have their *Bodenständigkeit*.⁹³ In the parallel “Ruhr-talk” this ground is truth. Returning to Aristotle and revealing the ground, however, is not a nostalgic return to a remote past. It belongs to the critique of history, through which an end is accomplished, and a future possibility is released. Not for one moment, he writes, does the return to history have “the slightest interest in serving antiquarian concerns.”⁹⁴

While truth is never explicitly thematized in *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, the disclosive aspect of the human being’s being-in-the-*polis* is a central theme throughout. In the “Ruhr-talk”, truth is explicitly addressed and a key topic is how speech can be grounded in truth, as opposed to being uprooted. The various modes of political speech are understood as ways of disclosing a community. Addressing the three classical genres of political speech in Antiquity, he interprets them as modes of disclosure, revealing life in the *polis*. These genres are: (i) the political speech that seeks to persuade and is directed to a future action and future policies; (ii) the judicial speech before a court of law whose subject matter is the justice or injustice of past actions; and (iii) finally the festive speech dealing with the values of the present.⁹⁵ Furthermore, these three modes of speech reveal Dasein in its temporality: whereas the first is a political strategy that makes possible future policies and actions, and the second deals with judgment about past actions, the third involves a reliving in the present of exemplary deeds. When ten years later Heidegger held a speech to honor Schlageter at the

⁹³ Heidegger, *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, p. 32, 39, 423.

⁹⁴ Heidegger, “Being-There and Being-True According to Aristotle”, p. 234.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 222, 235-237.

University of Freiburg, Schlageter's death was celebrated as a sacrifice and an exemplary deed that opened up a future to come.⁹⁶

Rhetoric, as Heidegger treats it in *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, is concerned with time; it is an investigation and study of the being of Dasein in its temporality. "Being itself as concern [*Besorgen*] and concernedful [*besorgenes*] speech is *temporal*, it is concern about the *still-not-at-hand* [*noch-nicht-Vorhandene*], speaks about the *already-happened* [*schon-Geschehene*], investigates the *presencing of what is now* [*Jetzt-Daseiende*]."⁹⁷ The three modes of political speech are interpreted as forming a receptive modus in seeking to win its audience, and in appealing to the *pathos* and *ethos* of the listener. They are not only ways in which a *pathos* and *ethos* is shared, and received, by a political community, they are also constitutive for a community to come. The *pathos* of the listener is stressed as crucial: in *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy* Heidegger interprets *pathe*, passions, as disclosing Dasein's *Befindlichkeit*.⁹⁸ Through passions Dasein encounters and finds itself in the *polis*. His definition of passions points back to anxiety in the interpretation of Paul, but also forward to the function of moods in *Being and Time* as the attuned happening of Dasein's thrownness, as well as to the political significance he ascribes to the poet's suffering in his interpretations of Hölderlin in the 1930s and 1940s. In the lecture course *Hölderlin's Hymns "Germania" and "The Rhine"* (1934–1935), the poet's "saying" founds the "fundamental attunement" of suffering, revealing "the truth of a people".⁹⁹ It is a truth envisioned and spoken by the poet in advance, though yet to be established in beings in an enduring way. It comes to presence in an enduring way when configured by a thinker and given a concrete shape by the statesman.¹⁰⁰ The poet, Heidegger says in another lecture course on Hölderlin from 1942, is a demi-god. Standing between gods and men, he speaks in signs, transmitting a destiny to come.¹⁰¹

⁹⁶ "[I]n his [i.e., Schlageter's] most difficult hour, he had to achieve *the greatest thing of which a man is capable*. Alone, drawing on his own inner strength, he had to place before his soul an image of the future awakening of the people to honor and greatness so that he could die believing in this future." (Heidegger, "Schlageter (May 26, 1933)", p. 40–41.)

⁹⁷ Heidegger, *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, p. 215. (Trans. modified.)

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 297–298.

⁹⁹ Heidegger, *Hölderlin's Hymns "Germania" and "The Rhine"*, p. 126.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 126.

¹⁰¹ Heidegger, *Hölderlin's Hymn "The Ister"*, trans. William McNeill and Julia Davis (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), p. 153–156.

In *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, Heidegger suggests that *pathos* means “attunement [*Sichbefinden*]”,¹⁰² and is thus a way of finding and encountering oneself in a community and political world. The *pathe* are not states of mind, they determine our being-in-the-*polis*. They belong, not simply to an isolated part of the human being, but are ways in which self, world and community are disclosed; understood as the capacity to receive change, as disclosure of a sudden conversion, *Umschlag*.¹⁰³ This is the ontological meaning of *pathos*, the correlate of *paschein* – i.e. suffering, receiving or undergoing change. At the same time, however, it is also an active making, *poiesis* and fulfillment. As capacities for change *pathos* entails a fundamentally disruptive moment, defined as “losing composure” and “being-brought-out-of-composure [*Aus-der-Fassung-Kommen*]”.¹⁰⁴ When discussing fear in Aristotle Heidegger stresses this: fear is a way in which a future possibility is disclosed, which approaches and “announces” itself as something that can suddenly irrupt, converse and discompose [*aus der Fassung bringen kann*].¹⁰⁵

He thus reads Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* as a treatise on how the adequate *ethos* and *pathos*, which keeps Dasein in enduring disclosure, ready for a future to come, is shared in action and speech. As knowledge and technique concerning language, rhetoric “exists inside of politics [*steht innerhalb der politik*]”,¹⁰⁶ and is that through which the *ethos* and *pathos* of a political community is both constituted and shared. What in this sense political rhetoric has the power to reveal is the situation. To speak “with” the world is to speak with one another, from which a common world is disclosed. There are, though, several ways in which a bringing-to-language can be effected. Authentic discourse discloses the situation, defined as a shared time-space, a “here” and “now”:

In this bringing-to-language of what is *sumpheron* [conducive], of the world as it is concretely there, the world is first authentically brought into the ‘there’. The ‘now’ and ‘here’ of the being of the human becomes explicit in a particular deliberation, and through this deliberation the human being is – in modern terms – in the concrete situation [*der konkreten Situation*], in the authentic *Kairos*. In this *logos*, *legein* as

¹⁰² Heidegger, *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, p. 397. (Trans. modified.)

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 269.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 269.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 382.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 219. (Trans. modified.)

logizesthai, the being of the human being has the world there, in such a way that I am in the world here and now in a particular site [*Lage*].¹⁰⁷

The word *Lage* is used by Heidegger in *Being and Time* for describing the situation. Not only does *Lage* here suggest position, readiness for action, openness to the extreme and unforeseen, it also has a spatial significance capturing the latin *situs*, which belongs to the word situation, meaning site. In the word situation, “there is an overtone of spatial significance” that, he stresses, should not be eliminated.¹⁰⁸ As well as carrying a temporal meaning, it also refers to the position and site of action and enactment, “to be in the position of [*in der Lage sein*]”.¹⁰⁹ In *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy* authentic discourse discloses the situation as the “fundamental possibility” of political Dasein. Accordingly, authentic discourse enacts the attuned authentic space-time of the disclosive movement in which political Dasein is rooted in its ground, *Boden*. It is speech that “stands” in this site, constituting a community by accomplishing, in an enduring way, a sudden conversion, *Umschlag*, of everyday political Dasein. *Pathos*, as that through which Dasein receives sudden irruption and change, “*is the ground [Boden] upon which language grows and to which expressions return*”.¹¹⁰ It is the ground from out of which Dasein speaks, but as such the ground is also transmitted, shared and communicated *in* speech.

The “Ruhr-talk” and *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy* can be seen as two works where Heidegger develops the situation as a way of grounding political Dasein in the truth. As a mode of being the situation also grounds truth: it makes a disclosive movement, in its authentic temporality, come to presence in an enduring way in the *polis*. It is a possibility of being that cannot be distinguished from the performative element in the lectures themselves. By destroying historical sediments of meaning that determine everyday political Dasein, the situation – enacted through the philosophical method – is revealed as the authentic disclosure of a political community. For Heidegger, the grounding of political Dasein in the truth is not to actualize the state’s true or ideal form. It is instead to ground Dasein’s mode of being in a historical transformation, which comes to endurance when taken up as a mode of life by a community. Here we can see for the

¹⁰⁷ Ibid, p. 111-112. (Trans. modified.)

¹⁰⁸ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 299.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, p. 299.

¹¹⁰ Heidegger, *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, 397. (Trans. modified.) See also p. 266.

first time that the role of constituting a community, which Heidegger had earlier ascribed to the Pauline proclamation, is transposed onto a discourse grounding a political community in the truth, and grounding truth in a political community.

In his interpretation of Paul, Heidegger emphasized the structure of the proclamation, expressed “in the situation of a letter-writer” as determining the content of the communal world.¹¹¹ Which is to say, the communal world is given to Paul in the situation, while his “standing” in relation to the congregation addressed in and by the proclamation determines the communal world constituted in his speech. What kind of community, then, emerges in the situation? Interpreting Paul, Heidegger develops Paul’s standing as his unique and personal relation, alone and face to face in an unmediated meeting with God: “each stand alone before God.”¹¹² The direct relation to God, in the situation, is what he must communicate and share with the congregation. Although it is a direct relation, the congregation’s access to the situation must still be mediated. This is what Paul provides in the proclamation. The proclamation is discourse that shares his direct standing, alone and face to face with God, and as such it must be equally direct. Formulating Paul’s position with regards to the members of the congregation, Heidegger writes: “I [must] see you, that is to say, have you in person in front of me.”¹¹³ Since faith is something unique, the “comportment [*Grundhaltung*]” of faith must be articulated, communicated and shared in a personal speech. This is a role the law – the religious, ethical or juridical law – cannot play, not only because it is understood by Heidegger as a fallen representation of *parousia*, which cannot be represented, but also because the law is abstract, anonymous and indifferent to the individual. “Whoever thus stands under the law is condemned.”¹¹⁴ The proclamation is personal speech that does not represent but indicates in a way adapted to the congregation: in his letter-writing, Paul sees the members of the congregation, he has them in person in front of him.

In these lectures, anxiety is developed as the feeling in which the heart opens up to God in a unique, personal way – and where the individual, who proves his faith in God by entering into anxiety, receives from God an

¹¹¹ Heidegger, *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, p. 61.

¹¹² *Ibid*, p. 79

¹¹³ *Ibid*, p. 99. The quote is not from Paul, but Heidegger’s interpretation of the “spirit” expressed in a passage in Paul’s first letter to the Thessalonians.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 51.

opening to an enduring meeting. According to Heidegger's interpretation, however, the members of the congregation are not themselves capable of acquiring and maintaining this relation of access, face to face with God – for instance by observing themselves in relation to the law. Access is mediated by a personal leader, sharing a mode of being that provides and secures the congregation's readiness for God. A leader who "has" himself and is himself only in so far as the congregation responds to the call, and the situation comes into the world, and endures. His own unique position in relation to *parousia*, as well as his own openness to its event, are dependent on the congregation's response to the proclamation. Heidegger does not discuss this structure as "being-with" or "being-with-one-another", which is his name for human Dasein as a being which always already exists together with other human Daseins in *Being and Time*, but it can be seen as an early outline of authentic being-with. He now suggests that "the how" of Paul's relation to the congregation determines the content of the community it constitutes. A community is released in the world that is unified not by law but by a personal leader in struggle with the law, as the authentic way in which Paul "has" himself, in and as the constitution of a community. Paul's relation to the community of the proclamation is a discourse that leads the congregation to *parousia*, grounds and re-grounds a community in the event of God's sudden presence – and the community it constitutes is a community structured not only by prioritizing a personal leader over law, but by Paul's struggle against the law.

When Heidegger turns to Aristotle's writings on rhetoric and politics in the "Ruhr-talk" and *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, he stresses that authentic speech is accomplished once the *ethos* and *pathos* of the speaker is shared: "He himself, his existence (*ethos*), must speak for what he is saying [...] the speech must be curt and speak directly to the heart."¹¹⁵ The *ethos* of the speaker refers to the way in which he "gives himself" to those listening – and in "giving oneself [*Sichgeben*]" this giving also speaks.¹¹⁶ The bringing-to-language of the speaker is a speaking not only through the content of words, but "*with his person*".¹¹⁷ What is received and taken up in listening is not a cognitive content, but a possibility of being for Dasein. In *Being and Time* Aristotle's understanding of rhetoric is commented upon. There Heidegger underscores Dasein as determined by attunement, and by

¹¹⁵ Heidegger, "Being-There and Being-True According to Aristotle", p. 236.

¹¹⁶ Heidegger, *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, p. 260. (Trans. modified.)

¹¹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 260.

the transmission of moods in and through speech. Moods, he says, is that from out of which the speaker speaks, as well as what the speaker seeks to accomplish: “*The speaker speaks to it and from it.*”¹¹⁸

In the lectures on Aristotle’s notions of rhetoric and politics, the performative structure of the Pauline proclamation is again taken up in Heidegger’s understanding of authentic discourse as disclosing a future possibility for political Dasein. It is a discourse that, through simultaneous destruction and retrieval of the past, constitutes the situation by revealing it as a “fundamental possibility” for Dasein as a being in the *polis*. The possibility it reveals is enacted and comes to presence, in an enduring way, in discourse itself. To ground political Dasein in the truth does not mean for Heidegger the retrieval of a given, historical possibility – the “true”, historical way in which a community is constituted – but to indicate the situation, that is, it requires a mode of disclosure emerging in the indication itself, so that an address can be responded to by way of a mode of being in the *polis*. Truth thus begins to acquire the function of gathering a political people to come.

In order to investigate this dimension of Heidegger’s concept of truth and true discourse further, I will now turn to *Being and Time* where the situation is described as “the truth of existence”. Although it is an underdeveloped theme in *Being and Time*, the situation is laid out in § 74 as coming to its most authentic expression in the constitution of a historical people in its struggle with public Dasein.

IV. The Situation as the Site of a Historical People in *Being and Time*

In his reading of *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, William McNeill points out that political and alethic themes from Heidegger’s early lecture courses on Aristotle are taken up and inscribed in the analysis of Dasein in *Being and Time*, where the public disclosedness of the “anyone” is discussed.¹¹⁹ McNeill never expands on this topic, but the philosophical destruction of the everyday mode of being in the public space of the Greek *polis* in *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy* and the “Ruhr-talk” can be seen as prefiguring the destruction of public Dasein in *Being and Time*. In *Being and Time*, the destruction of public Dasein provides access to the

¹¹⁸ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 138-139.

¹¹⁹ McNeill, *The Time of Life*, p. 79.

authentic community of a people discussed in § 74. Several commentators, such as Bourdieu, Arendt and Marcuse have drawn attention to the political dimension of Heidegger's criticism of public Dasein in *Being and Time*. Bourdieu interprets Heidegger's concept of the "they" – *das Man* – as the introduction of a mass-power representing a leveling down of authentic politics. According to Bourdieu it is introduced as a force of extreme indifference and concealment, expressed in public opinion and the egalitarian structure of public Dasein, which Heidegger turns into a fundamental, ontological category.¹²⁰ Marcuse discusses *das Man* as Heidegger's only conception of a community, in sharp distinction to authentic existence, which according to him appears as the existence of a withdrawn individual.¹²¹ Arendt makes a similar point in an early comment on Heidegger, where public Dasein is contrasted to the authentic existence of a solitary individual.¹²² However, in § 74 Heidegger did develop a positive possibility for a historical community, in "communication [*Mitteilung*] and struggle [*Kampf*]"¹²³ with public Dasein, although this is an underdeveloped theme in *Being and Time*.

In order to clarify the political dimension of the situation, as it comes to its authentic expression in the community of a people discussed in § 74, I will begin by investigating publicness in relation to Heidegger's notion of truth as *aletheia*. In § 44, where Heidegger develops truth as *aletheia*, he picks up a line of thought from the "Ruhr-talk", where the question of truth was explicitly raised in relation to political Dasein. In the "Ruhr-talk", recall that the correspondence theory of truth is seen as an inauthentic interpretation of truth expressed in Dasein's "uprooted" interpretation of itself. Here uprootedness is located within the public world of the *polis*, though the manner in which uprootedness appears in the public world is not explained. However, Jeffrey Andrew Barash points out that publicness and the public world plays "a particularly important role" also in Heidegger's interpretation of truth in *Being and Time*.¹²⁴ Publicness, the public world and public Dasein, is laid out by Heidegger in § 25-27. Here the egalitarian structure of the public world and public space is interpreted as a mode of being-with. Being-with, *Mitsein* or *Mitdasein*, is according to Heidegger

¹²⁰ Bourdieu, *The Political Ontology of Martin Heidegger*, p. 70-87.

¹²¹ Marcuse, "Heidegger's Politics: an Interview".

¹²² Arendt, "What is Existential Philosophy?" in *Essays in Understanding*, ed. Jerome Kohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1995), p. 176-182.

¹²³ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 384-385.

¹²⁴ Barash, "The Political Dimension of the Public World", p. 254.

constitutive for Dasein, as a being that always encounters itself together with others, in a world. Or, more precisely, Dasein exists as a “*Da*”, a “there”, it is there as a disclosive opening and as such it exists as being-with. As a “there” it is a being for whom the sense of being, including its own being, is at stake: it interprets itself, together with others, in a world that is always also a communal world. “Publicness” and “public Dasein” is an expression of inauthentic being-with, where Dasein exists alongside with others in a mode of disclosure that according to Heidegger expresses a flight from finitude. He describes it as a mode of being-with that abolishes all difference and distance between human Dasein to the point that it appears as an anonymous “Anyone”, a “they”. Dasein finds itself in the world, moves and interprets itself, like anyone and everyone else.

World in *Being and Time* refers to the ontological structure of disclosure, which belongs to Dasein as the being that “essentially *is* its disclosedness”.¹²⁵ As such Dasein always encounters itself, other Dasein and things, in a complex web of meaningful relations of concern. The world, in the sense of a network of relations, is thus prior to human Dasein, who encounters itself as already situated within it. The priority of the world is related to what Heidegger sees as the common accessibility of the everyday world, and to Dasein as a being that exists in and as a movement of disclosure. The world’s priority is a condition for relations to particular things and other, individual Dasein. It is expressed as a coherent and available structure within which Dasein orients itself and interprets itself. As such, the everyday, continual openness to the world consists in a complex and anonymous web of orientations and social relations, in accordance with which Dasein copes, moves and interprets itself in terms of *Das Man*, the anonymous “they”. What Heidegger calls the public world, *öffentliche Welt*, is this continuously available structure, which determines the non-authentic way in which Dasein exists as being-with. In the public world it moves and lets itself be “transported” by an available web of orientations. “[T]he public ‘surrounding world’ is always already at hand and taken care of [...]. In utilizing public transportation, in the use of information services such as the newspaper, everyone is like the next.”¹²⁶ What is available in this sense, Barash stresses, is characterized by the durability embodied in the permanence of the anonymous “they”, understood by Heidegger as continuously offering

¹²⁵ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 221.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 126.

paths for the inherent tendency of Dasein to escape the finitude of its mortal existence.¹²⁷ “The they”, Heidegger comments, “never dies”.¹²⁸

The public world is thus seen by Heidegger as an inauthentic way in which being-with is constituted and preserved in and as a flight from finitude. In part II of *Being and Time*, the public interpretability of the everyday world is grounded in “public time”. Dasein’s utilization of tools and transportation facilities, its encounter with objects and other Dasein, is possible only if there is general access to a public and measurable time. “[I]n *measuring time*”, Heidegger writes, “it is *made public* in such a way that it is encountered on each occasion and at any time for everyone as ‘now and now and now.’”¹²⁹

What is important here is not the structures themselves, but the relevance they have for the interpretation of truth in § 44. Here Heidegger argues that the traditional concept of truth as correspondence or agreement arises as a modification of the public interpretation of the world. Truth as *adaequatio intellectus et rei*, as agreement or correspondence between thought and thing, he explains, presupposes the availability of a world. The interpretation of the correspondence theory as a relation of representation between thought and thing presupposes the “objectively present conformity of something objectively present, of the statement expressed, to something objectively present, the being spoken about.”¹³⁰ Thus this notion of truth stems from the public interpretation of Dasein, as does the criteria of truth’s universal validity, *Allgemeingültigkeit*, which according to him arises from the constant availability to everyone, at every moment, of a world where beings are uniformly uncovered and accessible. He contrasts the criteria of universality to the situation, and the “authentic historiography” that becomes accessible in the situation: “In no science are the ‘universal validity’ of standards and the claim to ‘universality’ that are demanded by the they and its common sense less possible criteria of ‘truth’ than in authentic historiography.”¹³¹

The philosophical destruction of the public world and public Dasein provides access to what he calls “originary truth”, *aletheia* or disclosedness, something he sees as presupposed by the correspondence theory also. Truth

¹²⁷ Barash, “The Political Dimension of the Public World”, p. 254.

¹²⁸ Ibid, p. 254; Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 424-425.

¹²⁹ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 417. (Trans. modified.)

¹³⁰ Ibid, p. 224.

¹³¹ Ibid, p. 395.

in this sense determines Dasein: “disclosedness is the basic character of Dasein in accordance with which it *is* its there.”¹³² As constituted by attunement, understanding and discourse it is the “originary” phenomenon of truth that encompasses the totality of world, being-in and being-with, also in Dasein’s modes of flight. Determined in its being by disclosure, Dasein is the being which “*is* ‘in the truth’”.¹³³ It is thrown into a movement of disclosure and exists from out of it as always already disclosed together with other Dasein in a world.

Truth as disclosure, however, has different modes, where publicness is the inauthentic way in which a “there” happens. It is a mode of disclosure where a “there” occurs that simultaneously covers over this occurrence, which means that Dasein’s experience of itself as determined by *aletheia* is closed off and blocked. In contrast, authentic disclosure is a way of existing in the truth in accordance with which Dasein holds itself disclosed in an enduring way as a being that exists from out of and in a movement of disclosure it cannot control. This mode of being and existing in the truth is “the truth of existence”: the “most originary and authentic disclosedness in which Dasein can be as a potentiality-of-being is the *truth of existence*.”¹³⁴ It is enacted, and becomes manifest, in the situation, where Dasein in an enduring way is disclosed to itself as a being which is its “there”. This mode of truth, which comes to endurance in the situation, is according to Heidegger closed off to public Dasein, and cannot become manifest in the public world. “*For the they [...] the situation is essentially closed off.*”¹³⁵

The situation is described as the authentic way in which Dasein temporalizes itself, but as we have seen it is a word that also has the spatial significance of the latin *situs*, translated by Heidegger as *Lage*, although space in general, as well as the spatiality of the situation, remains underdeveloped in *Being and Time*.¹³⁶ As *Lage*, the situation is not a frame in which Dasein occurs or human Dasein places itself – it is not a present at hand container, but authentic disclosure of “the there [...] as which the existing being is there.”¹³⁷ The situation is a unique “there” in the sense of a historical site of action and enactment, developed in sharp contrast to the public space of “the they”. “The they knows only ‘the general position

¹³² Ibid, p. 220.

¹³³ Ibid, p. 221.

¹³⁴ Ibid, p. 221.

¹³⁵ Ibid, p. 300.

¹³⁶ Ibid, p. 299.

¹³⁷ Ibid, p. 299.

[*allgemeine Lage*]”¹³⁸ As a historical site, the situation is a unique mode of disclosure, determining how “inner-wordly” beings come to presence and are interpreted, as well as how the being-with of Dasein is constituted. As Heidegger explains in § 75, being-in-the-world has a history. Which is to say, the way in which a world is disclosed is not constant, and in that sense disclosure is not universal. A “there” happens as the unique site where a world is given and a historical people occurs. The latter is discussed in § 74, although he never thematically lays out how the situation as site, or the people constituted there, is to be understood.

How, then, is access provided to the situation for everyday public Dasein, to whom the authentic experience of disclosure is more or less fully closed off and blocked? How should the passage from the inauthentic being-with of Dasein in public space to the authentic being-with of a historical people be comprehended? What role does “the truth of existence” play in relation to the constitution of a community of a historical people? In his essay on the concept being-with in *Being and Time*, Jean-Luc Nancy argues that there is no passage from the inauthentic being-with of everyday Dasein to the authentic being-with of a historical people and generation.¹³⁹ This, he says, reflects a general problem Heidegger had in thinking being-with. On the one hand, being-with in its inauthentic mode is according to Nancy understood as “pure exteriority” in the sense of several Dasein existing in contiguity alongside one another in the public world. On the other hand, the authentic being-with of a historical people is according to Nancy developed as “pure interiority”, where “a single communal Dasein” is posited “beyond the singulars.”¹⁴⁰ If the former mode of being-with corresponds, Nancy says, to democracy “or at least to the vision of democracy held by the author of *Being and Time*”, the latter is a conception of being-with requiring that individual Dasein gives itself up for a “common cause” which “more or less obviously [leads] toward one or the other form of ‘totalitarianism’.”¹⁴¹

However, there is a passage from inauthentic being-with to its authentic mode in *Being and Time*. Although underdeveloped it reveals the role truth and true discourse plays in the constitution of a community of a people,

¹³⁸ Ibid, p. 300.

¹³⁹ Jean Luc Nancy, “The being-with of being-there”, *Continental Philosophical Review*, no. 41 (2008), p. 9.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid, p. 4.

¹⁴¹ Ibid, p. 4.

summoned to assume their historical destiny along the lines suggested by Nancy, where being-with is determined by a “common cause”. As we have seen, Heidegger interprets the Pauline proclamation as a discourse that mediates and shares the situation, which is developed as the mode of being in accordance with which the congregation, in an enduring way, holds itself in openness to the occurrence of *parousia*. In *Being and Time* the mediating function of the proclamation is transposed onto the call of conscience. Although Heidegger repeatedly insists that the call of conscience is not a religious phenomenon, that it should not be interpreted theologically and that the “caller” is not God, it nonetheless retains the performative and even prophetic structure of the proclamation. It is a mode of discourse that reveals the destiny of Dasein, what it is and has to be, but as such it also indicates a mode of being to come, “the truth of existence”, which is a mode of disclosing emerging in the call itself.

The call of conscience, Heidegger says, is “contained in the ground of Dasein”¹⁴², it arises from “the ground of [Dasein’s] being”¹⁴³. It is an address that speaks in silence, calling public Dasein “*forth to the situation*.”¹⁴⁴ As a call it is “a mode of discourse”¹⁴⁵, or more precisely, it is “originary discourse”.¹⁴⁶ What speaks in the call is the origin of Dasein, the being that exists in the truth and has its ground in a disclosive movement. Or rather, the origin and ground of its being presents itself in the form of an announcement or address. Here, the call indicates a fate that cannot be avoided; it reveals what Dasein already is and has to be. But it also announces, in advance, a positive mode of being, coming to presence in the call, in so far as Dasein responds to it.

Like the proclamation in Paul, the call discloses an irruption and break: it hits Dasein as a sudden “jolt”, conversion, rupture and end.¹⁴⁷ As a call it is disclosed to the ear and received in listening. Listening was a theme also in *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, where it was developed as a constitutive aspect of authentic speech in the *polis*. Heidegger for instance comments on hearing, *akouein* – responsiveness to speech – in Aristotle. He remarks that *bios teoretikos* – the philosophical life – was seen by the Greeks as the supreme mode of living and as a natural possibility for the human

¹⁴² Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 300.

¹⁴³ *Ibid*, p. 277.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid*, p. 300.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid*, p. 271.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid*, p. 296. (Trans. modified.)

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid*, p. 271.

being, lived as “pure seeing [*reinen Betrachten*]”.¹⁴⁸ However, Aristotle also approaches the human being as a living political being, since it is a being endowed with the word. Consequently, Aristotle posits listening or hearing, *akouein* – and not seeing – to be the most fundamental mode of perception. The theoretical life, which is an apolitical mode of life, free from practical concerns according to Aristotle, is oriented around intellectual seeing, *nous*, which is *aneu logou*, speechless or beyond speech. Yet hearing – which is the sense responsive to speech, and thus to politics – is determined by Aristotle as the best mode of perception, Heidegger notes.¹⁴⁹

What is disclosed to the ear in the call of conscience in *Being and Time* is not a cognitive content, or a representation of a state of affairs. In the call “the *they* collapses”¹⁵⁰ and Dasein is called forth to the situation. The latter is indicated and announced in advance, an announcement that at the same time brings forth the situation, in the present. Responding to the call, Dasein “does not first represent and acknowledge a situation to itself, but has already placed itself in it.”¹⁵¹ In resoluteness it assumes the situation as “the truth of existence”, which comes to presence and endurance in the response itself.

The word resolution is a translation of *Erschlossenheit*, whose literal meaning is to lock up and liberate. “To disclose”, Heidegger suggests, has the technical meaning of “to unlock” and “to be open”.¹⁵² As such the resolution is a mode of being where Dasein “can become the ‘conscience’ of others.”¹⁵³ In his work on philosophic pedagogy in Heidegger, Ehrmantraut shows that the philosophical method itself has this function in *Being and Time*: the ontological interpretation is itself “an act of ‘communication’.”¹⁵⁴ The philosophical method of destruction and formal indication is not only grounded in the situation as a mode of being. There is also, Ehrmantraut points out, a practical-pedagogical aim for philosophical discourse: to lead and liberate other Dasein to a possibility of existence.¹⁵⁵ In Heidegger’s words, the ontological interpretation “becomes the interpretive liberation [*interpretierende Befreiung*] of Dasein for its ownmost possibility of existen-

¹⁴⁸ Heidegger, *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, p. 89.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 89.

¹⁵⁰ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 273.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 300.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 75.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 298.

¹⁵⁴ Ehrmantraut, *Heidegger’s Philosophic Pedagogy*, p. 17

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 17; Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 295.

ce.”¹⁵⁶ The philosophical interpretation enacts the “originary discourse” of the call, which accomplishes a break with the public world and indicates the situation.

How this break is to be understood, more precisely, is never made clear in *Being and Time*. While the authentic self constituted in the address is laid out in detail, the call also seems to constitute a community. But it is the possibility of the latter that in large part is left unexplored by Heidegger. Nevertheless, he describes in § 74 the historical people as summoned to its destiny in the “communication [*Mitteilung*] and battle [*Kampf*],”¹⁵⁷ through which the mutual occurrence of individual fates, existing alongside one another, is transformed into the destined “occurrence-with” of a people and generation. The term destiny, he says,

designate the occurrence of the community of a people. Destiny is not composed of individual fates, nor can being-with-one-another be conceived of as the mutual occurrence of several subjects. These fates are already guided beforehand in being-with-one-another in the same world and in the resoluteness for definite possibilities. In communication [*Mitteilung*] and battle [*Kampf*] the power of destiny first becomes free. The fateful destiny of Dasein in and with its “generation” constitutes the complete, authentic occurrence of Dasein.¹⁵⁸

Nancy does not comment on the role of truth in the constitution of the historical people, or the role of philosophical interpretation as enactment of the “originary discourse”. What he does point out, in a footnote, is that the word *Mitteilung* not only usually means “communication”, but also “sharing” in the sense of partaking, and “message”. He prefers the translation “message” in so far as it is understood as announcement, meaning “a ‘communiqué’ addressed to the community to signify and hand it over to its destination.”¹⁵⁹ What is important here, however, is that *Mitteilung* is an irruptive address, which awakens and “liberates” everyday Dasein, closed off to the “destination” of its community. It is a mode of discourse that mediates, shares and communicates the situation, and the latter comes to its authentic endurance in the constitution of a historical community. The situation comes to presence and is maintained in historical retrieval, as

¹⁵⁶ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 303. (Trans. modified.)

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 384-385.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 384-385.

¹⁵⁹ Nancy, “The being-with of being-there”, p. 9, fn. 7.

discussed in § 75 as the “taking back” of Dasein from its dispersion in the public world:

Everyday Dasein is dispersed [*zerstreut*] in the multiplicity of what ‘happens’ daily. [...] So if it wants to come to itself it must first *pull itself together* [*zusammenholen*] from the *dispersion* [*Zerstreuung*] and the *disconnectedness* [*Unzusammenhang*] of what has just ‘happened’.¹⁶⁰

In the historical people’s retrieval of possibilities, the situation acquires endurance, *Ständigkeit*. Against the “non-endurance [*Unständigkeit*] of dispersion” characterizing public Dasein, retrieval is “*endurance that has been stretched along* [*erstreckte Ständigkeit*]”.¹⁶¹ It is in and as struggle with public Dasein that the situation comes to enduring presence as a mode of being in which the historical people partake for the first time in its own destination.

Here a theme emerges that will become central to Heidegger’s political writings during the 1930s. Although an underdeveloped topic, the role Heidegger assigns to “the truth of existence” and the “originary discourse”, as discourse that reveals “the truth of existence” as a mode of being and disclosing, is that of awakening and liberating a people. As such “the truth of existence” is a phenomenon that at once differentiates and unites. It differentiates the historical people from public Dasein, but it also unites them in what Nancy calls a “common cause”. Dasein exists in the truth, but truth is also a task and historical mission to be assumed. In the lecture course on Paul, the proclamation called forth a community to the situation as the mode of being in which openness to *parousia* was established and preserved. In *Being and Time*, the “originary discourse” is communication that serves this role in summoning a historical people to the situation as a mode of being that is also a task. In the lecture course on Paul, Paul’s way of “standing” and “having himself” in relation to the congregation in the proclamation was reflected in the community constituted in and through his address. In *Being and Time* the question of what kind of community is constituted in the situation is left more open. Should the passage from publicness to the situation be understood as a modification of publicness? Or should it be seen as an irruptive transformation of a more radical kind that establishes a differently structured public sphere, in line with the community constituted “at the end of time” in his interpretation of Paul?

¹⁶⁰ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 389-390.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 390-391. (Trans. modified.)

The question of community and authentic being-with is never addressed as a theme of its own in *Being and Time*, but when Heidegger introduces the historical people again in his more explicit political writings during the 1930s it is, as we will see in the next chapter, in the context of “communication”, “battle” and “work” that radically transforms political space.

To conclude, we have seen that it is not only in relation to the theoretical attitude that Heidegger criticizes the traditional concept of truth, developing his own notion of truth as *aletheia* in *Being and Time*. Although it is in general an underdeveloped theme truth as *aletheia* is also thought in relation to the constitution of a community of a people. “The originary discourse” is true discourse in so far as it reveals Dasein’s origin and ground in a disclosive movement and indicates in advance “the truth of existence”. It has a performative element since “the truth of existence” comes into being in and through “the originary discourse” itself. It can be interpreted as a discourse that grounds Dasein in the truth, but it also grounds truth in so far as it constitutes a community where “the truth of existence” comes to endurance as a people’s mode of being and disclosing. In relation to a people, the “originary truth”, which is Dasein’s origin and ground, differentiates a community and generation. However, truth is also, as Heidegger stressed in his interpretations of Aristotle, “a task”.¹⁶² It is a mission that unites a people in the situation, where the situation, in the words of Nancy, appears as a “common cause”. Grounding a community in the truth is thus for Heidegger not to reveal and actualize the inner or ideal essence of a people, but to disclose in advance a mode of being that emerges in the present, and that comes to endurance in the constitution of a historical people and generation.

Summary

In this chapter we have seen that what is at stake in Heidegger’s criticism of the traditional concept of truth, and the rethinking of truth as *aletheia*, is not only a questioning of the theoretical attitude. Questions pertaining to truth – i.e. its historical interpretation, of true discourse and the authentic mode of life as providing access to the “originary” phenomenon of truth – are raised in some significant lecture courses and essays from this period, not only in the context of a generation, but also in the context of a

¹⁶² Heidegger, “Phenomenological Interpretations with Respect to Aristotle”, p. 177.

community at “the end of time”, of Dasein as a “being-in-the-*polis*”, and in *Being and Time* with respect to a historical people.

In the lecture courses and essays treated in this chapter, an early version of authentic and true discourse appears, which no longer is to be seen as the correct representation of an object or state of affairs. I have followed how it is developed and displaced, from Heidegger’s interpretation of the religious proclamation in Paul, constituting a community at “the end of time”, to the “Ruhr-speech” and *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy* where authentic discourse reveals the situation as a fundamental possibility, *Grund-möglichkeit*, for political Dasein. Here a mode of true discourse appears for the first time in his writings that grounds political Dasein in the truth, as well as grounding truth in the situation as a mode of being of political Dasein. It has a performative structure since it is a mode of discourse that envisions in advance a truth to come, a truth which is a mode of being and disclosing coming to enduring presence through this discourse itself.

Although an underdeveloped theme, the situation is laid out in *Being and Time* as the site and authentic temporality of a historical people and generation, treated in § 74. The situation is communicated and shared in the call of conscience, the “originary discourse” that accomplishes a break with public Dasein. It is defined by Heidegger as “the truth of existence” and seen as a positive possibility for authentic being-with that comes to endurance in and as a historical retrieval. How this possibility should be understood is far from clear in *Being and Time*, but what Heidegger calls “the truth of existence” plays a role in the transformation of the inauthentic being-with of public Dasein into the authentic “being-with” of a people. It emerges as a possibility of being that distinguishes the historical people from public Dasein, but also unites them in a mission and “common cause”.

CHAPTER 3
The State as a Work of Art

I. The Politics of Beginnings

In June 1933 Heidegger accepted the politically appointed rectorship at the University of Freiburg, from which he would resign a year later. His most explicit political writings are from this period and the years following his resignation, when he conceived “the political” as a revolutionary and historical beginning, and was engaged in the concrete political transformation of Germany.

The question of beginnings is introduced already on the opening pages of his *Black Notebooks* from 1931. The condition in Germany, with economic and political instability, unemployment and inflation, is interpreted as a being-historical situation that calls for a “new beginning [*neuen Anfang*]”¹ – a terminology later replaced by “a second beginning [*zweite Anfang*]”² and “other beginning [*andere Anfang*]”.³ The beginning, he writes, requires an urgent transformation of the essence of truth: “with Dasein a transformation of truth and being is to be compelled.”⁴ What he sees in the National Socialist movement during this period is not a “party politics”, nor a harmless “political instruction” or a question of “the individual and the state.”⁵ In the political “stirrings” of the time he sees a political movement with the potential to accomplish a transformation of the essence of truth, called for in the present. It is politics engaged by truth, and a movement putting what he now sees as the history of truth into play, in a way that will

¹ Heidegger, *Ponderings II–VI*, p. 12.

² See for instance, Heidegger, *Ponderings II–VI*, p. 154–156.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 198–200 ff.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

transform its meaning: “[W]ith Dasein a transformation of truth and being is to be compelled”,⁶ he stresses in *Black Notebooks*.

The question of truth thus occupies a central position in his political writings and engagements during the 1930s, the meaning of which will be investigated in this chapter. In the previous chapter we saw that although the “historical people” was an underdeveloped theme in *Being and Time*, truth played an important role in differentiating the community of a people with respect to public Dasein, but it was also a task, unifying the people in a mission and common cause. In the 1930s the historical people are developed at length in relation to truth, and in an explicit, political context. In this chapter I will investigate in what sense Heidegger saw the National Socialist movement as politics engaged in and by truth, in a way that had the potential to awaken a people as well as transform the essence of truth. How is this transformation to be understood and what role does it play in his political writings? In the previous chapter we also saw that Heidegger developed a performative understanding of true discourse, partly modelled on the religious proclamation. In its “originary” sense, true discourse is a discourse that does not represent, but instead indicates and calls forth a mode of being and disclosure to come. In this chapter the meaning of “originary” and true discourse will be investigated in the context of his political writings from the 1930s, with special focus on his turn to the work of art during this period.

After resigning as head of the University of Freiburg in 1934, he held a lecture course on Hölderlin, *Hölderlin’s Hymns “Germania” and “The Rhine”*, and wrote the essay “The Origin of the Work of Art”.⁷ Here the beginning is formulated through the work of art. Before the relatively recent publication of material such as *Black Notebooks* and the 1934–1935 seminar on “Hegel’s Philosophy of Right”, held in parallel with *Hölderlin’s Hymns “Germania” and “The Rhine”*, his turn toward art was often taken to express his withdrawal from politics, and seen as a critical attempt to settle accounts with the National Socialist movement. In *Black Notebooks*, however, it becomes clear that he did not give up on the National Socialist regime until sometime around 1938, when he began distancing himself from the way it had developed. Interestingly, it also becomes clear that he formulates the

⁶ Ibid, p. 9.

⁷ Martin Heidegger, “The Origin of the Work of Art”, trans. Julian Yong and Kenneth Haynes, in *Off the Beaten Track*, eds. Julian Young and Kenneth Haynes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

beginning already in notes from 1931 as a poetic address – and the thinking that responds as a poetizing of being.⁸

Poetizing, he says a few years later in the lecture course on Hölderlin, is

to project in advance for the first time and in its essence that which is not yet. Insofar as [...] poetizing is a saying [*Sagen*], it also means bringing this projection into the word – as a saying and as something said, to place it as *myth* [*Sage*] into the Dasein of the people, and thus to bring this Dasein to a stand for the first time, to ground it.⁹

Poetizing is to project in advance a historical mode of being and “standing” in the Dasein of the people. Here “Hölderlin has a unique historical position and mission. We can comprehend it in saying: He is the poet of the Germans.”¹⁰ According to Heidegger, Hölderlin is the poet who “says” “the truth of a people”.¹¹ In “saying” the truth of a people he “ground[s]” the Dasein of a people.¹² Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe does not comment on truth or the role of true discourse anything other than short remarks, but according to him the historical mission Heidegger assigns to poetry, and to the work of art in general during this period, is the mythical function of inscribing an origin in the being of the people. It is an origin that does not lie behind them, in a remote past; the origin is a struggle between forces of beginning and end, concealment and unconcealment that can be assumed as a mission in the present, opening up a future to come. As such, myth imprints an *ethos* or style to existence, which is at once a historical destiny, and a task that summons the masses to a people and grounds a state. It was this conception of history, Lacoue-Labarthe stresses, that led Heidegger to National Socialism in the 1930s.¹³

If we follow Lacoue-Labarthe, the political mission Heidegger ascribes to the work of art during this period may seem like a quite different project than that of grounding politics in the truth. However, in the previous chapter I argued that for Heidegger, the grounding of political Dasein in truth is not meant to promote an authentic model of the ideal state, nor to suggest that political claims should be validated by empirical facts, established by scientific methods or to ground the state in an underlying substance or

⁸ Heidegger, *Ponderings II–VI*, p. 12.

⁹ Heidegger, *Hölderlin's Hymns "Germania" and "The Rhine"*, p. 195. (Trans. modified).

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 201.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 126.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 195. (Trans. modified).

¹³ Lacoue-Labarthe, *Heidegger and the Politics of Poetry*, p. 10.

substrate. For him, to ground political Dasein in the truth is to accomplish a transformation in the very way in which the community of a people is disclosed. If the meaning of this transformation was still quite open in the 1920s, it acquires a more determinate shape in his writings from the 1930s, when he begins to formulate being as a poetic address and assigns the role of inscribing in advance an *ethos* in the being of the people to the work of art. The state itself now emerges as a work of art. In the present context, the role of truth in this artwork is precisely what makes his political writings interesting. It is the point where his works can be used as a lens, revealing aspects of the National Socialist movement itself – also when he tried to distance himself from parts of its core ideology.

In order to be able to discuss this it is important to note that Heidegger's concept of truth as *aletheia* undergoes several shifts and turns during this phase, when compared to his early thinking and *Being and Time*. The 1930s mark the beginning of his questioning surrounding the systematic attempt made in *Being and Time* to lay out the meaning of being. As a part of this project he also began rethinking the notion of truth. In the essay "On the Essence of Truth" from 1930, truth as *aletheia* is defined as a historical event, it is the sudden "clearing" of an open and binding "region", issuing from an agonistic struggle between forces of concealment and unconcealment. In the 1931–32 lecture course *The Essence of Truth* he suggests that truth is "an occurrence happening 'in man', i.e., in his *history*."¹⁴ Truth itself has a history – it is the history of a struggle between concealment and unconcealment, which has undergone transitions and turns, still determining the West.

Another important shift in his thinking is that questions of space and place become key issues in his work. As we saw in the previous chapter, the spatial meaning of the situation was indicated in *Being and Time*, but never thematically laid out. During the 1930s the question of space develops into a central theme, although Heidegger gives up the concept of the situation. This shift has been commented upon by several scholars, though when it comes to its political meaning there is much left to explore.¹⁵ In a note in

¹⁴ Heidegger, *The Essence of Truth*, p. 57-58.

¹⁵ Didier Franck and Maria Villela-Petit have for instance argued that the withdrawal of the third section of *Being and Time* was due to the attempt in § 70 to lead spatiality back to its ground in temporality. Heidegger saw the limits of such a hierarchical relation between space and time, but also that acknowledging it, and allowing for a reciprocal relation between space and time, would have called into question the very project called *Being and Time*. It would have questioned the title *Being and Time*, expressing the

Black Notebooks from 1931, Heidegger for instance refers to the book *Volk ohne Raum* (*People without Space*) by Hans Grimm, whose title was used as a political slogan in the Weimar Republic: “What is ‘space’ here? What is ‘time’ here? Is that also *space* as time for a ‘people’?”¹⁶ Space and time are the advent of being, and “the political” is developed in *Black Notebooks* as the awakening of this occurrence: “to open space for this, prepare the roads, and send in advance the directions”.¹⁷ Two years later, in his inaugural speech as head of the University of Freiburg, the university is seen as situated in the “middle [*Mitte*]” or “center” of the state. The concept “situation” in *Being and Time* had a spatial meaning but did not name a place in the world. However, the university is a concrete, historical place where the beginning happens, and the masses are gathered into a people. In several lecture courses, such as the seminar “On the Essence and Concept of Nature, History and State” from 1934, Germany itself is determined as such a place. Turning to Hölderlin in the lecture course *Hölderlin’s Hymns “Germania” and “The Rhine”*, the work of art is seen as revealing Germany as a “metaphysical site [*metaphysische Ort*]”¹⁸ that calls the people to assume their mission in a world-historical struggle.

The lecture course on Hölderlin was given in parallel with the seminar on Hegel’s political philosophy, entitled “Hegel’s Philosophy of Right”. In the latter the question of place is repeatedly taken up in a context where Heidegger refers to concrete political events, such as the National Socialist

project of tracing the meaning of being back to time alone: room would need to have been set aside for space. See Didier Frank, *Heidegger et le problème de l’espace* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1986), p. 115 and Maria Villela-Petit, “Heidegger’s Conception of Space” in *Critical Heidegger*, ed. Christopher Macann (London: Routledge, 1996), p. 135. Edward Casey also comments on the hierarchical relation between time and space in *Being and Time* in his book *The Fate of Place*. (Edward Casey, *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History* [Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998], p. 256-259). According to Jeff Malpas *Being and Time* is accomplished on the model of a logical-mathematical system that Heidegger later came to criticize, where the meaning of being is deduced from a single ground – time. (Jeff Malpas, *Heidegger’s Topology. Being, Place, World* [Cambridge Mass: MIT Press, 2006] p. 104-125). None of them, however, comments on the political significance of this shift. Neither did Heidegger himself, when he looked back on *Being and Time* and suggested that the “attempt in *Being and Time*, § 70, to trace the spatiality of Dasein back [*zurückführen*] to temporality cannot be sustained.” (Martin Heidegger, “Time and Being” in *On Time and Being*, trans. Joan Stambaugh [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002], p. 23.)

¹⁶ Heidegger, *Ponderings II–VI*, p. 14.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 45. (Trans. mod.)

¹⁸ Heidegger, *Hölderlin’s Hymns “Germania” and “The Rhine”*, p. 203, 215, 261. (Trans. modified.)

seizure of power, National Socialist laws and the constitution of the National Socialist state. In comments on Heidegger's thought, Nietzsche and Hölderlin are usually seen as forming a couple where Nietzsche represents an end, in the sense of a thinker in which Western metaphysics is completed and consummated, while Hölderlin stands for a beginning. However, when it comes to Heidegger's political thinking the coupling of Hegel and Hölderlin is more significant.¹⁹ In one of the lecture courses in *Being and Truth* from 1933, he suggests that Hegel's thinking is "the completion of Western philosophy" since, according to him, it combines the two dominating forces of Western metaphysics – a Christian worldview and mathematical rationality.²⁰ Giving the courses on Hegel and Hölderlin together is therefore no coincidence: a confrontation with Hegel's political thinking is required in order to access the "fettered origin"²¹ that Hölderlin's poetry, according to him, has placed in the midst of the people. The confrontation with Hegel is oriented around a series of strategic questions

¹⁹ Nietzsche is no doubt in the background of many of Heidegger's works during the 1930s, not least when it comes to the parallel lecture courses on Hegel and Hölderlin. His criticism of Hegel is present in Heidegger's thought of Hegel as "the completion of Western philosophy" (Martin Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, trans. Georg Fried and Richard Polt [Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2010], p. 10), as well as in Heidegger's attempt at bringing Hegel's system to an end in the seminar on Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*, which will be discussed later on in the present chapter. In the winter semester of 1936–1937 he gave the first of a series of lecture courses on Nietzsche that extended to 1940. During this period, his attitude to Nietzsche underwent a transformation. In the first lecture course, "The Will to Power as Art", Nietzsche is positively valued (Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche, vol. I-II*, trans. David Farrell Krell [Harper Collins: San Francisco, 1991]). The first course centers on the will to power, though other themes are developed as well, such as Nietzsche's anti-Platonism and perspectivism and an understanding of truth as happening in the work of art. It is a central lecture course for the question of art in Heidegger, but in comparison to Hölderlin's *Hymns "Germania" and "The Rhine"* and the essay "The Origin of the Work of Art" from 1935, the political significance of art is a theme that recedes into the background. In the years 1937–1940 he gave three more lecture courses on Nietzsche, "The Eternal Recurrence of the Same", "The Will to Power as Knowledge" and "Nihilism". (Heidegger, *Nietzsche, vol. I-II*; Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche, vol. III-IV*, trans. Joan Stambaugh, David Farrell Krell, Frank A. Capuzzi [Harper Collins: San Francisco, 1991]). Here his attitude has changed. If Hegel, in the opening lecture course in *Being and Truth* from 1933, was the figure who completes Western metaphysics, while Nietzsche and Kierkegaard stand for a beginning in this history, Heidegger gradually comes to associate the role of an end in the history of being with Nietzsche. (Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, p.10). In the lecture course on Nietzsche from 1940 he for instance maintains that "Nietzsche's metaphysics is not an overcoming of nihilism. It is the ultimate entanglement in nihilism." (Heidegger, *Nietzsche, vol III-IV*, p. 203.)

²⁰ Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, p. 10 and 55.

²¹ Heidegger, *Hölderlin's Hymns "Germania" and "The Rhine"*, p. 183.

concerning the state's place. Asking about the location of the state in Hegel's system, he tries to displace the state in order to release it to its proper location, laid out in the parallel lecture course on Hölderlin. Here the state emerges, not as a sum of laws or legal principles, neither as a liberal constitution nor as the friend-enemy relation – but as having its origin in the “metaphysical site” projected by Hölderlin.

In the previous chapter, I discussed the philosophical destruction of publicness in *Being and Time* as providing access to the situation, seen as the site of a historical people and “the truth of existence”. The philosophical destruction of publicness was itself an enactment of the “originary discourse” of the call. The call is true discourse in its authentic sense in *Being and Time*; it reveals Dasein's origin and ground in the disclosive movement of truth, but does so by also grounding truth in the situation as a mode of being of Dasein. It is discourse that calls forth the situation, as a mode of being that emerges in the call itself and comes to enduring presence when taken up by a historical people as a task. How this passage from publicness to the situation is to be understood was, however, not made clear. Should it be seen as a modification of the public sphere? Or as a destruction that opens up a historical site in the sense of a radically different structured public sphere? In the present chapter I will show that a “space-work” is performed in the two lecture courses on Hölderlin and Hegel that can be understood as bringing the political space, which Heidegger sees as disclosed in Hegel's thought, to an end, in order to open up a different one, structured in a radically different way. During this period, true discourse in its “originary” sense is the enactment of a struggle between forces that, according to Heidegger, lies at the essence of truth. This struggle is performed in the parallel lecture courses as a “space-work”. The state is displaced from its place in Hegel's system, to the “metaphysical site” placed in the midst of the people by the poet, where the beginning can be assumed by the people and becomes real in the sense of coming into enduring presence.

In order to discuss this transformation of disclosure, and how the role of truth and the “saying” of truth, which enacts the struggle at the origin of people and state, is to be understood here, I will begin in section II by addressing the “aestheticization of politics” identified by Walter Benjamin as a central element in the fascist state. To be able to investigate in what sense there is an aestheticization of politics in Heidegger that at the same time grounds the state in truth, section III interrogates the shift in his concept of truth as *aletheia* that becomes visible in the early 1930s. Here true discourse, in its “originary” sense, is given a mythical function in

revealing the people's origin in a historical struggle between forces of concealment and unconcealment, beginning and end. In section IV I investigate the university as a site in the "middle" of the state, wherein the struggle is revealed to the people, thereby making it possible for the people to assume the struggle as a mission. Sections V–IX investigate how true discourse in its "originary" sense of an enactment of the struggle, is performed in the "space-work" that Heidegger defines in the seminar "On the Essence and Concept of Nature, History, and State". It is enacted within the lecture courses he held on Hegel and Hölderlin in 1934–1935. Here a political space opens up where mythical elements *come true*, ideology acquires a prophetic character, and the distinction between fiction and truth, myth and reality seem to be erased. In the last part of this chapter, section X, Heidegger's anti-Semitic comments in *Black Notebooks* are addressed in relation to the mythical function of truth in Heidegger's political thought during this period.

II. Aestheticization of Politics

The state as a work of art was central to National Socialism. Joseph Goebbels saw politics as "the plastic art of the state",²² and according to Walter Benjamin, who coined the concept "aestheticization of politics", it was a key ingredient in totalitarian politics. In the essay *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*,²³ Benjamin analyzes the role of art in the fascist state not simply as that of promoting a regressive return to past art-forms and ways of life, nor does he see its function solely as organizing the masses into a people. Art in the fascist state is instead discussed in the context of modern, mechanical reproduction techniques that challenges the inherited values of creativity, genius and eternal aesthetic qualities, seen by the tradition as inherent in the work of art.

Traditionally, he says, the essence of the work of art is its "aura".²⁴ Aura is the art-work's uniqueness, its non-reproducible singularity that also constitutes its authenticity and authority. The aura points to the origin of art in magic and religious practices, when it was an object of rituals and

²² See Paul de Mann, "Hegel on the Sublime" in *Displacement – Derrida and After*, ed. Mark Krupnick (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983) and Lacoue-Labarthe, *Heidegger, Art and Politics*, p. 62.

²³ Walter Benjamin, *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, trans. J. A Underwood (London: Penguin, 2008. E-book.)

²⁴ *Ibid*, p. 14.

sacrificial events. Aura is what cannot survive mass reproduction, and with it the traditional context determining the work of art is destroyed. Techniques of reproduction in that sense penetrate into reality and transform it: reproduction techniques become constitutive of objects themselves, and among them the work of art. In this process the work of art is removed from its religious context and placed in a different one – that of politics. For Benjamin this transformation is not simply destructive, but equally liberating, since it emancipates art from a strictly hierarchical and religious order, where it was accessible only to a few, and prepares it for mass consumption. Severing the work of art from tradition, it is brought closer to the masses, which for him is a promise of emancipation.

According to Benjamin, fascism *responded* to this situation. As such the role of art in the fascist state cannot be seen simply as regression to a moment in history before the transformation took place. Nor is the function of art solely propaganda or the organization of the masses into a people. Benjamin instead suggests that the destruction of the tradition, and with it the transformation of reality by techniques of reproduction, was *affirmed*, but in the form of an “aestheticization” of politics.²⁵ This means that the state itself is constituted as a work of art, in which the masses are allowed to express themselves, but in the cult of a leader and against the horizon of total war. Mankind has reached a stage of alienation “where it now allows its own destruction to be savored as an aesthetic pleasure of the first order.”²⁶ Aesthetics is drawn into the sphere of politics, or as Benjamin formulates it, fascism leads “*to an aestheticization of political life.*”²⁷

A discussion that in some respects is reminiscent of Benjamin’s can be found in Boris Groys’ *The Total Art of Stalinism*.²⁸ Groys argues that art in the Soviet Union, as well as in the National Socialist state, was not in an unambiguous sense opposed to the avant-garde’s questioning of the tradition and criticism of the autonomy of the work of art. In the totalitarian state, art found itself in the position dreamt of by the avant-garde: outside of traditional art-institutions and social norms.²⁹ As such totalitarian art is more than a return to past art-forms, intelligible to the masses in contrast to the unintelligibility of the avant-garde. It assimilates avant-garde methods

²⁵ Ibid, p. 49.

²⁶ Ibid, p. 52.

²⁷ Ibid, p. 49.

²⁸ Boris Groys, *The Total Art of Stalinism – Avant-garde, Aesthetic Dictatorship, and Beyond*, trans. Charles Rougle (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992).

²⁹ Ibid, p. 9.

and expressions in questioning the separation of art from the cognitive and political realm.³⁰ In the National Socialist state art was to reveal the nature of the community of the people, and what grounded them as such, but its function was not to represent the authentic nature of the masses and the state. Its role was instead to constitute the political *in* and *as* a work of art.³¹ Lacoue-Labarthe shares this conception in suggesting that in the National Socialist state “the political itself” is “instituted and constituted (and regularly re-grounds itself) in and as a work of art.”³²

J.M. Bernstein and Sven-Olov Wallenstein have shown that Heidegger’s turn to the work of art in the 1930s is explicitly formulated as a double movement of destruction and retrieval.³³ In “The Origin of the Work of Art”, Heidegger for instance describes the fate of art in Modernity as its loss of traditional values and stresses that thinking that responds to this situation cannot simply return to a state before the alienation took place. An overcoming of aesthetics is required that at the same time retrieves a beginning – as Wallenstein notes it was the 1935 lecture with the title “Die Überwindung der Ästhetik in der Frage nach der Kunstwerk” that served as the basis for “The Origin of the Work of Art”.³⁴ In that sense there is a certain affinity between Heidegger and Benjamin, Wallenstein says.³⁵ Heidegger approaches art in a movement of simultaneous destruction and retrieval, where the consequences for the work of art in Modernity – understood by Heidegger as an era of technological production – is explicitly addressed and developed in relation to politics.³⁶ He sees that a destruction of aesthetics is required, Wallenstein points out, in order to “approach the truth of the work of art, which is to establish the space and order of a *world*”, where a historical people is constituted “that locates itself as a response to the truth opened up by the work of art.”³⁷ It would therefore

³⁰ Ibid, p. 9.

³¹ Ibid. See also Lacoue-Labarthe: *Heidegger, Art and Politics*, p. 64.

³² Lacoue-Labarthe, *Heidegger, Art and Politics*, p. 64. See also the German director Hans Jürgen Syberberg, who wrote on the Third Reich as a “total artwork”. (Hans Jürgen Syberberg, *Die freudlose Gesellschaft: Notizen aus dem letzten Jahr* [Munich/Vienna: Hanser, 1981]).

³³ J. M. Bernstein, *The Fate of Art: Aesthetic Alienation from Kant to Derrida to Adorno* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992), p. 72-88; Sven-Olov Wallenstein, “The Destruction of Aesthetics” in Sven-Olov Wallenstein, *Essays, Lectures* (Stockholm: Axl Books, 2007), p. 240, 280.

³⁴ Wallenstein, “The Destruction of Aesthetics”, p. 279-280.

³⁵ Ibid, p. 241.

³⁶ Ibid, p. 241.

³⁷ Ibid, p. 241.

be too simple to see Heidegger's position as an aestheticization of politics that reinstates the aura and the religious, ritual, dimensions of the work of art.³⁸ The correct term, if we follow Wallenstein, would perhaps be a "politicization of aesthetics", although of a different kind than the communist politicization suggested by Benjamin in resistance to the "aestheticization of politics" in the fascist state. However, the work of art in Heidegger makes possible an active role for the people, and in that sense we can speak of a "politicization of aesthetics". It invites the people to partake in the opening up of a world, and the grounding of a state, rather than simply to take aesthetic pleasure in their own destruction.

Lacoue-Labarthe reads Heidegger in a somewhat different way than Wallenstein since he stresses the mythical role assigned to the work of art by Heidegger. Heidegger's retrieval of a beginning for the work of art prepares it for a political mission, where the artwork is assigned the role of inscribing, in advance, a historical destiny in the Dasein of the people.³⁹ The word Heidegger uses is *Prägung*, to inscribe, mark or form. Poetry as projective "saying", *Sagen* – which is the essence of all art according to him – inscribes in advance, in the being of a people, their mission and place in world-history. Heidegger writes that

the fable [*Sage*] of world and earth, the fable of the arena of their strife and, thereby, of all nearness and distance of the gods. Poetry is the fable of the unconcealment of beings. The prevailing language is the happening of that saying in which its world rises up historically for a people and the earth is preserved as that which remains closed. Projective saying is that in which the preparation of the sayable at the same time brings the unsayable as such to the world. In such saying, the concepts of its essence – its belonging to world-history, in other words – are formed [*geprägt*] in advance, for a historical people.⁴⁰

The work of art appoints a unique historical task: "Whenever art happens, whenever, that is, there is a beginning, a thrust enters history and history either begins or resumes. [...] History is the transporting of a people into its appointed task [*Aufgegebenes*] as the entry into its endowment [*Mitgegebenes*]."⁴¹ The thinking that thinks the work of art makes possible the people's recognition, its "giving" of itself, to this task, which is concealed

³⁸ Ibid, p. 301.

³⁹ Lacoue-Labarthe, *Heidegger and the Politics of Poetry*, p. 3-16.

⁴⁰ Heidegger, "The Origin of the Work of Art", p. 46. (Trans. modified).

⁴¹ Ibid, p. 49.

and cannot be experienced. The mythical function of the work of art, Lacoue-Labarthe argues, becomes visible in the theme of *Prägung* – the marking or imprinting that shapes an *ethos* or mode of being for the people: “Myth becomes effective and active, that is, exemplary, only because it imprints or impresses a *hexis*, in general, or a *habitus*, a style of existence, if you like, or an *ethos*”.⁴² In Heidegger’s 1920–1921 interpretation of Paul, discussed in the previous chapter, the religious proclamation was seen as discourse revealing a mode of being that constitutes a community at the end of time, and in the 1924 lecture course on Aristotle, political rhetoric was interpreted as a technique for revealing a fundamental possibility for political *Dasein*, understood as an *ethos* or mode of being in the *polis*. In Heidegger’s writings on art from the 1930s, the revelation of a historical possibility for the people is assigned to the “saying” of the work of art and understood as discourse that imprints, in advance, a mission that the people can assume and “give” itself over to. According to Lacoue-Labarthe, myth is

the historical inscription of a people, and the means by which a people is able to identify itself or appropriate itself as such, to see its world – and in particular its state – established or instituted, to receive and respect the gods, or even entrust itself to them or to let itself be ruled by them – having nonetheless previously imposed them: that is, figured or “fictioned” them.⁴³

Stressing myth Lacoue-Labarthe indicates a quasi-religious dimension in Heidegger’s position. In that sense he identifies an aestheticization of politics in Heidegger’s works, but of a different kind than the aestheticization discussed by Benjamin. Like Wallenstein, Lacoue-Labarthe does not seem to see the role of the people in Heidegger as simply that of taking aesthetic pleasure in their destruction. What the work of art invites the people to do is to partake in the opening up of a world, yet as such its role is also to passively respond to this beginning, assume and preserve it. I will use the concept “aestheticization of politics” in order to stress the mythical role of art in Heidegger, but that said it is should be remembered, as stressed by Wallenstein, that Heidegger’s position is not that of simply introducing a pre-modern conception of the work of art into the sphere of politics.

What is important here is that Heidegger’s destruction of aesthetics also opens up for the moment when art, which is separated from truth and the

⁴² Lacoue-Labarthe, *Heidegger and the Politics of Poetry*, p. 10.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

cognitive realm when seen as an object of aesthetic pleasure, becomes a bearer of truth. “Art allows truth to arise [*entspringen*]”⁴⁴, he maintains, in opening up a world. What then is the place and role of truth, true discourse and the transformation of truth Heidegger repeatedly stresses as urgent, in his political writings from this period? In so far as there is an aestheticization of politics in his writings, along the lines suggested by Lacoue-Labarthe, how is it related to truth and the project of grounding the state in truth? In order to be able to discuss the role of truth and true discourse in Heidegger’s political writings we must begin in the early 1930s, when he starts to rethink truth as *aletheia* in comparison to his early works and *Being and Time*. Already here, before the turn to Hölderlin, a mythical dimension becomes visible. True discourse is seen as revealing, and at the same time accomplishing, a world-historical struggle between forces that awakens and summons a people.

III. Truth as Struggle between Concealment and Unconcealment

Coming back to the difference between truth as *aletheia* and truth as the correctness of propositions in the 1930 essay “On the Essence of Truth”, the 1931–1932 lecture course *The Essence of Truth* and the lecture courses from 1933 published in *Being and Truth*, Heidegger stresses *aletheia* as a historical event. The neglect of truth as *aletheia*, in favor of the derivative concept of truth as correspondence, is seen as a transformation of disclosure. As such it is an occurrence in the history of truth, marking the beginning of a calculative mode of disclosure in the West, determined by technological production.

Truth as *aletheia* is still defined, along the lines of *Being and Time*, as modes of disclosure that determine a totality of beings, as well as empirical and factual truths, which in *The Essence of Truth* he briefly discusses as the object of propositions, that is, truth in its derivative form.⁴⁵ However, *aletheia* is now conceived as having a history, which is the history of transformations of the modes of disclosure determining beings. To him, history is the history of these transformations, which cannot be investigated by empirical methods or established by facts, since the latter presuppose *aletheia*. In his political writings there are almost no references to facts, in the sense of truths established or verified by empirical methods – the kind

⁴⁴ Heidegger, “The Origin of the Work of Art”, p. 49.

⁴⁵ Heidegger, *The Essence of Truth*, p. 2-3.

of truth which has political significance to him is *aletheia*, or “the truth of being”. “Philosophizing”, as he comments at one stage in *Black Notebooks*, is the “setting up of truth ahead of individual truths, the transformation of traditional ‘truth’.”⁴⁶ What he calls “individual truth”, *einzelne Wahrheiten*, is exemplified in one of the lecture courses in *Being and Truth* from 1933, the year Hitler came to power. Individual truths, he explains, are truths such as “2 and 1 is 3”, “The earth orbits the sun”, but also “On the 12th of November the German people will cast the vote that determines its own-most future”.⁴⁷ Individual truths in this sense of logical truths, empirical facts and events, he stresses, are usually interpreted as the correlate of correct statements, but they depend, for their disclosure, on *aletheia*. The interpretation of truth as correctness is the expression of a historical alteration of *aletheia* in the history of metaphysics, which according to him still determines or even dominates the present. To set up truth ahead of individual truths, as he suggests in *Black Notebooks*, is to accomplish a counter movement in the sense of a transformation of this mode of disclosure, a “transformation of traditional ‘truth’”, which will therefore also transform the way in which beings, facts and events are disclosed and interpreted.

In “On the Essence of Truth”, *aletheia* is defined as a struggle between forces of concealment and unconcealment. It is the clearing of “an open region [*ein Offenes*]” that “binds every presenting”⁴⁸, in the sense of determining how beings come to presence, are uncovered and interpreted, including the human being. As such unconcealment is also a simultaneous concealment, defined as “untruth”. If untruth in *Being and Time* was associated with Dasein’s fallenness and *Das Man*, it is now defined as the originary concealment from out of which unconcealment issues.⁴⁹ Concealment in this sense has been forgotten, and with it the historical struggle between forces of concealment and unconcealment, which is the essence of *aletheia*, has been covered over. Forgetfulness is itself a historical mode of disclosure, called “errancy” or “error”, *Irre*, which is seen as determining the

⁴⁶ Heidegger, *Ponderings II–VI*, p. 23. (Trans. modified.)

⁴⁷ Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, p. 78. The election Heidegger refers to is the plebiscite on the 12th of November 1933, held to affirm Germany’s withdrawal from the League of Nations. He gave two speeches on the plebiscite, which are available in English, Martin Heidegger, “German Men and Women!” and “Declaration of Support for Adolf Hitler and the National Socialist State”, trans. William S. Lewis, in *The Heidegger Controversy*, ed. Richard Wolin (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1993).

⁴⁸ Heidegger, “On the Essence of Truth”, p. 142.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 147.

totality of beings. “Error is not merely an isolated mistake but the kingdom (the dominion) of the history of those entanglements in which all kinds of erring get interwoven.”⁵⁰ It “dominates human beings through and through”,⁵¹ as a calculative mode of being and disclosing determined by technological production, to a point where the struggle between concealment and unconcealment can no longer be experienced, recognized and assumed.

In *Black Notebooks* his name for the modern expression of this mode of disclosure is *Machenschaft*, usually translated as “machination”. It is a word suggesting technical and manipulative domination, where beings, and in particular the state, are disclosed as objects of human production and calculative control. According to Peter Trawny, machination is an “end-formation of metaphysics”, seen by Heidegger as blocking entry to a place where disclosure can be experienced, not solely as an end, but also as a beginning.⁵²

What machination covers over is the struggle, *Kampf*, that according to Heidegger is the essence of truth. When defining struggle in *The Essence of Truth* and *Being and Truth* he refers to Heraclitus’ *polemos* – a word he usually translates as *Kampf*, struggle or battle, or *Streit*, strife but also as *Auseinandersetzung*, confrontation.⁵³ As we saw in the previous chapter, the word *Kampf* appeared in § 74 of *Being and Time*, where the situation was discussed as coming into its proper endurance in the constitution of a community of a people. *Polemos* is now understood as the “originary struggle”, which is not a struggle between given antagonists, but a struggle that for the first time creates the enemy: “An *originary* struggle (not just polemic) is the kind of struggle which first *creates* its enemy and assists its enemy to the *most incisive antagonism*.”⁵⁴ What machination covers over and conceals is the people’s origin in this struggle, as that which constitutes the people, its enemies and gods. As the people’s origin, the struggle is at the same time a mission that can be appropriated and assumed. However, to assume it as a mission requires that the struggle, which is blocked and concealed, can be experienced. If the role of the proclamation in Paul was to accomplish the situation, true discourse in its “originary” sense is now understood as the enactment of the struggle which is the essence of truth. It reveals the concealed struggle to the people by accomplishing it.

⁵⁰ Ibid, p. 150.

⁵¹ Ibid, p. 151.

⁵² Trawny, *Heidegger and the Myth of a Jewish World Conspiracy*, p. 12.

⁵³ Heidegger, *The Essence of Truth*, p. 9-10. (Trans. modified.) See also *Being and Truth*, p. 72-79.

⁵⁴ Ibid, p. 67. (Trans. modified.)

The political dimension of his interpretation of truth in *The Essence of Truth* and *Being and Truth* becomes manifest when he turns to Plato's cave allegory and stresses a violent battle, played out on the bottom of the cave. To Heidegger the battle is "originary struggle" in the sense of a struggle about the historical beginning and the history of metaphysics. However, if in *The Essence of Truth* his definition of this struggle remains quite open in the interpretation of the cave allegory he offers, then by the time of *Being and Truth* it acquires a more determinate, political shape. In the latter the allegory of the cave is interpreted within the context of "the political situation of the German people today", a situation calling for the people to assume their "spiritual-political mission".⁵⁵

The allegory of the cave is described by Heidegger as a turning point, at once making visible the "originary struggle" and the historical transition of truth that opened for the interpretation of truth as correctness. As such he reads the cave allegory as a key to the "fundamental experience"⁵⁶ of truth as that which testifies to *aletheia* as the origin and ground of human Dasein, interpreting it also as an allegory of the present. On the bottom of the cave, the "fundamental experience" of *aletheia* is blocked to a point where people "have no relationship to themselves at all. They do not know any I-myself or any you-yourself", but are "entirely ensnared in what lies before them."⁵⁷ Since they cannot experience the struggle that constitutes them, they are "utterly removed [*ganz weg*], ensnared by and in something, shackled."⁵⁸

To awaken the "fundamental experience" of struggle, which is the origin of the German people, its state and nation, is the explicit political mission in the first of the lecture courses in *Being and Truth*. On the opening pages he appeals to the National Socialist students' uprising, stressing that young academics know of the great historical moment facing the German people.⁵⁹ A unique, but "*fundamentally concealed*" vocation is prepared by the fate of the nation, presenting itself as a "spiritual-political mission [*geistig-politische Auftrag*]."⁶⁰ The political mission is a philosophical mission, requiring a return to the "poetizing-thinking [*Dichtend-denkende*]" of Heraclitus in struggle, *Kampf*, for the beginning.⁶¹ "We must awaken knowledge of this

⁵⁵ Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, p. 3.

⁵⁶ Heidegger, *The Essence of Truth*, p. 8.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 21-22.

⁵⁹ Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, p. 3.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

mission and root it in the heart and will of the people and its individual members.”⁶² Already here, in 1933, the year Heidegger became head of the University in Freiburg, the theme of poetizing thus emerges in relation to truth.

In the second of the lecture courses in *Being and Truth*, where he interprets the allegory of the cave, he stresses the political mission as a question of truth: “the urgency of our Dasein assails and the only thing that *matters* is that we ourselves *be true* and *remain in the truth*.”⁶³ Truth is “that which makes our Dasein sure, bright and strong in its being.”⁶⁴ Commenting on Heraclitus, he now develops the struggle, *Kampf*, which is the essence of truth as a struggle that is not between given adversaries, but creates its enemy. As there may not be an enemy to begin with, it is “a fundamental requirement to find the enemy, to expose the enemy to the light, or even first to make the enemy”.⁶⁵ The enemy is not necessarily external “and the external enemy is not even always the more dangerous one.”⁶⁶ The enemy can be anyone posing “an essential threat” to the people.⁶⁷ As such he may, Heidegger maintains, hide in the people itself:

The enemy can have attached itself to the innermost roots of the Dasein of a people and can set itself against this people’s own essence and act against it. The struggle is all the fiercer and harder and tougher, for the least of it consists in coming to blows with one another; it is often far more difficult and wearisome to catch sight of the enemy as such, to bring the enemy into the open, to harbor no illusions about the enemy, to keep oneself ready for the attack, to cultivate and intensify a constant readiness and to prepare the attack looking far ahead with the goal of total annihilation [*mit dem Ziel der völligen Vernichtung anzusetzen*].⁶⁸

Interpreting Plato’s allegory of the cave, the decisive, political moment when the struggle is instigated, and an enemy emerges, is when the liberated cave-dweller returns to his fellow cave-dwellers, shackled on the bottom of the cave. This moment is not an arbitrary stage in the analogy, he underscores this both in *The Essence of Truth* and *Being and Truth*. It is the moment when “man comes to himself, and finds the *ground* of his Dasein, in that event of deconcealment which constitutes the unhiddenness of

⁶² Ibid, p. 3.

⁶³ Ibid, p. 68.

⁶⁴ Ibid, p. 71.

⁶⁵ Ibid, p. 73.

⁶⁶ Ibid, p. 73.

⁶⁷ Ibid, p. 73.

⁶⁸ Ibid, p. 73.

beings.”⁶⁹ The return to the cave is the liberated cave-dweller’s relation of grounding with respect to a people, as that in which freedom resides:

[G]enuine freedom means *to be a liberator* from the dark. The descent back into the cave is not some subsequent diversion on the part of those who have become free, perhaps undertaken from curiosity about how cave life looks from above, but is the only manner through which freedom is genuinely *realized*.⁷⁰

In so far as the returning cave dweller comes back to his people with a truth, he does not deliver a correct representation of the world outside the cave. He instigates the “originary struggle” which is the forgotten essence of truth – something that requires a certain violence. “[T]he liberator [...] does not liberate by conversing with the cave-dwellers in the language, and with the aims and intentions, of the cave, but by laying hold of them violently and dragging them away.”⁷¹ In *Being and Truth*, Heidegger comes back to this passage in the allegory: “The *liberation is violent*.”⁷² The “spiritual-political” mission does not consist in educating the citizens about the ideal form of the state, but to awaken the experience of struggle, concealed to those inhabiting the cave. In so far as the bottom of the cave is the *polis*, it is a struggle that cannot be recognized by the people as their being and mission, until a violent “final battle [*letzte Kampf*]”⁷³ is realized there.

In the 1920–21 interpretation of Paul, the proclamation was authentic speech that called forth the situation as a mode of being for a community to come. As we saw in the previous chapter, the performative role of the proclamation was transposed onto political rhetoric in his interpretations of Aristotle in the “Ruhr-talk” and *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*. Here, in his interpretations of Plato’s cave allegory, the authentic discourse, which grounds a people in the truth and guarantees that the people “remain” in the truth, is a discourse that enacts and calls forth a violent struggle in the *polis*. The enemy is a mode of being of the people that blocks entry into the struggle as the people’s origin. True discourse in its “originary” sense has the mythical function of revealing the concealed origin. Not by representing it, but by liberating and enacting the struggle. In order

⁶⁹ Heidegger, *The Essence of Truth*, p. 56.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 66.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 62.

⁷² Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, p. 113.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 96, 97.

for the people to be summoned to truth as something determining them, and as a mission also, the struggle must become manifest, as a reality within the *polis*. By the time the essay “Plato’s Doctrine of Truth”⁷⁴ is published in 1940, he no longer interprets the allegory of the cave in terms of a violent struggle, and thus the political theme disappears.

The allegory of the cave, he emphasizes in *Being and Truth*, is a myth. As such it constitutes a “center” or “middle” in Plato’s philosophizing, the “single center of Platonic philosophizing.”⁷⁵ He sees *The Republic* as a work that bears witness to a period before *logos* and *muthos* were divided. Plato, he maintains, always speaks in terms of myth when he has something essential to say.⁷⁶ Turning to his students, he stresses that authentic understanding of the myth

depends on this alone: whether you are ready to take seriously the fact that you are sitting here in the lecture hall of a German university – that is, whether something unavoidable, something that has an enduring effect, speaks to you in the story of the underground cave [...].⁷⁷

If we follow Heidegger’s own understanding of the allegory as myth, and the central place he assigns to myth in Plato’s political thought, myth has a performative function. It reveals something “unavoidable” but becomes effective in organizing a people and grounding a state first when the mythical elements – such as that of the concealed final battle, *letzte Kampf*, which decides about the people’s destiny, its enemies and gods – become *real* in the polis itself. The struggle, which is at once a fate and vocation, becomes possible to experience, and assume as a mission, first when a battle is enacted and comes to presence in political space itself. If the proclamation in Paul shared the mode of being in accordance with which the congregation held itself in openness to *parousia*, it is now a concrete battle, enacted in political space, that grounds the people in truth, leads them to open themselves toward the beginning and guarantees that they “remain” in the truth.⁷⁸

⁷⁴ Martin Heidegger, “Plato’s Doctrine of Truth”, trans. Thomas Sheehan, in Martin Heidegger, *Pathmarks*, ed. William McNeill (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

⁷⁵ Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, p. 97.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 97-98.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 98.

⁷⁸ In the essay “Plato’s Doctrine of Truth” from 1940, which builds on material from his lecture courses, he no longer sees the allegory of the cave as pointing to a positive

In this section we have seen that Heidegger defines truth in the early 1930s as an “originary struggle” between forces of concealment and unconcealment. It opens up a world, and determines the way in which a people, its enemies, friends and gods come to presence. As such the “originary struggle” is the concealed origin of the people, which can be assumed as a mission if the “fundamental experience” of their origin is awakened. In Heidegger’s interpretations of Plato’s cave analogy this happens when the struggle becomes manifest and is enacted. Myth becomes effective, in organizing a people, first when mythical elements, such as that of a concealed battle between forces, become possible to experience as real.

In the next section I will turn to Heidegger’s writings on the university, from his period as head of the University of Freiburg. For the question of what role truth plays in Heidegger’s political writings, the university is interesting, not least since it is traditionally seen as an institution where truth is sought and established. As we have seen, Heidegger placed emphasis on the returning cave-dweller in the analogy of the cave as a liberator, awakening the people’s experience of the beginning. In Heidegger’s role as head of the university, he can be seen as trying to create an institution, in the “middle” of the state that opens up paths for the people’s recognition of the beginning. The university is a concrete place in the “middle” of the state, where the mythical struggle between forces comes to have real existence. In the interpretation of Plato’s cave allegory, it was an individual that led the people to “the fundamental experience” of their origin. This role is now assigned to the university. It is an institution in the

possibility. The emphasis on the violent struggle on the bottom of the cave, which he saw as the possibility to a beginning in the history of being is gone. He now speaks of a “life-and-death-struggle” (Heidegger, “Plato’s Doctrine of Truth”, p. 172) that represents the beginning of Western metaphysics, which is also the beginning of a history of humanism. What defines this history, he says, is the thought of human beings as *animale rationale* that must be lead “to the liberation of their possibilities, to the certitude of their destiny, and to the securing of their ‘life’.” (Ibid, p. 181). He thus seems to see his former interpretations in a critical light. However, if his previous interpretations put emphasis on the human being as an agent in the history of being, who is determined by this history but also capable of accomplishing a beginning, he now, during the war, stresses the human being as someone to whom history happens. “Whatever happens with historical human beings always derives from a decision about the essence of truth that was taken long ago and is never up to human beings alone. Through this decision the lines are always already drawn regarding what, in the light of the established essence of truth, is sought after and established as true and likewise what is thrown away and passed over as untrue.” (Ibid, p. 182).

middle of the state that grounds the state in truth by leading the people towards the beginning.

IV. The University as “Middle” in the State

In the “Rectoral Address”, held by Heidegger on the stairs to the University in May 1933, he declares that the beginning impresses the stamp of history in the being of the Germans. The essence of the university, and the task of leading it

will attain clarity, rank, and power [...] only when the leaders are, first and foremost and at all times, themselves led by the inexorability of the spiritual mission which impresses onto the fate of the German people the stamp of their history [*geführt von der Unerbittlichkeit jenes geistigen Auftrags, der das Schicksahl des deutschen Volkes in das Gepräge seiner Geschichte zwingt*].⁷⁹

The university’s “historical spiritual mission” is to “submit to the power of the *beginning* of our spiritual-historical existence.”⁸⁰ The beginning has its origin in antiquity, when Western man “rises up for the first time against *the totality of what is* and questions it and comprehends it as the being that it is.”⁸¹ All science is bound to this origin – an origin which is not behind the Germans as their past, but at work in the present, impressing its mark in the destiny of the people.

During the rectorship period he also gave the seminar “On the Essence and Concept of Nature, History and State”, where the mark of history is related to space. Space, he writes, is not a geographical region, a bounded geometrical surface or an extended area, nor is it surroundings or an indifferent container. Space is a people’s space, it belongs to “the essence and way of being of a people.”⁸² A people’s way of belonging to space, he explains, should be understood in terms of its “mastering of space and becoming marked by space [*Vom-Raum-geprägt-Werden*]”.⁸³ As marked by space in its being, the people is rooted, *Bodenständig*, in the fatherland. The

⁷⁹ Heidegger, “The Self-Assertion of the German University”, trans. Steven Galt Crowell, Joel Golb and William S. Lewis, in *The Heidegger Controversy: A Critical Reader*, ed. Richard Wolin (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1993), p. 29.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 30, 31.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

⁸² Heidegger, “On the Essence and Concept of Nature, History and State”, p. 55.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

following year, he interprets Hölderlin's poetry as founding the "fundamental attunement", which "opens up the world that in the poetic saying receives the stamp of being [*die im dichterischen Sagen das Gepräge des Seyns empfängt*]." ⁸⁴ It leads German Dasein into a place, the "metaphysical site", where the people can experience itself and come to itself as a people – it is a site that "marks" the being of the people, while it is also "marked" by them. Revealing "the metaphysical site", the struggle constituting the truth's essence imprints a stamp; yet summoned to struggle, the people also "marks" this site of disclosure.

In the "Rectoral Address", however, it is the university, and not art, that provides a site where the people can come to itself. At the university a transformation of disclosure happens. "[T]he essence of truth must first be transformed again" ⁸⁵, he repeatedly states in *Black Notebooks*. It brings the university to an end, and is the beginning of a new knowledge: "*The end of the university and the beginning of the new knowledge [neuen Wissens]*." ⁸⁶ The "Rectoral Address" can be seen as laying out a program for the university as a "middle" in the state, where disclosure is transformed into struggle in a way that will allow the people to experience and assume their vocation.

According to Miguel de Beistegui, the "Rectoral Address" should be seen in the context of a dismissal of the university's appeal to autonomy, in the sense of an independent, separate unity with respect to politics and the state. As such, de Beistegui says, it is also an attempt to think its freedom differently. ⁸⁷ Schleiermacher and Humbolt both insisted on the autonomy of the university with respect to the state, the independence of research with respect to teaching and the independence of teaching with respect to other schools. From Heidegger's perspective, however, the autonomy of the university came at a cost: the specialization of the faculties isolated them from one another and separated the university from the community of a people, *Volksgemeinschaft*. His speech, de Beistegui points out, is therefore a criticism of the autonomy of the university, as well as an attempt to think its freedom differently – not as independence or isolation, but in relation to the community of a people. ⁸⁸

⁸⁴ Heidegger, *Hölderlin's Hymns "Germania" and "The Rhine"*, p. 73. (Trans. modified.)

⁸⁵ Heidegger, *Ponderings II-IV*, p. 10. (Trans. modified.)

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 94.

⁸⁷ de Beistegui, *Heidegger and the Political*, p. 44.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

In *Black Notebooks* it becomes clear that what Heidegger sees in the National Socialist student uprising at this time is a movement that, as suggested by de Beistegui, is against the separation and specialization of the faculties by which the university has lost contact with the people. The university's mission, Heidegger says, is "not an impotent 'idea' we think of now and then, not a floating image we have intuited hitherto, but that which has been assigned to Dasein in its ground".⁸⁹ The ground presents itself as a vocation that can be accomplished and "*preserved* only in struggle."⁹⁰ The university's task is to awaken the struggle that constitutes the people's ground, to lead the people into this struggle, thereby grounding the state. As such the university's freedom, as it is laid out in the "Rectoral Address", does not reside in isolation, nor is it the negative freedom from constraints. Its freedom is accomplished in and as a relation of leading and grounding with respect to the community of a people – a relation which is also a "bond" with the beginning. The university is a site in the "middle" of the state, where the people's recognition of the beginning is awakened. The "new knowledge" is science engaged in this awakening:

[k]nowledge of the people that is actively involved with the people, knowledge of the destiny of the state that holds itself in readiness; it is these that, together with the knowledge of the spiritual mission, first create the full essence of science, the realization of which has been given to us as our task – assuming that we obey what the beginning of our spiritual-historical existence decreed in the distant past.⁹¹

In the speech, science, *Wissenschaft*, and the Greek *techne* is connected with *theoria*, but also with *energeia*, interpreted as "*Am-Werk-sein*", "being-at-work" – a concept which is related to the German word for reality, *Wirklichkeit*.⁹² For the Greeks, Heidegger comments, *theoria* was not simply a contemplative attitude, but "the supreme realization of genuine practice."⁹³ It was itself a science, concerned with questioning and determining the people's place in the totality of beings and as such it was the "determining middle [*bestimmende Mitte*] of their existence as a people and a state."⁹⁴ Science in this sense was the "highest mode of man's *energeia*, of man's

⁸⁹ Heidegger, *Ponderings II-VI*, p. 83.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

⁹¹ Heidegger, "The Self-Assertion of the German University", p. 36.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 32.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

‘being at work’.⁹⁵ In *Black Notebooks*, “work” in this sense facilitates a transformation of disclosure and makes it real: “the essence of truth must first be transformed again and become real in Dasein by way of work [*das Wesen der Wahrheit erst wieder verwandelt und im Dasein Werkhaft wirklich werden muß*].”⁹⁶ A few years later, in “The Origin of the Work of Art”, the “*ins-Werksetzen*” of truth, *aletheia*, is seen as happening, not in science, but in the work of art.⁹⁷ Art is one of the ways in which a configuration of disclosure is established in beings themselves. It becomes real, in the sense of acquiring endurance, when taken up and preserved by a people.

In *Black Notebooks*, it is the “new knowledge” that recaptures the beginning and turns the history of metaphysics into “metapolitics”. “The *metaphysics of Dasein*”, Heidegger suggests in an ongoing discussion of the university, “must become deeper in accord with the innermost structure of that metaphysics and must expand to the *metapolitics ‘of the historical people* [*Metapolitik ‘des’ geschichtlichen Volkes*]”.⁹⁸ Transforming the metaphysics of Dasein is to bring philosophy to an end – an end that at the same time prepares “what is wholly other – metapolitics.”⁹⁹ It calls for the destruction of philosophy, science and the university in so far as they are understood as independent of the community of a people – a destruction which reveals politics as metaphysics, and radicalizes metaphysics to meta-politics: “*Metaphysics as Meta-politics* [*Metaphysik als Meta-politik*].”¹⁰⁰ As such meta-politics is not a theory or science of politics, nor a political philosophy, but education of a “new species”:

We need a new constitution of the university – the single spiritually political leadership made secure – and why? Not to give what is present at hand a ‘build up’ and a new gloss, but to destroy the university. This ‘negativity’, however, will be effective only if it finds its task in the education of a new species.¹⁰¹

Against the “bourgeois spirit”,¹⁰² “spiritual National Socialism”¹⁰³ will foster “the *coming to themselves* of the people on the basis of their rootedness and

⁹⁵ Ibid, p. 32.

⁹⁶ Heidegger, *Ponderings II-VI*, p. 10. (Trans. modified.)

⁹⁷ Heidegger, “The Origin of the Work of Art”, p. 49.

⁹⁸ Heidegger, *Ponderings II-VI*, p. 91.

⁹⁹ Ibid, p. 85.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, p. 85.

¹⁰¹ Ibid, p. 85.

¹⁰² Ibid, p. 99.

their assuming of their mission through the state.”¹⁰⁴ The masses will be brought to participation in a work whose goals are the “creation of the community of the people”¹⁰⁵ and “the capacity of *all* countrymen for *Dasein* and for work – creation of the joy of work and the new will for *work* [*Arbeitswillen*].”¹⁰⁶ Binding itself to this work, the people comes to itself, and the students are prepared for “their new and necessary essence as workers [*Arbeiter*].”¹⁰⁷ The word he uses for work in these passages is *Arbeit*; it signifies “*Am-Werk-sein*”, “being-at-work” in the sense of a work that configures and “marks” disclosure, and is required for the people to recognize the struggle as a mission that can be assumed. “[*W*]hat matters before everything and for everything is only the one task: to open up the world-place [*Welt-ortes*]” and “to strive only so that *the work shall stand* [*das Werk soll stehen*] and only that.”¹⁰⁸ In work, disclosure is transformed to world-historical struggle and the university is the “world-place” where this transformation happens.¹⁰⁹

Space and place, as a link between the people and the state, played an important role in the transformation of Germany at this time. Hitler’s vision of Berlin was for it to become the *Welt-hauptstadt Germania*, the center and capital of the international world. He planned the erection of monumental buildings, but also theaters, parks and leisure areas, as well as a grid of streets and a ring highway, organizing the life of the citizens and their transportations. The concrete, spatial transformation of public space,

¹⁰³ Ibid, p. 99.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, p. 100.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, p. 100.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, p. 100.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid, p. 94.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, p. 71.

¹⁰⁹ The concepts *Arbeit* and *Arbeiter* are influenced by Ernst Jünger’s book *The Worker: Dominion and Form* (*Der Arbeiter: Herrschaft und Gestalt*), which was published in 1932. (Ernst Jünger, *The Worker: Dominion and Form*, trans. Bogdan Costea and Laurence Paul Hemming, ed. Laurence Paul Hemming [Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2017]). Heidegger, who was friends with Jünger, held two seminars on Jünger’s book, one in relation to its publication and the other in 1938. For the seminar notes and the marginal notes that he made in his actual copy of the book, see Martin Heidegger, *Zu Ernst Jünger*, GA 90 (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2004). He commented on Jünger also in “On the Question of Being”, an essay which was a contribution to a publication in honor of Jünger’s sixtieth birthday. (Martin Heidegger, “On the Question of Being”, trans. William McNeill in *Pathmarks*, ed. William McNeill [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998].) For Heidegger’s and Jünger’s correspondence, see Martin Heidegger and Ernst Jünger, *Correspondence 1949–1975*, trans. Timothy Sean Quinn (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2016).

and cities into world-places, was in that sense an important step undertaken to reorganize the relation between the people and the state, as well as the state's place in the international world. Heidegger's preoccupation with space and place during this period, his references to *Welt-ort* and the university as "center" or "middle", not only in the state, but in the international world, is seldom discussed in this context. However, what he sees in the National Socialist movement is politics opening the roads and preparing the paths that will transport the German people to the "fundamental experience" of their concealed origin as a mission to which it can "give itself". The National Socialist university is the place in the "middle" of the state where this happens: it provides a place for the people's recognition of the beginning, and paths for the beginning to be realized in and through the people, as a lasting mode of being and disclosing.

In so far as the university is a place where truth is sought and established, its role for Heidegger is to accomplish the struggle that constitutes the essence of truth, thereby making it possible for the people to experience and assume it. It is the "new science" which is given this role. Metaphysics, the science and knowledge of origins, is transformed into metapolitics, in the sense of a technique for making the concealed origin manifest. In *Black Notebooks* he contrasts meta-politics in this sense to "vulgar National Socialism". In a "brainless appeal of Hitler's *Mein Kampf*", he says, a doctrine of history and humanity is delivered to the people by newspaper reporters and makers of culture – a doctrine according to which the fostering of character is the "thing around which everything turns".¹¹⁰ It reduces National Socialism to a biologicistic and bourgeois enterprise that results in an "ethical materialism".¹¹¹ "Vulgar National Socialism" in this sense of a biological doctrine of character and race is according to him grounded in a materialistic morality and as such it devalues the discipline of knowledge that, in "anticipatory struggle", gathers the people into a historical community.¹¹²

That Heidegger saw this use of *Mein Kampf* as betraying the essence of National Socialism is not surprising. In *Mein Kampf*, Hitler's conception of nature and Aryan supremacy is not sustained simply by a biological determinism, but also by a concept of self-preservation and will. Importantly, his race ideology is motivated by identifying which race founded human

¹¹⁰ Heidegger, *Ponderings II–VI*, p. 104.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 104.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, p. 105-106.

culture, which having done so, is said to have the strongest affinity with the origin and thus has the capacity to begin, to found and initiate things. According to *Mein Kampf*, mankind can be divided into three groups: “culture founders, culture-bearers, and culture-destroyers”.¹¹³ The Aryan race, Hitler says, has proved supreme as the founder of historical culture. “It is from him that the foundation and the walls of all human creation originate.”¹¹⁴ The doctrine of the Germans as descending from the Aryan race, seen as superior founder of cultural developments such as architecture, writing and art was common in Nazi ideology. As this doctrine was disputed by scholars, the think tank Ahnenerbe was created by Himmler in 1935 in order to provide evidence. The organization for instance sent an expedition with scholars to Bohuslän in Sweden, inspecting the petroglyph rock carvings in Backa and Tanum, which were believed to include a pre-historic alphabet invented by the Aryans.¹¹⁵ In the 1933 article “Herman Wirth: en germansk kulturprofet” (“Herman Wirth: a German Cultural Prophet”),¹¹⁶ the Swedish archeologist Nils Åberg recalls his meeting with Herman Wirth, who became one of the founders of the Ahnenerbe. In a dispute with an older scholar, Wirth had declared: “[T]he time is now past when science believed its task was to search for a truth, any kind of truth. Now the task of science is to proceed with its prophecy, anticipating the future and like the morning dawn, to light a new day for the German people.”¹¹⁷

When Heidegger in the “Rectoral Address” discusses the three “bonds” with the beginning, it can be seen as a way to institutionalize what he calls the “new knowledge”, understanding it as a technique for awakening the German people’s experience of their origin. The point is not to return to the origin, which is abyssal and withdraws, but to root the people in this experience, understanding themselves as “marked” in their being by the struggle that lies at the essence of truth at the same time as seeing this struggle as something that can be taken up and be “marked” by them. To

¹¹³ Hitler, Adolf, *Mein Kampf: The Official 1939 Unexpurgated Edition*, trans. James Murphy (London: Hurst and Blackett Ltd., 1943): https://archive.org/details/Mein_Kampf_398.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 398.

¹¹⁵ Heather Pringle, *The Master Plan: Himmler’s Scholars and the Holocaust* (London: Harper Collins, 2014. E-book.), p. 131-155; David Barrowclough, *Digging for Hitler: The Nazi Archeologists Search for an Aryan Past* (Fonthill Media: Stroud, 2016. E-book.), p. 319-342.

¹¹⁶ Nils Åberg, “Herman Wirth: en germansk kulturprofet”, *Fornvännen*, no. 28 (1933).

¹¹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 248-249.

root the people in truth is to root them in a struggle that marks their specific mode of being as a people.

The first bond is an “internal” bond of being-with in relation to the community of a people, *Volksgemeinschaft*. It is the obligation of the university to share and to partake, *Teilhaben*, in the nation through *mittragenden* – a word suggesting shared work and support – and acting-with, *mithandelnden*. It is accomplished as labor service, in working camps – which was a measure undertaken by the party to remediate unemployment. In a speech published in the *Freiburger Studentenzeitung*, a student organ that published several of his speeches and political statements, Heidegger describes the working camps as sites where the transformation of disclosure becomes a reality. “A new site [*Stätte*] for the unmediated revelation [*unmittelbaren Offenbarung*] of the community of the people [*Volksgemeinschaft*] is being realized in the work camp.”¹¹⁸ In the camp a laboring community is awakened and educated across the classes: it forms an institution for “training leaders in all social groups [*Stände*] and professions.”¹¹⁹ Through labor service a future “political class [*politische Stände*]”¹²⁰ is constituted, independent of social class. “No ‘classes’; but rank”, he comments in *Black Notebooks*.¹²¹

If the first bond of labor service constitutes the university as a place in the “middle” of the national community of a people, the second is a bond of the nation “in the midst of the other peoples of the world”.¹²² It is a bond that constitutes a nation in relation to outer, external communities, where the German state is to become a leading “middle” in the international world. It is accomplished as readiness for the “extreme” and willingness to give one’s “utmost [*Letzte*]”,¹²³ which suggests an end, but also points to the theme of sacrifice in Heidegger’s writings. It is interesting to note here that the memorial service in honor of Leo Schlageter, celebrating the tenth anniversary of Schlageter’s death, was held at the University of Freiburg the day before Heidegger gave the “Rectoral Address”. In his speech to

¹¹⁸ Martin Heidegger, “Labor Service and the University” in *The Heidegger Controversy: A Critical Reader*, trans. Steven Galt Crowell, Joel Golb and William S. Lewis, ed Richard Wolin (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1993), p. 42. (Trans. modified).

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

¹²⁰ Martin Heidegger, “Zur Immatrikulation” in *Reden und andere Zeugnisse eines Lebensweges*, p. 96.

¹²¹ Heidegger, *Ponderings II–VI*, p. 98.

¹²² Heidegger, “The Self-Assertion of the German University”, p. 35.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

Schlageter, Heidegger honored him for his sacrifice that was not only for a people, but also, as Charles Bambach has pointed out, for a place.¹²⁴ His sacrifice was for the landscape of the Black Forest, with its “native valley [*Heimattales*]” where the mountains “of primitive stone [*Urgesteine*], of granite [...] have long been at work hardening the will.”¹²⁵ In the same year, and in another speech, Heidegger described the Black Forest as a place opened up by his work, and as the reason for why he turned down the offer of a position in Berlin.¹²⁶ In *Black Notebooks* the theme of sacrifice is related to the university itself: “The new university will arrive only if we *sacrifice* ourselves *for it*; this is our lot, even if only to form in advance an image of it for ourselves.”¹²⁷ On behalf of the coming generations the university must be sacrificed “as a transition”,¹²⁸ in order for the new knowledge to take shape. “The university is dead; long live the advanced school of knowledge cultivation of the Germans!”¹²⁹

The third bond with the beginning, as discussed in the “Rectoral Address”, is “knowledge service”. It is an *ethos* entrusted to the leaders of the faculties, to “the statesman and the teacher, the doctor and the judge, the pastor and the master builder”.¹³⁰ If the first bond was an internal bond, constituting a national community, while the second bond constituted a nation in relation to other nations, then the third is a bond with the beginning itself through knowledge service, which grants that the three forms of service come together in “one formative force”,¹³¹ united in a single mission.

These three bonds express Heidegger’s philosophical version of the leader principle, *Führer-prinzip*, the implementation of which was to integrate the university within the National Socialist state. The university is the “leading middle” in the state, in the sense of a site where disclosure is

¹²⁴ Charles Bambach, *Heidegger’s Roots: Nietzsche, National Socialism and the Greeks* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2003), p. 59-60

¹²⁵ Heidegger, “Schlageter (May 26, 1933)”, p. 41. For further discussions on Heidegger’s speech on Schlageter, and Schlageter’s role in his political engagements, see Karl Löwith, “The Political Implications of Heidegger’s Existentialism” in *The Heidegger Controversy: A Critical Reader*, ed. Richard Wolin (Cambridge Mass/London: MIT Press, 1993), p. 179; Fariás, *Heidegger and Nazism*, p. 87-95; Ehrmantraut, *Heidegger’s Philosophic Pedagogy*, p. 104-113; Kiesel “Rhetorical Protopolitics in Heidegger and Arendt” p. 135-136.

¹²⁶ Heidegger, “Schöpferische Landschaft: Warum bleiben wir in der Provinz? (1933)” in *Aus Der Ehrfahrung des Denkens* (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1983), p. 9-13.

¹²⁷ Heidegger, *Ponderings II-VI*, p. 82.

¹²⁸ *Ibid*, p. 91.

¹²⁹ *Ibid*, p. 92.

¹³⁰ Heidegger, “The Self-Assertion of the German University”, p. 35.

¹³¹ *Ibid*, p. 37.

revolutionized, and the struggle between world-historical forces, which marks the people's specific mode of being as a people, is carried out. It is a concrete site in the world where mythical elements, such as a concealed world-historical struggle between forces, become *real*. They become possible to experience and as such they become effective in summoning a people.

For Heidegger, an opening up of those sites (such as the university) through which the beginning can be seized, demands "space-work", that is, a working on, of, and within political space. This becomes clear in the years following his resignation as head of the university, when he turns to Hölderlin and the work of art. In the previous chapter I discussed the philosophical destruction of publicness in *Being and Time*. Here it remained quite open how the passage from publicness to the situation was to be understood: as a transformation of publicness or as the opening up of an alternative public sphere, structured in a radically different way? If we follow the "space-work" enacted in the parallel courses on Hegel and Hölderlin from 1934–1935 it becomes clear that it brings the space of the Hegelian state to an end, in order to open up a radically different political space. In this space mythical elements are transformed into reality and come true, in the sense of coming to endurance as a mode of being, the way in which also a people disclose itself and its world.

V. The Work of Political Space

In 1934 when the attempt to reorganize the university had failed and Heidegger resigned as principal, he gave the parallel courses *Hegel's Philosophy of Right* and *Hölderlin's Hymns "Germanis" and "The Rhine"*. In the lecture course on Hölderlin he comments that the transformation of science can never be accomplished by science itself:

Science as a whole can never be transformed through science, and still less through measures that are concerned merely with altering the business of its teachings, but only through another metaphysics – that is, a new fundamental experience of being [*Seyn*].¹³²

Giving up on the university and the attempt to transform science, he turns to Hölderlin's poetry, which he sees as forming "another metaphysics" and constituting a new "fundamental experience of being". If the university was a "center" or "middle" in the state, where science was to be transformed into

¹³² Heidegger, *Hölderlin's Hymns "Germania" and "The Rhine"*, p. 179.

metapolitics, Hölderlin's poetry reveals a "metaphysical site" in the midst of the people, where it comes to itself as a people.

In order to be able to discuss this, I will follow the movement of the parallel lecture courses on Hegel and Hölderlin, where Heidegger tries to displace the state from its location in Hegel's system to the "metaphysical site" put forth by Hölderlin in the midst of the people. In order to be able to detect this "space-work", however, as it is enacted in the parallel lecture courses, we must begin by addressing another seminar from 1934, "On the Essence and Concept of Nature, History and State". Here space is laid out as the origin of the state, and as belonging to "the essence and way of being of a people".¹³³ A people rooted in space is a people "marked" in their being by the historical domain of the "fatherland", in contrast to an "uprooted" people which has no space. This is to say, the rooted people can assume an active relation to space, in interacting and working "outwards" as well as "in space":

[T]o rule over the soil [*des Bodens*] and space [*des Raumes*], to work outwards [*Auswirkung*] into the wider expanse, to interact. The concrete way in which a people effectively work [*wirkt*] in space and forms space necessarily includes both: rootedness in the earth [*Bodenständigkeit*] and interaction [*Verkehr*].¹³⁴

The words *Auswirkung* and *wirkt* refer to "Am-Werk-sein", the "being-at-work" of truth; it is work the people can actively partake in, letting themselves be "marked" by space but also imprinting their "stamp" on space. To be rooted in this "work" is to work "outwards" but also "in space", transforming political space into, and preserving it, as a site for the struggle that lies at the essence of truth and marks the people's being. The word he uses for rootedness is *Bodenständigkeit*, which, as we saw, was an important concept also in the 1924 lecture course on Aristotle's *Rhetoric* and the *Politics*. Here it was not obviously connected to the expression *Blut und Boden* but referred to the ground in which the Greek conceptuality was rooted. During this period, however, Heidegger begins connecting blood to historical rootedness, and also to truth, though he does not discuss blood in "On the Essence and Concept of Nature, History and State".¹³⁵ Here

¹³³ Heidegger, "On the Essence and Concept of Nature, History and State", p. 55. (Trans. modified.)

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 55. (Trans. modified.)

¹³⁵ In a note in the seminar on Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* Heidegger maintains for instance that the concept of care refers to "truth (nature – soil – blood – homeland – landscape – gods – death)". (Heidegger, *Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, p. 162). In the con-

Bodenständigkeit is a concept that refers to ground, as well as to standing and stance in the sense of an *ethos* or mode of being, but also to endurance, *Ständigkeit*. Rootedness, he says, gives to the people a “peculiar endurance”.¹³⁶ Furthermore, *Boden* and *Bodenständigkeit* are words that Heidegger now begins to use for earth, understood as a resistance and an abyssal ground that withdraws. Interestingly, it was a conceptuality used also by Husserl during this period. In “Husserl and the Earth”, Sven-Olov Wallenstein discusses a manuscript published after Husserl’s death, entitled “Reversal of the Copernican Theory: The Earth as original *Arch* does not move”, where Husserl refers to earth in the Biblical sense of “originary arch”.¹³⁷ His choice of word, Wallenstein says, probably alludes to the Greek *arche*, in the sense of an “unmoved *archi-earth*”. As such the “originary arch” is that which resists every idealization, and provides a ground for intentional activities, but it is also a vessel compensating “a loss of ground by providing us with a secondary ground after the flood has forced us to depart from the first.”¹³⁸ Playing with the connotations to *stehen* and *ständigkeit*, Heidegger seems to use the words *Boden* and *Bodenständig* in a similar way, as indicating an “*archi-earth*” in the sense of a concealed origin, from out of which things issue, as well as a foundation the people can be rooted in, and stand on, in an enduring sense. It is an abyssal ground that withdraws, but in withdrawing it also provides support.

What is important here, however, is that rootedness is also connected to space and political space. The rooted people’s “space-work” founds a state. But a state’s space, Heidegger maintains, is not a system of law, a sum of legal principles or a constitution. A state is founded when a rooted people assume its rootedness in work and will to expansion: “We can speak of the

text of a discussion about the “*domain*” within which a “*struggle for the truth*” is played out, and a historical people is constituted, he maintains in *Being and Truth* that “[b]lood and soil are indeed powerful and necessary, but they are *not sufficient* conditions for the *Dasein* of the people.” (Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, p. 200-201). I will come back to Heidegger’s conception of blood and race in the last section of the present chapter.

¹³⁶ Heidegger, “On the Essence and Concept of Nature, History and State”, p. 55.

¹³⁷ Sven-Olov Wallenstein, “Husserl and the Earth” in *Dis-Orientations: Philosophy, Literature and the Lost Grounds of Modernity*, eds. Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback and Tora Lane (London/New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2015, p. 3; Edmund Husserl, “Foundational Investigations of the Phenomenological Origin of the Spatiality of Nature”, trans. Fred Kersten, in Husserl, *Shorter Works*, eds. Peter McCormick and Frederick A. Elliston (Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981).

¹³⁸ Wallenstein, “Husserl and the Earth”, p. 3.

state only when rootedness in the soil is combined with the will to expansion, or generally speaking, interaction.¹³⁹ The state's space is

the space of a people rooted in the earth [*bodenständigen Volkes*], insofar as it is grasped in terms of the will to work out into the expanse, in terms of interaction, in terms of power. This space we call land, sovereign dominion [*Herrschaftsgebiet*], territory; in a certain sense, it is the fatherland.¹⁴⁰

The state is thus not identical with a people's space, but constituted, grounded and continually re-grounded in so far as the people is rooted in the "Am-Werk-sein", "being-at-work" of truth that opens up a space. They are rooted in the "marking" and "imprinting" that happens in space, which means that they assume a specific mode of being. As such the being of the people "marks" the being of the state: "The manner of our being marks [*prägt*] the being of the state."¹⁴¹ Becoming "marked" by space, and "marking" the state at once differentiates the people from other peoples as well as uniting them as a people, in a common mission. As a rooted people the Germans are distinguished from the Jews, the "Semitic nomads" that according to Heidegger have no space – from which it follows that they can have no state.¹⁴² I will come back to his anti-Semitic comments, but what is important here is that the "space-work" discussed by Heidegger opens up a political space, in that it "marks" and founds a state. The very enactment of this activity can be traced in the parallel lecture courses Heidegger gave on Hegel and Hölderlin. Within and between these courses, a space unfolds in which mythical elements become real and ideology comes true: the state is constituted and re-constituted in this "work" that transforms myth into reality and ideology into truth. This, I would argue, is the point at which Heidegger's aestheticization of politics grounds politics in the "truth". To ground the state in truth is not to realize a preconceived idea, but to ground it in the "work" and struggle that opens up a site for the state, and imprints a distinguishing "mark" in the being of the people.

If true discourse in its "originary" sense in *Being and Time* was enacted in the philosophical destruction of publicness, it is now enacted as the struggle that marks a people, and imprints a mode of being and a mission.

¹³⁹ Heidegger, "On the Essence and Concept of Nature, History and State", p. 55.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 56.

The poet is the paradigmatic figure that “says” the “truth of a people”, but in order for him to be heard by the people, paths must be opened up for this truth to become real in the people, as a mode of being and disclosing. The “space-work” performed in the parallel lecture courses on Hölderlin and Hegel creates paths that make the people’s recognition of the truth, said by the poet, possible – and thereby it also opens paths for this truth to become real in the people.

VI. Background and Context to the Parallel Lecture Courses on Hölderlin and Hegel

The seminar on Hegel is interesting not least since it includes discussions and comments on the National Socialist state, the meaning of “the political”, as well as references to concrete political events, such as Hitler’s seizure of power. It is oriented around a series of questions about space and place: “[W]here is the location [Ort] of the state?”¹⁴³, “Where is the state?”¹⁴⁴ “What is the *systematic* place [Ort]?”¹⁴⁵ Asking about the location of the state in Hegel’s system, Heidegger enacts an *Auseinandersetzung* – a confrontation or struggle – with Hegel. He seeks to displace the state from its place in Hegel’s system of law, in order to release the “metaphysical site”, revealed in the parallel lecture courses on Hölderlin as the state’s “fettered origin”¹⁴⁶. The aim of the lecture course on Hölderlin, repeatedly stressed by Heidegger, is to lead into the “domain in which Hölderlin’s poetry unfolds its power”, to “stand” within this domain and “place the Dasein of the people” there.¹⁴⁷

According to Peter Trawny, an important background to the seminar on Hegel is the 1932 lecture course *Der Anfang der abendländischen Philosophie*.¹⁴⁸ Here Heidegger discusses a “first beginning”, localized to ancient Greece, and a beginning “for the ones to come” – the ones that will “per-

¹⁴³ Heidegger, “Hegel’s *Philosophy of Right*”, p. 133.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 140.

¹⁴⁵ Martin Heidegger, *Seminare Hegel – Schelling*, GA 86, (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2011), p. 588. (There are two versions of Heidegger’s seminar, created from students notes, one of which is not translated into English.)

¹⁴⁶ Heidegger, *Hölderlin’s Hymns “Germania” and “The Rhine”*, p. 183

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 7, 21, 47, 123, 194, 202, 215.

¹⁴⁸ Peter Trawny, “Heidegger, Hegel and the Political” in *On Hegel’s Philosophy of Right*, eds. Peter Trawny, Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback and Michael Marder (New York: Bloomsbury, 2014), p. 5; Martin Heidegger, *Der Anfang der abendländischen Philosophie. Auslegung des Anaximander und Parmenides*, GA 35, (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2011).

haps again begin with this beginning”.¹⁴⁹ The following year he gave the two lecture courses in *Being and Truth*, previously discussed in this chapter, where Hegel is addressed in relation to the question of the German people’s “spiritual-political mission”.¹⁵⁰ The “political situation of the German people today”¹⁵¹ must be determined – a task that requires a thinking that asks about the beginning. Here the “first beginning” is thought as a being-historical event determining the destiny of Germany – a destiny in which German Idealism and system-philosophy is given a central role. Hegel’s philosophical system represents “*the completion of Western metaphysics*” since it combines the two dominating forces of Western metaphysics: a Christian worldview and mathematical rationality.¹⁵² Unifying these forces in a systematic philosophy “*Hegel’s metaphysics is theo-logic*”.¹⁵³ In order to awaken the experience of the beginning, a confrontation, *Auseinandersetzung*, with Hegel’s political thinking is therefore required.¹⁵⁴

According to Heidegger, Hegel did not properly recognize his friend Hölderlin – the “the first born”, who had to be “sacrificed” since his poetry was before its time.¹⁵⁵ Confronting Hegel in the seminar on his political philosophy, simultaneously reveals the concealed site Hölderlin has placed in the midst of the German people, which has not yet been recognized. For this to be revealed to the people a thinker is needed. In “The Origin of the Work of Art” from 1935, Heidegger defines the thinking that thinks the work of art as thinking that “prepares, for art, the space, for creators, the path, and for preservers the location”.¹⁵⁶ The *Auseinandersetzung*, confrontation or struggle, with Hegel, which asks about the state’s place in Hegel’s system, prepares a space where Hölderlin’s poetry can be recognized, a path for the statesman’s creation of the state, and a location for the people’s preservation of the state. The confrontation with Hegel enacts the struggle that grounds the state in “the truth of a people”,¹⁵⁷ placed by Hölderlin as a veiled beginning in the midst of the people.

¹⁴⁹ Heidegger, *Der Anfang der abendländischen Philosophie*, GA 35, p. 83.

¹⁵⁰ Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, p. 3.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid*, p. 4.

¹⁵² *Ibid*, p. 55.

¹⁵³ *Ibid*, p. 56.

¹⁵⁴ See also Trawny, “Heidegger, Hegel and the Political”, p. 6.

¹⁵⁵ Heidegger, *Hölderlin’s Hymns “Germania” and “The Rhine”*, p. 128.

¹⁵⁶ Heidegger, “The Origin of the Work of Art”, p. 49.

¹⁵⁷ Heidegger, *Hölderlin’s Hymns “Germania” and “The Rhine”*, p. 126.

In order to be able to discuss this, however, some general words must first be said about the seminar on Hegel. The seminar is comprised of a series of notes and fragments, combining comments on Hegel, Carl Schmitt and Rousseau, alongside references to National-Socialist laws and the constitution of the National-Socialist state. According to Emanuel Faye it is a key testimony, outlining Heidegger's political philosophy in "identification" with Hegel.¹⁵⁸ Others have stressed the fragmentary and discontinuous form of Heidegger's seminar: resisting any systematic and linear account they resist the temptation to derive from them something like a political ontology of right, according to Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback and Michael Marder.¹⁵⁹ The fragmentary character of the notes, they say, also make the seminar notoriously difficult to read. The reader is forced to jump between Hegel's and Heidegger's voices in a text where they can hardly be distinguished but create a "middle".¹⁶⁰ To complicate matters further, there are also two versions of the seminar, which were recreated from student's notes.

However, Heidegger's voice can be distinguished if we follow the movement of *Auseinandersetzung* operative in the seminar. For it is this movement that reveals precisely a "middle". As we have seen the "middle" is a technical concept in Heidegger's thought during this period – in the "Rectoral Address" it referred to the university as a site in the middle of the state, where disclosure is transformed and the "fundamental experience" is awakened. In the lecture course on Hölderlin it refers to the work of art as situated in the "middle" between humans and gods, but also to the "meta-physical site", placed by Hölderlin in the "midst" of the people.

When it comes to the non-systematic character of Heidegger's notes it is important to see that they point back to his interpretation of Kant in *The Essence of Human Freedom*,¹⁶¹ delivered in the summer of 1930, as well as forward to the lecture course on Schelling, *Schelling's Treatise on the Essence of Human Freedom*.¹⁶² In both of these lecture courses freedom is under-

¹⁵⁸ Emanuel Faye, *The Introduction of Nazism into Philosophy in the Light of the Unpublished Seminars of 1933–1935*, p. 229.

¹⁵⁹ Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback and Michael Marder, "Philosophy without Right? Some Notes on Heidegger's Notes for the 1934/35 'Hegel Seminar'" in *On Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, eds. Peter Trawny, Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback and Michael Marder (New York: Bloomsbury, 2014), p. 83.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

¹⁶¹ Martin Heidegger, *The Essence of Human Freedom. An Introduction to Philosophy*, trans. Ted Sadler (New York: Continuum, 2002).

¹⁶² Martin Heidegger, *Schelling's Treatise on the Essence of Human Freedom*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (Athens, Oh: Ohio University Press, 1985).

stood as an event that cannot fully be represented in a system or law since it is a living accomplishment, from out of which both a system and law originates. Addressing the question of the state's place in Hegel's thinking in a series of fragmentary notes can be seen, not only as a result of the fact that the seminar is partly recreated from students' notes, but also in light of Heidegger's intense preoccupation during this period with German idealism and system-philosophy. Not only the content, but the form of his notes, can be understood as expressing his *Auseinandersetzung* with system-philosophy.

VII. The State's Place in Hegel's System

In asking about the location of the state in Hegel, Heidegger tries to demonstrate that it realizes itself concretely in a system of public law. As such Hegel represents the completion of Western philosophy – and in occupying this position he is seen by Heidegger as both an enemy and a friend. Hegel is a friend in thinking the state not as a social contract or a “present-at-hand formation [*Gebilde*]”,¹⁶³ but from out of “spirit as effective in its essence [*in seinem Wesen erwirkende Geist*]”.¹⁶⁴ Heidegger consequently stresses that to Hegel the state is historical work, it is the “steadfastness” or “endurance”, *Inständigkeit*, of the historical world.¹⁶⁵ As such the state is not a contract, a sum of independent individuals living together or a necessary constraint of an individual's freedom. The state is instead the coincidence of the individual and the universal [*Allgemeine*]: it is first within the state that the free individual is realized in a concrete and real sense, in a relation of recognition. The state, Hegel says, is “the reality of concrete freedom [*die Wirklichkeit der konkreten Freiheit*]”.¹⁶⁶

Heidegger therefore emphasizes that Hegel is an ally in his criticism of both liberalism and Rousseau.¹⁶⁷ From his perspective, Rousseau understands the state as a social contract limiting the individual's freedom, although in a necessary way, since it is a limitation that gives access to society. For Hegel, however, the state does not restrict the individual: it is first in the state, Heidegger stresses, that the individual comes to its full

¹⁶³ Heidegger, “Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*”, p. 105.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 114

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 118

¹⁶⁶ Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, § 260, p. 248. (Trans. modified.)

¹⁶⁷ Heidegger, “Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*”, p. 102, 179-180; Heidegger, *Seminare Hegel – Schelling*, p. 601.

concretion and reality.¹⁶⁸ As such, the state in Hegel has a negating function, but what it negates is not the individual – it negates the abstract character of an absolutely free individual, a negation through which the individual first becomes concrete and real. Heidegger consequently comments on § 258 in the *Philosophy of Right*: universality [*das Allgemeine*] in Hegel is “positively liberating” and decisive for “bringing [the individual] to self-sufficiency [*Selbständigkeit*]”.¹⁶⁹

For Rousseau, who understands the state as a social contract, the common will is the highest form of freedom, but to Heidegger it is at the cost of the individual: in being subjected to the common will of the state, the individual is, according to him, constrained. But for Hegel it is instead within the state that the individual must search for its reality. On Heidegger’s interpretation this means that Hegel is not only “fundamentally beyond Rousseau”¹⁷⁰ – his thinking is also an “overcoming of liberalism”.¹⁷¹ The state as *contrat social*, he remarks in “On the Essence and Concept of Nature, History and State”, “is a subordinate means to an end, in service to the development of the personality in the liberal sense”.¹⁷² According to Hegel, the contract is a way in which the individual relates to the state as an optional and arbitrary instrument in the pursuit of personal interests.¹⁷³

¹⁶⁸ Heidegger, *Seminare Hegel – Schelling*, p. 601.

¹⁶⁹ Heidegger, “Hegel’s *Philosophy of Right*”, p. 179. (Trans. modified.) See also Heidegger, *Seminare Hegel – Schelling*, p. 601.

¹⁷⁰ Heidegger, “Hegel’s *Philosophy of Right*”, p. 102.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 180.

¹⁷² Heidegger, “On the Essence and Concept of Nature, History and State” p. 52.

¹⁷³ According to Hegel the contract is a specific way in which a common will is formed, and persons bind themselves to the common – but as a means to realize their individuality. A contract on property for instance rests on recognition of the other since it presupposes that the contracting parties recognize one another as other and free. As such it is the recognition of a *limit*, understood as a (necessary, but optional) restriction of the freedom to realize oneself since it requires recognition of what one is not (for instance the owner of something). (Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, § 72, 76-77). However, what is really accomplished in the contract is a common will and social bond. It takes the form of a co-operation into which an individual enters and consents, in the forming of an optional but binding contract – understood as a means to realize one’s interests. As such the contract opens for the emergence of the liberal individual who relates to the common as to a capricious, external object which nevertheless constitutes a necessary limit to absolute self-realization – a limit which nevertheless functions as a means to develop personal interests. In this situation the universal [*Allgemeine*] at once upholds and paradoxically threatens the freedom of the individual since the means of satisfaction must be acquired from others, and the individual must accordingly conform to their opinions and is itself compelled to produce the means for the satisfaction of others. (*Ibid.*, § 192, 199).

Heidegger therefore sees the contract as leading to the development of the liberal personality, seen by Hegel as appearing in the transition from family to a modern, civil society. For this reason, liberalism, Heidegger comments, is a particular way in which we relate to freedom.¹⁷⁴

His slightly bizarre comment on Carl Schmitt in the seminar on Hegel can be understood in this context: Schmitt, he remarks, thinks too “liberally”.¹⁷⁵ While, like Schmitt, Heidegger sees the state as issuing from an antagonistic struggle between forces, Schmitt’s friend-enemy distinction ends up being, for Heidegger, an external determination. In so far as the friend-enemy distinction determines the state, the latter appears as an independent substance, restricted in an optional way by an equally independent, outer substance. What Schmitt does not see is that in so far as the state is not to be understood as an external and optional restriction upon the individual (be that individual a person or another state) it requires *negation*. What is negated is not an outer enemy, nor the freedom of the individual, but the abstract and absolute character of freedom itself. Negation in this sense is itself enactment of *polemos* as the “originary struggle” which Heidegger sees not as a struggle between external enemies, but as a struggle that creates the enemy.¹⁷⁶

This is the point in the seminar where Heidegger’s *Auseinandersetzung*, his enactment of the “originary struggle”, with Hegel comes into play. Hegel comes close to Heidegger in seeing the state as requiring negation, all the while emerging as an enemy in thinking the negating function of the state in a “mathematical” and “bureaucratic” manner. Heidegger never explains what the “mathematical” and bureaucratic” state is supposed to mean, but according to Hegel the state cannot realize itself concretely unless there is a legal constitution, a *Rechtsstaat*, since it requires recognition within a system of law. Civil society is characterized by the codification of the social fabric into a system of public law, accessible and equal to everyone, and administered by institutions of justice. Abstract freedom is negated when the individual recognizes itself in a system of universal law, when it under-

¹⁷⁴ Heidegger, *Seminare Hegel – Schelling*, GA 86, p. 604.

¹⁷⁵ Heidegger, “Hegel’s *Philosophy of Right*”, p. 186.

¹⁷⁶ For further discussion about Heidegger’s comment on Schmitt, see for instance Robert Bernasconi, “‘The Misinterpretation of Violence’: Heidegger’s Reading of Hegel and Schmitt on Gewalt”, *Research in Phenomenology*, vol. 45, no. 2, 2015, p. 231; Franco de Sá, “Politics and Ontological Difference” in *On Hegel’s Philosophy of Right*, eds. Peter Trawny, Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback and Michael Marder (New York: Bloomsbury, 2014), p. 63; di Cesare, *Heidegger and the Jews*, p. 142.

stands its own freedom as requiring universal law in order to be real and strives for the system of law to be “complete”. To Heidegger this is a “bureaucratic” conception of the state: the state is not a sum of legal principles, it is more than “inventory maintenance [*Bestands-*], administrative obligation [*Verwaltung-*], and judicature [*Rechtspflege-*].”¹⁷⁷ A destruction of the state’s place within Hegel’s system is therefore required. His repeated questions about the place of the state in Hegel’s system can be interpreted as an attempt to turn the state’s negating function in Hegel against the Hegelian state itself.

What he sees in the National Socialist movement is this possibility, which is why Hitler’s seizure of power now serves as an example in the seminar. In reference to Schmitt, who proclaimed Hegel’s death on the 30th of January 1933 – the day of Hitler’s installation as chancellor – Heidegger comments: “On 30. 1. 33 ‘Hegel died’ – no! he has not yet ‘lived’! – there he has first come *alive* – just as even history comes alive, i.e., dies.”¹⁷⁸ Only someone confusing the “essential motif of the Hegelian idea”¹⁷⁹ with his philosophy of the state as a “metaphysics of the bureaucratic state”¹⁸⁰ can pronounce Hegel’s death on 30. 1. 1933. Confusing the “essential motif”, Schmitt attempted to “renew” Hegel, but Hegel cannot be renewed: what Heidegger seeks to do is not to renew, but to bring to an end the “bureaucratic” place of the state in Hegel’s system. What comes alive in 1933, in such a way that Hegel is not renewed but brought to completion, is the “essential motif” of the state’s negating function.

The historical work, through which the state finds concretion, is expressed in Heidegger’s seminar through the concepts of stand, standing, stance, endurance, and variations of these concepts, such as *Inständig*. In a note playing on the connection between the word *Staat*, *Stand*, status and *Ständigkeit*, he comments that the state is not a *Zustand*, a condition or constitution. “Condition [*Zustand*] – in condition [*im Zustand*] – to be a constitution [*Verfassung sein*]. Why ‘constitution’ [*Verfassung*]? Inner necessity? Condition of *public* things [*Zustand der öffentlichen Dinge*].”¹⁸¹ The state does not come to its endurance as an arbitrary condition or as the

¹⁷⁷ Heidegger, “Hegel’s *Philosophy of Right*”, p. 118.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid, p. 119. Schmitt’s comment can be found in Carl Schmitt, *State, Movement, People: The Triadic Structure of the Political Unity*, trans. Simona Draghici (Corvallis Or.: Plutarch Press, 2001), p. 35.

¹⁷⁹ Heidegger, “Hegel’s *Philosophy of Right*”, p. 120.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid, p. 120

¹⁸¹ Ibid, p. 118

endurance of a constitution, and its “standing”, “status” and “stance” is not accomplished as “inventory maintenance [*Bestand*]”¹⁸² or “administrative obligation [*Verwaltung*]”,¹⁸³ but in and as a “bringing out of constitution [*aus der Verfassung bringen*]”.¹⁸⁴

He never explains in what sense the “standing” of the state is a “bringing out of constitution”. Although, in a previous note, entitled “Constitution [*Verfassung*] of the National Socialist State”, he does comment on the National Socialist state’s “starting point [*ihr Beginn*]”, “beginning [*ihr Anfang*]”, “ground [*ihr Grund*]” and “origin [*ihr Ur-sprung*]”.¹⁸⁵ Here he refers to the *Law to the Remedy of Distress of State and People* as well as to the laws from 7th of April and 1st of December 1933. In the context these references function as examples of a historical beginning becoming concrete: “Advance effect [*vor-wirken*] of the beginning [*Anfangs*] and origin [*Ursprungs*] and thus *grounding* [*Gründend*]!”¹⁸⁶ The *Law to the Remedy of Distress of State and People*, also called the *Reich law*, is the formal name of “the Enabling act” of 24th of March 1933. “The enabling act” was the temporary upheaval of Germany’s constitution, which gave Hitler power to legislate laws without consent from parliament. It effectively brought the Weimar Republic to an end and established Hitler as dictator. Together with the laws from 7th of April and 1st of December 1933 it installed the leader principle, subjecting public law, legislative power and the bureaucratic apparatus to the Führer, as the new organizational principle of the German state. To Heidegger this is a double movement of destruction and beginning: the “[u]ngrounding [*Entgründung*] of the previous and founding [*Begründung*] of the New State.”¹⁸⁷ His own destruction of the state’s place in Hegel’s system of law can be seen as enacting this movement that simultaneously prepares a path for the community of a people to recognize the “metaphysical site” revealed in Hölderlin’s poetry. Here the state realizes itself, not in a system of law or right, but in the struggle discussed in the lecture course on Hölderlin as the origin of right.¹⁸⁸ “The metaphysical site” is a site where the state itself emerges as a work of art, and the distinction between reality and myth, fiction and truth seems to be erased.

¹⁸² Ibid, p. 118.

¹⁸³ Ibid, p. 118.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid, p. 118. (Trans. modified.)

¹⁸⁵ Ibid, p. 112.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid, p. 112.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid, p. 112 (Trans. modified.)

¹⁸⁸ Heidegger, *Hölderlin’s Hymns “Germania” and “The Rhine”*, p. 113.

VIII. The “Metaphysical Site” Revealed by Hölderlin

What is at stake in the lecture course on Hölderlin, Heidegger emphasizes, is not to rescue from obscurity a poet who was not properly recognized for his works. The task is “to determine and to attain the ‘metaphysical site’ from where the poet poetizes his saying”.¹⁸⁹ It is a metaphysical site in the sense of an origin which determines a totality of beings, as that from out of which things come to presence. Spelling being, *Sein*, as *Seyn*, he stresses that being itself issues from such a site, as the historical fatherland of a people. “*The ‘fatherland’ is being [Seyn] itself*, which from the ground up bears and configures the history of a people as an existing [*daseiende*] people”.¹⁹⁰ As the site where the dwelling of the German people is founded, “*the metaphysical site of Hölderlin’s poetizing [...] is the middle of being [Sein] itself, the being [Seyn] of the demigods, the being [Seyn] of man, of our poet.*”¹⁹¹ If the university was a “middle” in the sense of a site where the masses were gathered into a people, the “middle” is now placed as a veiled origin in the midst of the German people by the poet. He stands at the “site of metaphysical need”¹⁹² since the Dasein of the people “has become foreign to its historical essence, its mission and mandate. Alienated from itself, it remains without vocation”.¹⁹³ What the poet places in the midst of the people is the struggle between world-historical forces from out of which the being of the people comes forth – a struggle that cannot be experienced since it is blocked in the history of “errancy”, to which machination, the mathematical ordering of nature and science belongs. “[W]e stand in an erroneous relation to the poetizing – indeed do not at all stand, but *wander in errancy.*”¹⁹⁴ To experience being in the way opened up by Hölderlin’s poetry therefore requires a transformation of disclosure: “Such an experience entails, first, a transformation in the essence of truth”.¹⁹⁵

In the lecture course Heidegger develops a “system” of beginnings, which is taken up again and modified in “The Origin of the Work of Art”. What is realized in this system is not a contract or a set of codified laws, but the mytheme itself. It is a system, that gives the poet, the thinker, the statesman

¹⁸⁹ Ibid, p. 203. (Trans. modified.)

¹⁹⁰ Ibid, p. 109.

¹⁹¹ Ibid, p. 261. (Trans. modified.)

¹⁹² Ibid, p. 120.

¹⁹³ Ibid, p. 119.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid, p. 215.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid, p. 179.

and the people different roles, where the poet's task is to awaken "the fundamental attunement",¹⁹⁶ which "founds the metaphysical site of our futural historical being."¹⁹⁷ As demigod he does not himself create the origin, but receives a struggle from the gods, configures it and places it "into the midst of the language of the people."¹⁹⁸ However, "[f]or this battle to transform the attunements that still dominate and perpetuate [the historical *Dasein* of a people] at any given time, the first-born must be sacrificed."¹⁹⁹ The first-born is the poet, who is before his time since the attunement he finds, "that configures and shapes the historical *Dasein* of a people",²⁰⁰ cannot be recognized by the people. When Heidegger, in "The Origin of the Work of Art", comes back to the system of beginnings that takes shape in the lecture course on Hölderlin, sacrifice is one of the ways in which the "originary struggle" that cannot yet be experienced is instigated, established in beings and becomes real. A couple of years later, during the war, he gave another lecture course on Hölderlin, *Hölderlin's Hymn "The Ister"*, where he comments also on Sophocles' *Antigone*. Sacrificing herself is the "dramatic action" of Antigone's life, revealing her at once to be a part of and apart from the *polis*.²⁰¹ Her life is a poetic sign, signaling a beginning in the coming to completion of an end – an end in the history of being that Heidegger seems to transpose onto the fate approaching Germany in the ongoing war. In battle with "Americanism", "resolved to annihilate Europe", Germany sets its destiny forth and in that sense places a veiled beginning in the middle of the *polis* that may someday be recognized.²⁰²

Since the struggle that the poet places within language is before its time, and cannot be experienced by the people, a thinker is needed to comprehend and configure it. "The being [*Seyn*] of beings thus unveiled [...] is comprehended and configured and thereby first opened up as being [*Seyn*] by the thinker".²⁰³ As such, the thinker's role is to prepare a place for the work of art in the community of a people, to open a path for the people's recognition of the work of art and thereby make possible the people's appropriation of their unique, historical mission. The statesman's role,

¹⁹⁶ Ibid, p. 126.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid, p. 128.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid, p. 257

¹⁹⁹ Ibid, p. 128.

²⁰⁰ Ibid, p. 128.

²⁰¹ Heidegger, Hölderlin's Hymn "The Ister", p. 115

²⁰² Ibid, p. 54, 143

²⁰³ Heidegger, Hölderlin's Hymns "Germania" and "The Rhine", p. 126. (Trans. modified.)

finally, is to set “the being [*Seyn*] that has been comprehended in this way [...] into the ultimate and preeminent gravity of beings”.²⁰⁴ This occurs through “the action of statesmanship”,²⁰⁵ when the statesman creates a state – an action that brings the people to itself as a people. In establishing the concealed struggle between forces that drives the movement of history into “the gravity of beings”, he gives the struggle a concrete and determinate shape. Heidegger never explains who the statesman is, or how his role is to be understood, more specifically – but he sees the people’s response to Hölderlin’s poem “Germania” as residing in a battle over the destiny of Germany and “the West”:

We think that one day genuine poetry will be delivered to us, without our first delivering ourselves over to the horrors and devastation that threatens the Dasein of the West on all sides (despite Christendom and churches) and that keep it hovering at the edge of the abyss.²⁰⁶

The people are brought to itself, and the state is grounded, when the struggle between forces of beginnings and ends is set into a “*determinate, attuned*” mode of disclosure.²⁰⁷ The statesman gives the battle a *concrete, political figure* where friends and enemies, humans and gods emerge, which in turn makes possible the people’s experience of their origin and place in this struggle as a mission that can be assumed. In *Black Notebooks*, the question of beginnings take shape as a battle over the destiny of the Germans against liberalism and machination, which, as the war draws closer, is mapped onto nations and people. As suggested by Peter Trawny, Heidegger draws up a being-historical topology, where the places and people of the beginning are lined up against the places and people of the end. It takes the form of a veritable battle formation during the war, where Greece, Germany and Russia represent the beginning, and England, America and Judaism, which stands for liberalism and machination, are agents of the end.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁴ Ibid, p. 126. (Trans. modified.)

²⁰⁵ Ibid, p. 127.

²⁰⁶ Ibid, p. 202.

²⁰⁷ Ibid, p. 126.

²⁰⁸ Trawny, *Heidegger and the Myth of a Jewish World Conspiracy*, p. 69-78. Trawny finds it surprising that Russia is included on the side of the beginning, but Nazi Germany and Russia signed the German-Soviet non-aggression pact on August 23, 1939. The pact was an agreement between the two countries not to take military action against each other for 10 years. In the lecture course *Introduction to Metaphysics* from 1935, Russia is instead positioned as enemy. (Martin Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, trans. Gregory Fried and Richard Polt [New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000], p. 40).

In the system of beginning developed in the 1934–1935 lecture course on Hölderlin, what results from the interplay between the poet, the thinker and the statesman is the “originary struggle” itself. It is first when the struggle brought forth is given a concrete, determined political shape by the statesman that it becomes possible for the people to recognize it as a mission that can be assumed. Heidegger at the same time describes this system as a system in which “the truth of a people”, a truth that does not exist until it is established in beings, finds its point of realization.

The poet, he says, projects in advance “the truth of a people”.²⁰⁹ The truth of a people is “the manifestness of being as a whole”,²¹⁰ in the sense of a unique, historical mode of disclosure. It is a truth that does not exist beforehand, he explains in “The Origin of the Work of Art”: “truth is not present in itself beforehand, somewhere among the stars, so as then, later on, to find accommodation among beings.”²¹¹ It becomes real, in the sense of coming into enduring presence. This happens through the work of art, in the act of founding a state, “the essential sacrifice” and the thinking of being.²¹² The thinker’s role, he explains in “The Origin of the Work of Art”, is to prepare a path for the happening of truth in the work of art, which is brought forth in the midst of the people.²¹³ Or, as he formulates it in *Black Notebooks*, but in relation to the university: “to create for the new generation and for its truth a free path”.²¹⁴ In the interpretation of Hölderlin, the statesman who gives the struggle configured by the poet and thinker a concrete, political shape is the figure who finally sets this struggle “into the ultimate and preeminent gravity of beings – that is, into a *determinate, attuned* historical truth”.²¹⁵

Through this system, where truth is established in beings by the work of art, the thinker and the statesman; the mytheme, ascribed to the people in advance, comes true. The poet, the thinker and the statesman now emerge as seers in the state, projecting in advance a truth which is also the people’s destiny. In *Black Notebooks*, “*fate as the basic form of truth*” is about “to create the actual [*das Wirkliche*]” and impose “the new essence of truth.”²¹⁶

²⁰⁹ Heidegger, *Hölderlin’s Hymns “Germania” and “The Rhine”*, p. 126.

²¹⁰ *Ibid*, p. 126.

²¹¹ Heidegger, “The Origin of the Work of Art”, p. 36.

²¹² *Ibid*, p. 37.

²¹³ *Ibid*, p. 49.

²¹⁴ Heidegger, *Ponderings II–VI*, p. 85.

²¹⁵ Heidegger, *Hölderlin’s Hymns “Germania” and “The Rhine”*, p. 126.

²¹⁶ Heidegger, *Ponderings II–VI*, p. 82.

Here a space opens up where the difference between myth and reality, fiction and truth seems to be erased. In this space a leader is introduced that has a quite different role than Hegel's prince. This becomes clear if we return to the seminar on Hegel.

IX. Heidegger's Leader vs. Hegel's Prince

Heidegger rightly interprets civil society as abstract right but by emphasizing the state as the ground of civil society in Hegel he neglects the extent to which the state is also an *effect* of civil society, such that the *Rechtstaat* grows from there. In her comment on Heidegger's interpretation of Hegel, Susanna Lindberg remarks that Heidegger focuses his reading on § 257-270 of the *Philosophy of Right* but ignores the first 256 paragraphs of Hegel's work. These are the sections where the state is discussed also as the effect of family and civil society, brushed aside by Heidegger in favor of the sections where the state instead appears as the ground of civil society.²¹⁷ The state, Heidegger for instance says, is "ground [*Grund*] of civil society"; it is its "authentic truth".²¹⁸ It is "also each time that which is historically first, prior to civil society".²¹⁹ He takes Hegel to be ambiguous on this issue – "[o]ne moment civil society as ground [*Grund*] – one moment the state?"²²⁰ – but never reflects or expands on what this ambiguity might mean.

Lindberg draws attention to the role civil society plays for Hegel's conception of the state, discerned in the formal authority he gives to the leader of the state, the prince. Hegel was a proponent of constitutional monarchy and responding to critics questioning the irrational contingency of monarchy – the prince could easily end up being quite incompetent – he replies that this is precisely the point. The prince *must* be a contingent person; for the state cannot be the ground of civil society other than on the basis that it is first its result. Family and civil society, Lindberg stresses, is made up of complex, singular and conflicting interests that must be negotiated; the state is the result of such negotiations.²²¹ As coincidence of the individual and universality, the state can come to its concrete reality

²¹⁷ Susanna Lindberg, "Hegel in 1933" in *On Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, eds. Peter Trawny, Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback and Michael Marder (New York: Bloomsbury, 2014), p. 24.

²¹⁸ Heidegger, "Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*", p. 116.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 116.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 116.

²²¹ Lindberg, "Hegel in 1933", p. 29

only in so far as the individual recognizes itself *in* the state: the state must therefore be complex enough to harbor and embody these contradictions and contingencies. To put it differently, the state is “tested” and grows out of the conflicts and negotiations between those multiple interests comprising civil society and as such it is itself a “subject” and “person”. It is a singularity born through a series of more or less arbitrary decisions, whose consequences are not always known and cannot be anticipated. The role of the prince is to formally validate these decisions – to be, as Hegel devises, “a man who says ‘Yes’ and so puts the dot upon the ‘i.’”²²² The leader’s function is to sign decisions whose contents are negotiated by counselors, experts and different groups of interests with his name: to give decisions that may otherwise be arbitrary and whose origin may escape us, a signature. “The state”, Hegel writes, “is not a work of art. It is in the world, in the sphere of caprice, accident and error.”²²³ The historical work of the state happens through a myriad of small, arbitrary decisions and actions – there is no central agent who founds the state, nor does it unfold as a destined work.

In Heidegger’s displacement of state, a political space emerges where a leader with a different kind of authority is introduced than the formal authority of Hegel’s prince. Against the dispersion of civil society, power is unified in a leader – a unification, Heidegger comments, not to be understood as a “piling together of ‘powers’ in one person”,²²⁴ i.e. as a quantitative, mathematical unity. Power is instead “grounded in the leadership relation [*Führungsverhältnis*] as such [...] essencing solely as determined by the leader [*Führer*].”²²⁵ The leadership relation is a relation of “metaphysical correspondence – which occurs groundingly [*der metaphysischen Entsprechung – die gründend geschieht*]”,²²⁶ i.e. it is a relation to being, which is also a relation of grounding with respect to the state. As such the leader is not a symbolic, formal and contingent administrator of the state’s work. He is not himself a bureaucrat, restricted by law, but “[d]irector of the bureaucratic apparatus. Preparer of the danger and decider of the struggle and guardian of its new truths.”²²⁷ For Heidegger this means that the leader

²²² Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, § 280.

²²³ *Ibid*, § 258.

²²⁴ Heidegger, “Hegel’s *Philosophy of Right*”, p. 182.

²²⁵ *Ibid*, p. 182.

²²⁶ *Ibid*, p. 182.

²²⁷ *Ibid*, p. 183

is responsible for the “*political schooling*”,²²⁸ which awakens and consolidates “the ‘masses’ into a people”.²²⁹

In the parallel lecture course on Hölderlin, the leaders are the poet, the thinker and the statesman, who together configure the powers of being: the origin of right, according to Heidegger. Referring to Heraclitus’ notion of *polemos* he stresses that “right is strife”:

According to common understanding, right is something inscribed independently somewhere, and with its aid and through its application strife is precisely decided and eliminated. No! Originally and in keeping with its essence, right first emerges as such in strife; in strife it forms itself, proves itself and becomes true.²³⁰

In that sense he is close to Schmitt, who criticized the neo-Kantian conception of the juridical order as a disinterested collection of empty, general norms. According to Schmitt this conception neglects the decision as the constituting element of law: general norms are constituted in concrete, singular acts that create values as the positive content of juridical norms.²³¹ “Every general norm”, Schmitt says, “demands a normal, everyday frame of life to which it can be factually applied and which is subject to its regulations.”²³² It is the decision that produces the everyday situations wherein norms gain their legitimacy and can be applied. Thus the decisional act is neither neutral nor disinterested – it is a political act that, in struggle with opponents, ultimately concerns “the question of the nature of man”.²³³

Although critical of Schmitt’s friend-enemy distinction, which from Heidegger’s perspective is a derivative notion that rests on *polemos* as the historical origin of every distinction, Heidegger remains close to Schmitt. He sees right as having its origin in a struggle that forms a measure and opens up the world in which right has legitimacy and can be applied. In a letter he wrote to Schmitt, dated August 22, 1933, he thanked Schmitt who had sent him a copy of *The Concept of the Political* and complimented his citation of Heraclitus: “For years now I have had ready a similar inter-

²²⁸ Ibid, p. 106

²²⁹ Ibid, p. 106.

²³⁰ Heidegger, *Hölderlin’s Hymns “Germania” and “The Rhine”*, p. 113.

²³¹ Carl Schmitt, *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty*, trans. George Schwab (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2005), p. 10.

²³² Ibid, p. 13.

²³³ Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*, trans. George Schwab (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), p. 65.

pretation relating to the notion of truth – the *édeixe* and *epoiese* that appear in fragment 53.²³⁴ The same year he discussed Heraclitus' fragment 53 in relation to truth in one of the lecture courses published in *Being and Truth*.²³⁵ In the 1934–1935 lecture course on Hölderlin, he comes back to fragment 53, which he translates in the following way: “Battle is for all beings indeed the creator, yet for all beings also the ruler, and it indeed makes some manifest as gods, others as humans, bringing some to light as slaves, yet others as masters.”²³⁶ Like Schmitt, Heidegger stresses *polemos* in *Being and Truth* as “the father of all things”, in so far as the father, *basileús*, is also the ruler in a deeper sense of the word, namely as progenitor, custodian and preserver.²³⁷ *Polemos* is father and ruler of all things, because it is *in* struggle that things come to presence and are enduringly preserved as real. “[B]eings are in their constancy and presence only if they are preserved and governed by struggle as their ruler.”²³⁸ In that sense *polemos* determines the totality of beings – the struggle decides how beings, including a people, its gods, enemies and friends, come to presence. It “sets beings out into *unconcealment*, into truth.”²³⁹ As Heidegger formulates it in the 1934–1935 lecture course on Hölderlin, beings are placed in truth, and right, seen as a measure emerging in struggle, he says, “becomes true”.²⁴⁰ Right is born in struggle as a specific way in which the world is disclosed, deciding in advance how beings come into presence. What the struggle projects – friends, enemies, gods – becomes true as soon as the struggle is set into a determinate shape.

In the seminar on Hegel, Heidegger develops his own philosophical version of the *Führerprinzip*, where the leader is a being-historical legislator in the sense of configuring the struggle from out of which right emerges, and measure is provided. In *Introduction to Metaphysics* – whose title, *Einführung in die Metaphysik*, plays with the word leading – he suggests that the leaders are “without constitution [*Satzung*] and limit, without structure and fittingness [*Fug*], because they *as* creators must first ground

²³⁴ Heidegger, “Hier ist es Leider sehr trostlos” in *Reden und andere Zeugnisse eines Lebensweges*, GA 16, (Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2000), p. 156.

²³⁵ Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, p. 72.

²³⁶ Heidegger, *Hölderlin's Hymns "Germania" and "The Rhine"*, p. 112.

²³⁷ Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, p. 72-73.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

²³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

²⁴⁰ Heidegger, *Hölderlin's Hymns "Germania" and "The Rhine"*, p. 113.

all this in each case.”²⁴¹ As creators they “rise high”²⁴² in the historical site of the *polis*, meaning that they are “*apolis*”²⁴³ – above or beyond the *polis*, since they ground it as such. To rule politically is to enact this relation of grounding:

[W]hat we have named is political – that is, at the site of history – insofar as, for example, the poets are *only* poets, but then are actually poets, the thinkers are *only* thinkers, but then are actually thinkers, the priests are *only* priests, but then are actually priests, the rulers are *only* rulers, but then are actually rulers. *Are* – but this says: use violence as violence-doers and become those who rise high in historical being as creators, as doers. Rising high in the site of history, they also become *apolis* [...].²⁴⁴

As “violence-doers” they are not necessarily using physical violence but enact the struggle between forces of concealment and unconcealment, beginning and end, from out of which right, as a historical mode of disclosure, originates. Leading, he maintains, is to lead into a site: “we are entering a landscape; to be in this landscape is the fundamental prerequisite for restoring rootedness [*Bodenständigkeit*] to historical Dasein.”²⁴⁵ It is a site that in the course of the lecture develops into a geopolitical landscape where the people of Europe, as the most “metaphysical people” and “the people richest in neighbors”, is “standing in the center”, i.e. in the “middle” of being.²⁴⁶ In battle with Russia and America, which both express “the same hopeless frenzy of unchained technology and [...] rootless [*bodenlosen*] organization of the average man”,²⁴⁷ Europe’s historical mission is to “transpose” and expand its center in order to again find its way into the power of being.²⁴⁸ In so far as this landscape is *polis*, Edward Casey remarks in his book on space in Heidegger, it is “the unbound space of geopolitical, metaphysical and spiritual powers.”²⁴⁹

If the role of the prince in Hegel’s system was to formally validate a plurality of small decisions and actions taken in civil society, Heidegger’s

²⁴¹ Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, p. 163.

²⁴² *Ibid*, p. 163.

²⁴³ *Ibid*, p. 163.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid*, p. 163.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid*, p. 42.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid* p. 41.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid*, p. 40.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid*, p. 41.

²⁴⁹ Casey, *The Fate of Place*, p. 263

displacement of the state opens up a space where a sovereign appears – a people’s sovereign, who is in need of the people’s recognition and response. Carl Schmitt defines the sovereign in *Political Theology*, which was published the same year Heidegger held the seminar on Hegel, as “he who decides on the exception.”²⁵⁰ It is the sovereign who decides about the friend-enemy distinction. Heidegger sees sovereignty as residing in the “originary struggle”, from out of which the friend – enemy relation emerges. “Sovereignty inwardly”, he writes in the seminar on Hegel, “this at the same time ‘disposition’ – the inner principle of a people – its historical truth each time at a particular state.”²⁵¹ He never explains in what sense sovereignty is a disposition, but in “On the Essence and Concept of Nature, History, and State”, he seems to suggest that every leader has the mark of sovereignty in its being. “Every leader is a leader; he must be a leader in accordance with the marked form [*geprägt Form*] of his being; and he understands, considers and brings about what people and state are, in the living development of his own essence.”²⁵² The leader is marked, and distinguished as a leader, by the “originary struggle” which is the origin of his being. As such he is called to enact this struggle, which “marks” a state and people. He gives the struggle a concrete, political shape in deciding about exceptions, enemies and friends that define what state and people are.²⁵³

While Heidegger is critical of Schmitt for thinking the friend-enemy distinction in an external fashion, in his own political thought the role of truth and true discourse in its “originary” sense of poetic “saying” seems to lead to what Nancy calls a “pure interiority” in relation to *Being and Time*, discussed in the previous chapter. While Nancy does not comment on the role of truth or the “originary” discourse, building on his remarks I argued that the “originary discourse” awakens and calls forth the historical people discussed in § 74 of *Being and Time*. Truth is a mission and “common” cause, which in the 1930s acquires the role of mobilizing and awakening the masses in a way where “a single communal Dasein” is posited “beyond the singulars”, to speak with Nancy.²⁵⁴ This is the point where Heidegger’s aestheticization of politics at the same time grounds the state in truth. True

²⁵⁰ Schmitt, *Political Theology*, p. 5.

²⁵¹ Heidegger, “Hegel’s *Philosophy of Right*”, p. 180.

²⁵² Heidegger, “On the Essence and Concept of Nature, History, and State”, p. 45.

²⁵³ For a discussion about Heidegger’s comments on Schmitt in the seminar on Hegel, and Heidegger’s and Schmitt’s different interpretations of Hegel, see Bernasconi, “The Misinterpretation of Violence: Heidegger’s Reading of Hegel and Schmitt on Gewalt”.

²⁵⁴ Nancy, “The being-with of being-there”, p. 4.

discourse in its “originary” sense of poetic “saying” awakens a people by enacting the struggle that “marks” a destined people, “rooting” them in the truth. In this sense it decides about their affinity or distance with respect to the origin. To ground the state in truth is not to realize the inner nature or essence of state or people, but to ground and re-ground the state in the struggle that both “marks” the being of the people as well as circumscribing their mission and “common cause”.

As such the “work” that grounds the state opens up a space where the distinction between fiction and truth, reality and myth seem lost. In the “space-work” enacted in the parallel lecture courses on Hegel and Hölderlin, the state is transposed from its place in Hegel’s system onto the “meta-physical site” “said” in advance by Hölderlin as the “the truth of a people”. At the same time the displacement of the state opens up a radically different political space when compared to Hegel. It is a space where the state itself emerges as a work of art, and the leaders as seers in the state. Mythical and ideological elements, e.g., the German nation’s and the German people’s place in a world-historical struggle, are transformed into reality and come true. A political space is thereby opened up where the distinctions between fiction and truth, myth and reality seem to be erased. The projective “saying” of truth, which grounds the state in the truth, paradoxically opens up a space that erases these distinctions.

Ironically Heidegger’s notes on “international Judaism [*internationales Judentum*]” and “World-Judaism [*Weltjudentum*]” in *Black Notebooks* play into this logic. As such they can be seen as revealing aspects of the National Socialist method of rule itself, but at a time when he had distanced himself from the regime, was critical to the way National Socialism had developed and at a time when he saw it as representing an end in the history of being, rather than a beginning. In the last section of this chapter, I will discuss his anti-Semitic remarks, which draws on *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, also called *The Protocols of the Meetings of the Learned Elders of Zion*. The *Protocols* is interesting in this context as it is a fabricated document, purporting to be a protocol of meetings between Zionist leaders, planning for global domination. It is a conspiracy theory, staged in the form of factual evidence, as real and true, and was used in Nazi propaganda to mobilize the masses.

X. The Myth of a Jewish World-Conspiracy

Heidegger’s comments on “international Judaism” and “World-Judaism” appear in *Black Notebooks* in notes dated from 1940 and 1941, when he was critical of the regime and no longer saw it as a beginning in the history of

being. What is important here is that his comments on “International Judaism” and “World-Judaism” are expressed within the context investigated in this chapter, where his aestheticization of politics at the same time is an attempt to ground politics in truth. The “saying” of truth that in advance reveals a people’s origin, and grounds it in the truth, is also an enactment of the struggle that “marks” a people and “imprints” in its being a style of existence and way of disclosing itself and its world. By enacting the “originary” struggle, the discourse projects in advance a people’s affinity or distance, that is, its “rootedness” or “uprootedness” with respect to the origin.

Against this background it is worth noting that already in the lecture course on Paul from 1920–1921, discussed in the previous chapter, the question of struggle, *Kampf*, as well as of origin and beginning, expressed in the theme of *parousia*, is associated with the Jews. Paul’s struggle, which prepares for the second coming of *parousia*, is according to the lecture course a struggle against the law, as a path of salvation.²⁵⁵ “[T]he law”, he comments in a context where standing under the law is to be “condemned”, “is that which makes the Jew a Jew”.²⁵⁶ To “stand under the law” is a technical term, meaning that the Jew’s mode of being and living is in accordance with the law – and as such the Jew has no access to the historical event of *parousia*, which according to Heidegger comes to endurance in and as the struggle against the law that functions as bifurcation between the fallen and the called.

In the 1934 seminar “On the Essence and Concept of Nature, History and State”, the Jew is related to space as “marking” a people. Connected to this also is how the trope of “marking” or “stamping” is unfolded during the seminar, where the rooted people’s state bears the people’s “mark” and the political leader is appointed and “marked” by being. On the one hand, as rooted in space and “marked” by space, the Germans are addressed by the history of being – their destiny is “stamped” by this history, they are inscribed within it and appointed by it, as a history they can appropriate and master in the “space-work” that grounds a state. On the other hand, the “Semitic nomads” have no space in this sense, which means that to them “the nature of our German space [...] will perhaps never be revealed at all.”²⁵⁷ Space is according to Heidegger “embedded in a people, situated in a people” in a way that “cannot be taught; at most, it can be awakened from

²⁵⁵ Heidegger, *The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, p. 48.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid*, p. 51.

²⁵⁷ Heidegger, “On the Essence and Concept of Nature, History and State” p. 56.

its slumber”.²⁵⁸ The “space-work” that grounds a state, will in turn bear the “mark” of the people’s manner of being.²⁵⁹

During the war, he addresses the “issue” of “international Judaism” and “World-Judaism” as a question of “uprootedness”, and the “uprooting” of beings from a history of being. World-Judaism is a conspiracy-theory based on an amalgamation of historical fictions expressed in novels, prophecies, pamphlets and fabricated documents. One of the sources that produced the myth of a Jewish world conspiracy is the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, which probably appeared for the first time in 1903, but was translated into several languages and distributed worldwide. It consists of fabricated minutes from 24 sessions of a meeting, which never happened, between Zionist leaders, held by a Grand Rabbi. It purports to document the Zionist leader’s plan to overthrow the social order by taking control of the media and financial institutions and thereby gain control of the world. It is a compound which expands on several already existing texts, such as the 1864 pamphlet *The Dialogue in Hell between Machiavelli and Montesquieu*, written by Maurice Joly, and the 1868 novel *Biarritz* by Herman Gödsche. Hitler refers to it in *Mein Kampf*, and it was used in the Nazi movement to validate the hypothesis of a “state within the state”, as well as to legitimize the myth of an invisible enemy infiltrating German culture with the purpose of world domination. Although already exposed as fraudulent by newspapers such as *The Times* and *Frankfurter Zeitung*, parts of it became mandatory reading in German schools when the Nazis rose to power.²⁶⁰

Donatella di Cesare and Peter Trawny show that the myth of a Jewish world conspiracy plays into Heidegger’s historical narrative in *Black Notebooks*, which insists on concealed powers of machination, functioning as end formations in the history of the Germans, seen by Heidegger as determining the totality of beings.²⁶¹ On a general level he depicts the Jew, some-

²⁵⁸ Ibid, p. 56.

²⁵⁹ Ibid, p. 46.

²⁶⁰ In *Warrant for Genocide*, Norman Cohn traces the sources that produced the myth of a Jewish world conspiracy (Norman Cohn, *Warrant for Genocide: The Myth of the Jewish World Conspiracy and the Protocols of the Elders of Zion* [London: Serif, 2006]). Cf. also on the *Protocols*, Benjamin W. Segel, *A Lie and a Libel: The History of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, trans. Richard S. Levy (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1995); Stephen Eric Bronner, *A Rumor About the Jews: Conspiracy, Anti-Semitism and the Protocols of Zion* (Cham: Palgrave MacMillan, 2019).

²⁶¹ di Cesare, Heidegger and the Jews, p. 148-154; Trawny, *Heidegger and the Myth of a Jewish Conspiracy*, p. 21, 27-37.

times as a passive puppet of these forces, sometimes as their active agent, driving the “uprooting” of all beings. As he states in a note from 1941:

The question of the role of *world-Judaism* [*Weltjudentum*] is not a racial question, but a metaphysical [*metaphysische*] one, a question that concerns the kind of of human existence which in an *utterly unrestrained* [*schlechthin ungebunden*] way, can undertake as a world-historical “task” the uprooting of all beings from being.²⁶²

The “question of the role of world-Judaism” is for Heidegger not a racial question in the sense of a biological question. It is a question of being and the history of being – of the “mark” of being, inscribing in advance a destiny in the being of the people. As such it is a double question: on the one hand, it is the political question of a struggle between beginning and end, but on the other, it is also a question whether the Jewish people can at all be said to have a place in the history of being. The threat of machination, to Heidegger, is the threat of a more or less complete erasure of being’s inscription, of the impression of the stamp of history – and with it the unique place in this history that a “marked” and rooted people can assume and appropriate. As an “uprooting” people, the Jews, if they have a place in this history at all, are a people enacting the erasure not only of their own distinctive “mark” – but on a planetary scale the very difference between people altogether. Although this is not a question of race in a “vulgar” sense for Heidegger – i.e., race seen as a biological determination – it is a question of race in a different sense, where race is the expression of the “mark”, which is a people’s thrownness. This is the reason why he can maintain that the “uprooting” people drives a planetary “deracialization”:

With their emphatically calculative giftedness, the Jews have for the longest time been “living” in accord with the principle of race, which is why they are also offering the most vehement resistance to its unrestrained application. The instituting of racial breeding stems not from “life” itself, but from the overpowering of life by machination. What machination pursues with such planning is a complete deracializing of peoples through their being clamped into an equally built and equally tailored instituting of all beings. One with the deracializing is a self-alienation of the peoples – the loss of history, i.e., the loss of the domains of decision regarding being [Seyn].²⁶³

²⁶² Heidegger, *Ponderings XII–XV*, p. 191.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

As the “calculative” people, the Jews have lived in accordance with the forces of machination that Heidegger now identifies as a problem expressed in National Socialism itself and sees as the source of its “vulgar” racial thinking. Suggesting that the Jews offer “vehement resistance” to the “unrestrained application” of the principle of race he probably refers to the Nuremberg Laws. The “vulgar” race-ideology, according to Heidegger, is thus an effect of a principle that has been pursued by the Jews themselves, and will have as its effect a “deracialization” in the “non-vulgar” sense of “uprooting” people from history – an “uprooting” that will destroy the “domains”, the places or sites in the middle of being, where a historical origin impresses itself in peoples.

Although he maintains a concept of race as an expression of thrownness and rootedness, in contradistinction to race as a biological determination, it is still related to blood. One example is the 1934 lecture course *Logic as the Question concerning the Essence of Language*, where he says that “race” is “not only that which is racial as in the bloodline” since *rassig* can mean status and rank, and speaks about the “voice” or “call of the blood”. “The call of the blood [*Stimme des Blutes*] comes from the fundamental attunement [*Grundstimmung*] of the human being.”²⁶⁴ Another example is from one of the lecture courses in *Being and Truth*, where he discusses the German people as “a historical people, with a specific *historical mission*” constituting itself in “the *domain* within which *the struggle for the truth* must play itself out.”²⁶⁵ In this context he maintains that “[b]lood and soil are indeed powerful and necessary, but they are *not sufficient* conditions for the Dasein of the people.”²⁶⁶ In a note in *Black Notebooks* he continues this line of thought: “Race – that which is *a necessary though indeed indirectly expressed condition* (thrownness [*Geworfenheit*]) of historical Dasein.”²⁶⁷ He consequently criticizes the Nazi regime, suggesting that in the “intellectualism” of racial talk a necessary condition is “falsified into the unique and sufficient condition [...]. A condition is elevated to the unconditioned.”²⁶⁸ Race, blood and soil thus refer to thrownness, seen as a necessary condition for the Dasein of a people, as it expresses a people’s inscription in

²⁶⁴ Martin Heidegger, *Logic as the Question Concerning the Essence of Language*, trans. Wanda Torres Gregory and Yvonne Unna (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2009), p. 57, 131.

²⁶⁵ Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, p. 200-201

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 201.

²⁶⁷ Heidegger, *Ponderings II-VI*, p. 139.

²⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 139.

the history of being. However, it is not sufficient since the Dasein of a people is constituted also in the active assumption of the historical mission inscribed in its being – that is, the mission of actively marking, typing or forming in advance the being of a people, its enemies and gods, which Heidegger assigns to the artist, the thinker and the statesman.

di Cesare and Trawny draw attention to Heidegger's appeal in *Black Notebooks* to mythical elements and the conspiratorial logic of the *Protocols* – such as the invocation of concealed spiritual forces, operated by an invisible enemy planning for world domination.²⁶⁹ It is an enemy that has no place and cannot be located, since he is everywhere and nowhere, gifted in disguising himself by erasing his character traits and in assuming seemingly contradictory properties. Building on the model of the *Protocols*, which displays the Jew as secretly infiltrating culture from behind the scene, rather than openly declaring war, Heidegger refers to world-Judaism in another note from 1941:

World-Judaism, incited by the emigrants allowed out of Germany, cannot be held fast anywhere and, with all its developed power, does not need to participate anywhere in the activities of war, whereas all that remains to us is the sacrifice of the best blood of the best [*das beste Blut der Besten*] of our own people.²⁷⁰

His repetition of the conspiratorial logic of the *Protocols* is one of the reasons for di Cesare's caution against Peter Trawny's suggestion that Heidegger's antisemitism should be understood as a "being-historical anti-Semitism".²⁷¹ According to her "being-historical anti-Semitism" is a concept that has an esoteric tone and a mystical aura that reduces the brutality of Heidegger's narrative, but also risks isolating his position to a unicum. The proper concept, she suggests, is "metaphysical anti-Semitism", which also positions Heidegger together with other German philosophers such as Kant, Nietzsche and Hegel in a philosophical tradition defining the "essence" of the Jew. The Jew is represented in this tradition as the negative pole in a series of metaphysical dichotomies to be discarded, such as that of soul/body, spirit/letter, beginning/end, originality/imitation etc. If else-

²⁶⁹ di Cesare, *Heidegger and the Jews*, p. 148-154; Trawny, *Heidegger and the Myth of a Jewish Conspiracy*, p. 21, 27-37.

²⁷⁰ Heidegger, *Ponderings XII–XV*, p. 208.

²⁷¹ di Cesare, *Heidegger and the Jews*, p. 167; Trawny, *Heidegger and the Myth of a Jewish Conspiracy*, p. 18.

where Heidegger contested hierarchical oppositions within the Western tradition, this was not so with respect to the Jew: the real Jews, with their history and innumerable differences are reduced to “the Jew, the *Jude*, the Jew per se.”²⁷²

However, once Heidegger’s anti-Semitism is placed within the context of the interplay between his aestheticization of politics and his attempts to ground politics in truth, it seems to have a different meaning than the philosophical anti-Semitism that seeks to define the essence of the Jew. The “saying” of truth that grounds the Dasein of a people in the truth is at the same time an enactment of the struggle that “marks” or “imprints” an essence, style of existence and mode of being in the people. To ground a people in the truth is to ground it in a “metaphysical site” in the “middle” of the state, where the mytheme is transformed to reality and *comes true*.

In her writings on totalitarianism Arendt identified a totalitarian “invention” that she saw as a key element in totalitarian politics. What totalitarianism invented was a method for translating fictive and ideological elements into concrete, experienceable reality. Since these fictions are presented in the form of truth-claims, ideology acquires a prophetic character foreseeing the future. The event of totalitarianism grounds and re-grounds itself in this operation – and it is within this logic, it seems to me, that Heidegger’s anti-Semitic comments should be understood. They reveal aspects of the paradoxical relation between politics and truth in totalitarianism itself, ironically at a time when he had distanced himself from the regime.

In the next chapter I will discuss the totalitarian “invention” that Arendt saw as a key element in totalitarian rule. It sheds light on the relation between truth and politics in Heidegger. At the same time, Heidegger’s writings from the 1930s also shed light on parts of Arendt’s analysis that while remaining implicit can be made explicit against the background of his writings.

Summary

This chapter has explored the role of truth and true discourse in Heidegger’s political thought and engagements during the 1930s. In this period he defines truth as a concealed “originary struggle” between forces of concealment and unconcealment, beginning and end. The role he assigns to true discourse in its “originary” form of poetic “saying” is the mythical role of

²⁷² di Cesare, *Heidegger and the Jews*, p. 166-167.

revealing a people's origin in this struggle, thereby grounding the Dasein of the people and their state in truth. As such the "saying" of truth does not represent the origin. It has the role of summoning the masses to a task, of awakening a people called to appropriate their origin as a historical mission. Thus, true discourse in Heidegger plays the role of mobilizing and gathering the masses – where the question of truth is itself a political task.

In order for the origin to be appropriated and assumed, the concealed struggle between world-historical forces must be experienced. To reveal the origin is not to represent it, but to enact it and transform it into concrete, experienceable reality, thereby making it possible for a people to assume it as a mission. The "saying" of truth that makes the origin manifest enacts a struggle that "marks" a people and "impresses" in its being a style of existence, which is also a way in which the people discloses itself, its enemies, friends and gods.

In Heidegger's interpretations of Plato's allegory of the cave in *The Essence of Truth* from 1931–1932 and *Being and Truth* from 1933 this role is assigned to an individual – the returning cave-dweller. During his period as head of the University of Freiburg, the role is ascribed to the university, as an institution in the "middle" of the state. The university is a concrete place in the "middle" of the state, and the international world, where disclosure is transformed, in a way that will allow the people to come to themselves. It is also a place where paths are created for the historical beginning to become real in and through the people, when appropriated and preserved as a mode of being and disclosure.

After resigning as head of the University of Freiburg, Heidegger turned to Hölderlin and Hegel. In this chapter I have followed the movement in his parallel courses on Hölderlin and Hegel, where a "space-work" is enacted. The state is displaced from its location in Hegel's system to the "meta-physical site", placed by Hölderlin in the "midst" of the people. To displace the state is also a form of "space-work" that radically transforms political space. It is work that transports the people to the "originary struggle" by giving the latter a concrete, political shape required for the people to come to itself. The political space that opens up in this "work" is a space where the state seems to emerge as a "pure interiority". While Heidegger is critical of Schmitt for thinking the friend-enemy distinction in an external fashion, in his own political thought the role of truth and true discourse in its "originary" sense of poetic "saying" posits a single, historical mode of disclosure that determines a people as their destiny and task in a way that does not seem to allow for "singulars". In this project of grounding, myth is

transformed into reality and thereby comes true. The “poetic” saying that grounds the state in truth paradoxically seems to erase the very distinction between myth and reality, fiction and truth.

CHAPTER 4

The Modern Political Lie

I. The Problem of Politics and Truth

After the end of World War II Hannah Arendt began searching for a notion of politics as beginning. *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, published in 1951, is a work on an end, but also on beginnings: “Beginning”, she states, “[...] is the supreme capacity of man; politically, it is identical with man’s freedom.”¹ In *The Human Condition*, published seven years later, politics is defined as beginning while natality is understood as the primary category of political thought. Political action “means to take initiative, to begin (as the Greek word *archein*, ‘to begin,’ ‘to lead,’ and eventually ‘to rule,’ indicates).”²

In this chapter and the next I will show in what ways the question of truth played a central role in her notion of politics as beginning, though in a manner quite different from Heidegger’s. While her view on the relation between truth and politics has received comment, the complexity of this topic in her work has not been satisfactorily and systematically accounted for. Perhaps one reason is due to the fact that, rather than systematically thematized, not only are her comments on truth scattered among her writings, they also seem somewhat contradictory. As I mentioned in Chapter 1, a commonly held view about Arendt is her skepticism, if not open hostility, toward truth-claims in politics. Others have emphasized that she saw factual truth as essential to politics, while still others have stressed her acknowledgment of a role for what she would call philosophical truth. However, if her writings on truth are interpreted against the background of her analysis of totalitarian politics then she can be seen as identifying a problem of politics and truth that sheds light on the contradictory state-

¹ Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, p. 479.

² Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998. E-book.), p. 135.

ments about truth in her writings. In his essay on truth in Arendt, John S. Nelson makes an important observation when suggesting that “the problematic of politics and truth” was for Arendt “central to twentieth century politics in particular and life in general.”³ According to him the problematical relation between truth and politics is addressed in all her major works, not least in her writings on totalitarianism.⁴ The present chapter is dedicated to how Arendt approaches the problem of politics and truth, as discussed not only in her writings on totalitarianism but one that returns and is developed by her in other works. However, if Nelson interprets this problem primarily from out of Arendt’s claim that totalitarian politics shows an “extreme contempt for facts”⁵, I will stress that her analysis at the same time reveals how truth-claims *function* in totalitarian politics. This level of her analysis is implicit but becomes visible when we read Heidegger and Arendt together. Heidegger’s writings on truth during the 1930s can be used as a lens through which to reveal central aspects of the problem of politics and truth that Arendt identified in totalitarianism. Arendt never suggested this interpretive strategy herself. Her own comments about Heidegger can be deemed overly cautious in retrospect, and in addition several of his works referred to in the previous chapter were not available to her. Nonetheless, by reading Arendt and Heidegger together, the specific problematic surrounding truth and totalitarianism becomes manifest, while aspects Arendt only indicated and touched upon become possible to develop further.

In order to tackle this topic in her writings we must paradoxically begin with the political lie. It is in her treatment of the political lie that the problem of politics and truth in totalitarianism comes to the fore. In her 1945 essays “The Seeds of a Fascist International” and “Approaches to the German Problem” she suggests that fascism has invented a new form of political lie.⁶ She writes: “One can say to some extent that fascism has added a new variation to the old art of lying – the most devilish variation – that of *lying* the truth.”⁷ The same year Alexandre Koyré’s essay, “The Political Function of the Modern Lie”, was published in English. According to Koyré, “the present epoch, or more exactly, its totalitarian regimes, has

³ Nelson, “Politics and Truth”, p. 270.

⁴ Ibid, p. 271, 274.

⁵ Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, p. 350; Nelson, “Politics and Truth”, p. 274.

⁶ Arendt, “The Seeds of a Fascist International”, p. 146; Arendt, “Approaches to the ‘German Problem’”, p. 111.

⁷ Arendt, “Approaches to the ‘German Problem’”, p. 111.

created some mighty innovations.”⁸ The innovation he refers to is a new, previously unseen, form of political lie – a lie, he says, that does not hide the truth, but makes use of it.⁹ Whether Arendt and Koyré read one another’s essays in 1945 is unclear, though she refers to his essay in a footnote in *The Origins of Totalitarianism*.¹⁰ Like Koyré she saw this new type of lie as a distinctly modern invention, and later she too came to call it the modern lie. For the sake of convenience, I will use this expression also when discussing her early comments on the political lie.

Since Arendt saw the modern lie as an innovation in the history and practice of lying, Jacques Derrida has noted that it cannot be understood in the usual sense of the lie, as a statement that deliberately misrepresents reality, in order to deceive.¹¹ According to him it must be understood in a completely different way, as a lie that does not misrepresent, but transforms or even annihilates reality.¹² As such, Peg Birmingham suggests, the political lie should be seen as occupying a central place in Arendt’s analysis of totalitarianism: “It is not often enough noted that the problem of political deception occupies a central, indeed inaugural place, in Hannah Arendt’s analysis of totalitarianism.”¹³

In this chapter I will take as my starting point Arendt’s claim that fascism introduced a way of “lying the truth”. In what sense can the modern, political lie be seen as “lying the truth”, and as making use of the truth, which is what Koyré suggested? In the previous chapter we saw that the poetic “saying” of truth in its “originary” sense in Heidegger’s political writings has the mythical function of revealing a people’s origin in a concealed struggle between forces. It reveals, in advance, a beginning in the history of being, and grounds the state in truth. As such the “saying” of truth does not represent the inner nature of people or state, but enacts the struggle between forces that shapes, figures and “fictions” a historical origin. It is first when the concealed struggle between forces is accomplished, and becomes possible for the people to experience, that myth becomes effective

⁸ Koyré, Alexandre, “The Political Function of the Modern Lie” in *Contemporary Jewish Record*, vol VIII (1945), p. 290.

⁹ *Ibid*, p. 297.

¹⁰ Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, p. 376, fn 90.

¹¹ Derrida, “History of the Lie”, p. 40. For a discussion about Derrida’s interpretation of Arendt in this essay, see Jay, “Pseudology” and La Caze, “It’s Easier to Lie if you Believe it Yourself”.

¹² Derrida, “History of the Lie”, p. 42. See also Birmingham, “A Lying World Order”, p. 73-74; Caruth, “Lying and History”, p. 82; Sjöholm, *Doing Aesthetics with Arendt*, p. 94.

¹³ Birmingham, “A Lying World Order”, p. 73.

in gathering a people. In this process, I argued, mythical elements and projections, are transformed into reality. Heidegger is not a proponent of the modern, political lie but what Arendt's analysis of the political lie can be seen as addressing is nevertheless a problem present also in his thought. Her treatment of the lie reveals that the event of totalitarianism grounds and re-grounds itself in a transformation of fictive elements into reality and truth. In some passages she describes this in terms of legitimization processes that can be understood as "making use" of the truth in ways that will be investigated in the present chapter.

This dimension of her analysis becomes visible if we remember that the modern political lie cannot be understood on a representational level, i.e., as a deliberate misrepresentation that hides or covers over the truth. As suggested by Birmingham, the modern lie cannot even be seen as deception or falsehood, in the usual sense of opposition or intentional dissimulation of the truth.¹⁴ In their build-up phase, Arendt argued, totalitarian movements establish a lasting and functioning, but "fictitious world",¹⁵ where ideological statements, conspiracy-theories and fictions come true. The ideal subject of totalitarian rule, she writes, "is not the convinced Nazi or the convinced Communist, but people for whom the distinction between fact and fiction (i.e., the reality of experience) and the distinction between true and false (i.e., the standards of thought) no longer exists."¹⁶ In so far as the modern political lie appeals to truth, it does so in a way that paradoxically short-circuits and even destroys its meaning in political contexts.

After *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, she discussed the modern, political lie as an organized form of lying that evolves, assumes new forms and can appear also under non-totalitarian circumstances in contemporary democracies. In the essays "Truth and Politics", "Lying and Politics" and "Home to Roost"¹⁷ she developed a version of the lie called "image-making" which utilizes public relations techniques and mass-media. The extension of the modern, political lie into contemporary democracies, will also be investigated in the present chapter.

What is important in Arendt's concept of modern lying is that here the problem of politics and truth is not that lies are taken as truth, but that the

¹⁴ Ibid, p. 74.

¹⁵ Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, p. viii, 353, 361, 362, 363, 364, 373, 382, 387, 388, 391, 392, 393, 415, 417, 420, 436, 439.

¹⁶ Ibid, p. 474.

¹⁷ Hannah Arendt, "Home to Roost" in Hannah Arendt, *Responsibility and Judgment* (New York: Schocken Books, 2003).

sense of truth and fact in political contexts is destroyed. To Arendt, however, this was never to say that we live in a condition of what is today called “post-truth”, i.e., a situation where references to truths and facts in politics have become obsolete. On a general level the modern lie represents an end in the relation between politics and truth in her works – however, and precisely as such, it also to some extent points to a beginning. “[E]very end in history necessarily contains a new beginning; this beginning is the promise, the only ‘message’ which the end can ever produce”¹⁸, as she states in *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. The lie is a contradictory phenomenon that cannot simply be countered by demanding a more truthful attitude in politics. As we will see, an implicit level of her analysis is that it also reveals the paradoxical way in which truth-claims function in totalitarian politics, as well as in contemporary democracies, where the lie is invented anew, under non-totalitarian conditions. What the lie therefore calls for, Arendt seems to be saying, is a rethinking of the concept of truth against the background of the lie. An approach, then, that asks about the *position* of truth in the political sphere. In comments and fragments scattered in most of her major works, but more systematically in the essays “Philosophy and Politics”, “Truth and Politics” and the section in the *Denktagebuch* entitled “Wahrheit und Politik”, Arendt can be seen as undertaking precisely such a reflection. This dimension of her works will be investigated in the next chapter, Chapter 5.

Before proceeding to Arendt’s definitions of the modern political lie it is important to see that Heidegger’s role for the question of truth in her works is double. As pointed out by Sergio Belardinelli, the words disclosure and revelation are frequent in her writings – especially in the sections on the political realm in *The Human Condition*, studying what she calls the “revelatory quality of speech and action”.¹⁹ According to Villa she understands the human being as existing in and as disclosure. What she calls “the political realm” is a site, a “there”, where disclosive activities, such as action and speech, appear.²⁰ Revelation is the word she adopts for truth also in the

¹⁸ Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, p. 478-479.

¹⁹ Belardinelli, “Martin Heidegger und Hannah Arendt’s Begriff von ‘Welt’ und ‘Praxis’”; Arendt, *The Human Condition*, p. 180. See also Villa, *Arendt and Heidegger*, p. 130, 138-139.

²⁰ Villa, *Arendt and Heidegger*, p. 130, 138-139. Several scholars have suggested that Arendt was influenced by Heidegger’s notion of truth. See for instance Brennan and Malpas, “The Space of Appearance and the Space of Truth”, p. 49; Tchir, “Daimon

1954 lecture on Socrates, “Philosophy and Politics”, and the essay “Truth and Politics”, both of which are works where truth, and the relation between truth and politics, are discussed at length. Her own notion of truth can in fact be traced back to a comment in *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, where she suggests that “truth, defined as logical consistency, is empty or rather no truth at all, because it does not reveal anything. (To define consistency as truth as some modern logicians do means to deny the existence of truth.)”²¹

On the one hand, Arendt is obviously influenced by Heidegger’s notion of truth as disclosure or revelation. Her analysis of the modern political lie is probably also indebted to his notion of untruth, developed by Heidegger as a form of untruth that does not function on the level of representation. On the other hand, however, her critique of totalitarianism locates a problem of politics and truth visible in Heidegger also. In relation to this, her analysis of totalitarian politics as establishing a “fictitious world” can be seen as a criticism of the aestheticization of politics. Though she never formulated it in this way, her confrontation with totalitarianism can therefore be understood, or at least reconstructed, as a response to Heidegger. When developing her own notion of truth as disclosure or revelation in works subsequent to *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, she does so in ways that differ on crucial points from Heidegger. We will explore this in Chapter 5. To be in a position to do so, however, we must begin by discussing the problem of politics and truth, which for her was a key element in totalitarianism.

I will begin, in section II of this chapter, by addressing Arendt’s view on lying in politics in a more general sense, namely with respect to her definition of political action as beginning. By offering close readings of works such as “Approaches to the ‘German Problem’”, “The Seeds of a Fascist International”, “The Aftermath of Nazi Rule: A Report from Germany”,²² “On the Nature of Totalitarianism: An Essay in Understanding”²³ and *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, Section III investigates the problematical relation of politics and truth that arises from her analysis of the

Appearances and the Heideggerian Influence in Arendt’s Account of Political Action”, p. 56-59; Zerilli, *A Democratic Theory of Judgment*, p. 120.

²¹ Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, p. 477.

²² Hannah Arendt, “The Aftermath of Nazi Rule: A Report from Germany” in Hannah Arendt, *Essays in Understanding* (New York: Schocken Books), 1995.

²³ Hannah Arendt, “On the Nature of Totalitarianism: An Essay in Understanding” in Hannah Arendt, *Essays in Understanding* (New York: Schocken Books), 1995.

modern political lie. Section IV–V situates the modern political lie in relation to her notion of politics as beginning, by discussing the lie as destroying what Arendt calls the “space between” in *The Origins of Totalitarianism* and later developed as the space where a “scene of appearances” can arise. In section VI the renewal and mutation of the modern lie, under non-totalitarian conditions in contemporary democracies, will be addressed in relation to her writings on the trial of Eichmann and the Vietnam war.

II. The Affinity of Lying and Political Action

According to Arendt’s preface, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* is a work that gives a historical account of the elements that crystallized into totalitarian rule.²⁴ Margaret Canovan has pointed out that Arendt did not approach totalitarianism as a fixed form of governing, but as an event that can constitute itself anew.²⁵ To Arendt history is not the history of a single beginning or a few grand transformations, determining the West. For her, history is the history of a plurality of elements, some of which amalgamated into the phenomenon of totalitarianism, seen by her as finding its clearest expression not only in the Third Reich but also in the Soviet Union. These elements, Canovan stresses, are not primarily ideas: Arendt emphasized the establishment of totalitarian *practices*, rather than the influence of ideas. What she saw as unprecedented in totalitarian rule was not the content of the ideology or the propaganda, but the *event* of totalitarianism, which, according to her, was constituted by means of an amalgamation of elements that were not totalitarian in themselves.²⁶ Her approach, therefore, is not that of a political philosopher trying to define the essence of totalitarian rule in comparison to other forms of governing, such as dictatorship or democracy. She approached totalitarianism, Canovan says, as a “theorist of beginnings.”²⁷ That is, she analyzed it as introducing something unexpected: to her the unexpected could, as Canovan formulates it, be “the novel horrors of totalitarianism” just as much as the “new dawn of revolution.”²⁸ One of the elements appearing in *The Origins of Totalitarianism* as constitutive for

²⁴ Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, p. xv.

²⁵ Margaret Canovan, *Hannah Arendt: A Reinterpretation of her Political Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 28-29, 42.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 23, 42.

²⁷ Margaret Canovan, “Introduction” in Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998. E-book.), p. 6.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

totalitarianism is the modern political lie, earlier described by Arendt as a novelty, for which no one was prepared.²⁹ Thus already from the start, she develops the lie in relation to the unexpected.

Birmingham draws attention to the fact that the issue of political deception is introduced at the very outset of *The Origins of Totalitarianism*.³⁰ Here Arendt reminds the reader of the “insecure position of truth in the world”, distinguishing between ancient and modern sophistry.³¹ While the ancient sophist was satisfied “with a passing victory of the argument at the expense of truth”, the stakes are higher for its modern counterpart, who seeks to win “a more lasting victory at the expense of reality.”³² The ancient sophist manipulated the logic of thought, in order to achieve a temporary victory in an argument, but the modern sophist is different: he targets facts and aims at a lasting victory over reality itself.

It is the contemporary form of sophistry that she sees as a new, unexpected form of political lie. It is a lie of a quite different kind than the lies discussed for example by Sissela Bok in her classical study of lying, *Lying: Moral Choice in Public and Private Life*.³³ Bok defines lying as “any intentionally deceptive message which is *stated*.”³⁴ Her examples are intentionally stated falsehoods, such as “government pronouncements that the CIA did not participate in a Latin American coup, or that new figures show an economic upturn around the corner”, when no such upturn is in sight.³⁵ The modern lie identified by Arendt, however, is more than an act of speech. In her essay on the lie, Cathy Caruth suggests that the modern lie is speech which is *itself* action.³⁶ Action, according to Arendt, is the capacity for beginnings. It is the capacity to change the record of history, which is why she maintained that the liar “is an actor by nature; he says what is not so because he wants things to be different from what they are – that is, he wants to change the world.”³⁷

In one of her late essays, “Lying in Politics”, Arendt points out that lying has always been part of the political game, and often a necessary and

²⁹ Arendt, “The Seeds of a Fascist International”, p. 146.

³⁰ Birmingham, “A Lying World Order”, p. 73.

³¹ Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, p. 9.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 9.

³³ Sissela Bok, *Lying: Moral Choice in Public and Private Life* (New York: Vintage Books, 1999).

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

³⁶ Caruth, “Lying and History”, p. 81.

³⁷ Arendt, “Truth and Politics”, p. 246.

justified political tool: “Let us remember that the lie did not creep into politics by some accident of human sinfulness. Moral outrage, for this reason alone, is not likely to make it disappear.”³⁸ There is therefore a certain parallel between Arendt’s and Machiavelli’s conception of the political lie. The prince, Machiavelli taught, must learn how to lie and pretend: “[I]t is necessary to know well how to [...] be a great pretender and dissembler; [...] he who deceives will always find someone who will let himself be deceived.”³⁹ In *The Human Condition*, Arendt comments on the passage in *The Prince*, where Machiavelli claims that what matters in politics is what is done, not what one ought to do:

Goodness [...] as a consistent way of life, is not only impossible within the confines of the public realm, it is even destructive of it. Nobody perhaps has been more sharply aware of this ruinous quality of doing good than Machiavelli, who, in a famous passage, dared to teach men ‘how not to be good’.⁴⁰

Along this line, she also comments on Plato in the essay “Truth and Politics”, suggesting that he “was permissive about occasional lies to deceive the enemy or insane people”⁴¹ and was “much harsher on people ‘wallowing in swinish ignorance’ than on liars”.⁴² Arendt herself, Martin Jay remarks in his

³⁸ Arendt, “Lying in Politics”, p. 6.

³⁹ Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. Tim Parks (London: Penguin Books, 2009), ch. 18.

⁴⁰ Arendt, *The Human Condition*, p. 70; Machiavelli, *The Prince*, ch. 15. For further discussions about the parallel between Arendt and Machiavelli, see for instance Buckler, *Hannah Arendt and Political Theory* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), p. 132-145 and Faisal Baluch, “Arendt’s Machiavellian Moment”, *European Journal of Political Theory*, vol 3, no. 2 (2013).

⁴¹ Arendt, “Truth and Politics”, p. 228, fn. 5. She refers to the passage in Book II of *The Republic* suggesting that occasional lying is useful among men, “as a kind of preventive medicine against our enemy”, but that God has no reason to tell lies. (Plato, *The Republic*, trans. Desmond Lee, [London: Penguin Books, 1987], Book II, 382c-d.)

⁴² Arendt, “Truth and Politics”, p. 228. However, according to Arendt the belief that Plato invented “the noble lie” in *The Republic*, rests on a mistranslation of the Greek *gennaion pseudos* to “noble lie”. In this context *pseudos* signifies fiction or invention, not lie, she stresses. In his Penguin translation, Desmond Lee makes a similar point in his introduction and translates the passage in Book III, 414b as “magnificent myth”. (Desmond Lee, “Translator’s Introduction”, p. 1 in Plato, *The Republic*, trans. Desmond Lee [London: Penguin Books, 1987].) Arendt’s comment may very well be an indirect comment also on Leo Strauss’ interpretation of Plato in *The City and Man*, which was published a few years before “Truth and Politics”. (Leo Strauss, *The City and Man* [Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1964]). According to Strauss, the noble lie is introduced with a view to the best of the city, in regard to the ruled, and especially with

book on lying in politics, did not see truthfulness as an unqualified political virtue and conceived of lying as sometimes a legitimate political tool.⁴³

In the late essay “Lying in Politics”, Arendt describes the lie as the expression of a capacity necessary in politics: to deny reality as it is given to us. As such lying is intimately connected to political action, defined by her as the historical beginning of something unexpected. Among the activities labor, work and action, she states in *The Human Condition*, the latter “has the closest connection with the human condition of natality”.⁴⁴ Through action “the new beginning inherent in birth can make itself felt in the world”, which is why action is “the one miracle-working faculty of man”.⁴⁵ In action man assumes and affirms the disclosure of unexpected beginnings, whose outcome is uncertain and cannot be accounted for by previous history. Action, therefore, is “the political activity par excellence”, and natality, rather than mortality, is “the central category of political, as distinguished from metaphysical, thought.”⁴⁶

As closely connected to action, lying is more than an act of speech or deliberate misrepresentation of states of affairs. This is crucial for under-

regard to soldiers. “[T]he noble lie is to bring about the maximum of caring for the city and for one another on the part of the ruled (415d3-4). The good city is not possible then without a fundamental falsehood; it cannot exist in the element of truth, of nature.” (Ibid, p. 102). This passage and others, where Strauss may be seen as interpreting ancient thinkers in order to defend the use of the noble lie, has been referred to in the heated debate about Strauss’ possible influence on conservative, American right-wing politicians such as George W. Bush and his administration. For a discussion about this debate, see Martin Jay, *The Virtues of Mendacity: On Lying in Politics* (Charlottesville/London: University of Virginia Press, 2010), p 158-161. According to Jay it is far from clear that Strauss endorsed the noble lie or influenced American conservatives. However, if he did endorse the noble lie, he probably had a different rationale for his defense than his defenders in the debate. “What is crucial to note is that the elitist tradition that descended from Plato had a rationale for its defense if its advocates so desired. Believing in a single truth about the good society based on natural right, but one whose candid dissemination might be dangerous to the stability of the state, meant that mendacity could be justified by the guardians of that truth for the benefit of the whole. Full transparency and honesty could be a threat to order, as conservatives ever since Burke with his celebrated defense of the value of ‘veils’ and ‘drapery’ have known.” (Ibid, p. 164). For a discussion about Arendt’s and Strauss’ different interpretations of Plato, see for instance Zerilli, “Truth and Politics”, § 13-19 and Dana Villa, “The Philosopher versus the Citizen: Arendt, Strauss and Socrates” in Dana Villa, *Politics, Philosophy, Terror: Essays on the Thought of Hannah Arendt* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999).

⁴³ Jay, *The Virtues of Mendacity*, p. 165-168.

⁴⁴ Arendt, *The Human Condition*, p. 26.

⁴⁵ Ibid, p. 26, 246.

⁴⁶ Ibid, p. 25.

standing Arendt's notion of modern lying, since it sees an affinity between the modern political lie and the political task of beginning. To begin, Arendt writes, is never to begin *ex nihilo*, from nothing. It always takes place in a given historical and political context. Therefore, in order to make room for our actions, "something that was there before must be removed or destroyed, and things as they were before changed".⁴⁷ This would be impossible unless we were able to imagine a different world, to remove ourselves, at least in fantasy, from reality. If we were unable to say "yes" and "no" – not only to statements about the world, but to reality itself, "to things as they are given, beyond agreement or disagreement, to our organs of perception and cognition", action would be impossible.⁴⁸ Our capacity to lie – to deny reality as it is given – and to act politically, in the sense of initiating a beginning and to change reality, are therefore closely connected.

It seems it was Rahel Varnagen who pointed out this connection between lying and changing reality to Arendt. In her biography on Varnagen, completed in 1938 but not published until 1957, she quotes Varnagen as explaining that mendacity can be an expression of freedom:

[L]ying can obliterate the outside event which introspection has already converted into a purely psychic factor. Lying takes up the heritage of introspection, sums it up, and makes a reality of the freedom that introspection has won. 'Lying is lovely if we choose it, and it is an important component of our freedom.' [...] Whatever is not proved by thinking is not provable – therefore, make your denials, falsify by lies, make use of your freedom to change and render reality ineffective at will.⁴⁹

The conviction that there exists a close affinity between lying and freedom, in the sense of changing reality, led Arendt also in her early works to see totalitarianism as a movement that introduced a novelty. "[I]t is, after all, contempt for reality which makes possible changing the world",⁵⁰ she remarks in *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. What she sees as a modern form of lying, at the heart of totalitarian rule, is a version of lying that cannot be understood – or responded to – on the level of representation, where the lie is seen as a deliberate misrepresentation of states of affairs. It is a form of lie that intervenes in reality, though in a way that destroys the very condition for the appearing

⁴⁷ Arendt, "Lying in Politics", p. 5.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁴⁹ Hannah Arendt, *Rahel Varnagen: The Life of a Jewish Woman*, trans. Richard Winston and Clara Winston (New York: Harvest, 1974), p. 11-12.

⁵⁰ Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, p. 458.

of beginnings. This becomes clear if we investigate the problem of politics and truth that emerges in her treatment of the modern lie.

III. Modern Lying

In order to shed light on this problem, it is instructive to recall Arendt's comment in "Approaches to the 'German Problem'", where she suggests that "fascism has added a new variation to the old art of lying – the most devilish variation – that of *lying* the truth."⁵¹ What Koyré the same year referred to as a modern version of the political lie, is a lie that does not function as lies usually do, by concealing the truth and covering over its intentions. Totalitarianism, he says, invented a way of utilizing public disclosure. Since Hitler knew "that his declarations would not be taken seriously by the uninitiated [...] it was precisely by telling them the truth, that he made certain of gulling and lulling his foes."⁵² In *Mein Kampf*, Hitler for example openly declared his contempt for facts: "We National Socialists, as the protagonists of a new view of life, must never stand on the famous 'ground – and false at that – of facts'. In this case we would no longer be the fighters for a new great idea, but the coolies of the present."⁵³ He also openly discussed a propaganda technique, projected on the Jews, for which he coined the expression "the big lie [*Große Lüge*]"⁵⁴ An "enormous" lie, he maintained, is more effective than a small one since the masses cannot believe that someone "could have the impudence to distort the truth so infamously".⁵⁵ What Koyré seems to be indicating in his essay, when suggesting that totalitarianism "operate[s] in public" and "*conspire[s] in broad daylight*", is the paradoxical dimension of a lie, more or less openly stated as a lie rather than covering over its intentions.⁵⁶ If the traditional lie operates through secrecy and hiding, the modern lie makes use of public disclosure.

Like Koyré, Arendt also develops the modern lie as a form of lying that does not dissimulate or cover over but utilizes truth. In "Approaches to the 'German Problem'", she for instance says that "the Nazi lies alluded to certain fundamental truths".⁵⁷ Its lies – such as that of a unique *Volksgemein-*

⁵¹ Arendt, "Approaches to the 'German Problem'", p. 111.

⁵² Koyré, "The Political Function of the Modern Lie" p. 296.

⁵³ Hitler, *Mein Kampf: The Official 1939 Unexpurgated Edition*, https://archive.org/details/MeinKampf_595.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, p. 313.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, p. 313.

⁵⁶ Koyré, "The Political Function of the Modern Lie" p. 297.

⁵⁷ Arendt, "Approaches to the 'German Problem'", p. 112.

schaft, built on racial laws – were presented as an answer to two truths, according to her: that of the breakdown of European class-society and the decline of the national state, which had ceased to represent the people.⁵⁸ It is far from clear in what sense she means that class-society had broken down, but her point is that the lies of the Nazi movement alluded to problems and transformations in society that were actual and real. In *The Origins of Totalitarianism* she stresses this: the lies of the totalitarian movements were not entirely arbitrary, they referred to real conditions from which they derived an “element of truthfulness and real experience”.⁵⁹ They were especially successful and could “acquire the reputation of superior ‘realism’” when they touched “upon real conditions whose existence [was] being hidden” by official authorities.⁶⁰ They appealed to real conditions, and were particularly successful when they mimicked the disclosure of unwelcome truths.

However, the modern lie invented a way of “lying the truth” also in another respect. In “The Seeds of a Fascist International”, published in 1945, she writes:

Das Schwarze Korps conceded several years before the outbreak of the war that people abroad did not completely believe the Nazi contention that all Jews are homeless beggars who can only subsist as parasites in the economic organism of other nations; but public foreign opinion, they prophesied, would in a few years be given opportunity to convince itself of this fact when the German Jews would be driven out across the borders like a pack of beggars. For such a fabrication of a lying reality no one was prepared.⁶¹

The hallmark of totalitarian propaganda is “that it was not satisfied with lying but deliberately proposed to transform its lies into reality.”⁶² The distinguishing feature of the propaganda was according to Arendt never the content of its lies, but that it “exploited the age-old Occident prejudice which confuses reality with truth, and made that ‘true’ which until then could only be stated as a lie.”⁶³ What is important here is not only that lies were transformed into reality, it was rather the fact that they were stated in the form of truth-claims, which were translated into reality and thereby

⁵⁸ Ibid, p. 111.

⁵⁹ Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, p. 354.

⁶⁰ Ibid, p. 353.

⁶¹ Arendt, “The Seeds of a Fascist International”, p. 146.

⁶² Ibid, p. 146.

⁶³ Ibid, p. 147.

became true. The lie makes use of public disclosure – *Das Schwarze Korps*, for example, was SS’s official newspaper – for translating truth-claims *into* experienceable reality.

If her comments on the lie are read against the background of Heidegger’s political thought, then the truth-claims made in totalitarian politics can be seen as mobilizing the masses to a “common cause”. In so far as they also provide “principles for movement” they produce their own legitimization and verification. In an important passage in *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, the process by which lies are transformed into reality is described as a prophetic “method”.⁶⁴ To claim that the only subway in the world is in Moscow, she remarks, “is a lie only so long as the Bolsheviks have not the power to destroy all the others.”⁶⁵ The transformation of fictions into reality and truth was according to her more than a means within a larger, political agenda – it belonged to the totalitarian method of rule itself, as a way in which the event of totalitarianism constituted, and re-constituted itself. The novelty of totalitarian rule was therefore not primarily the content of its ideology, nor even the racist content of its propaganda.⁶⁶ What was new was the forms of totalitarian organization, which, together with its propaganda, built up a fictive, but functioning world:

The forms of totalitarian organization, as distinguished from their ideological content and propaganda slogans, are completely new. They are designed to translate the propaganda lies of the movement, woven around a central fiction – the conspiracy of the Jews, or the Trotskyites, or 300 families etc. – into a functioning reality, to build up, even under nontotalitarian circumstances, a society whose members act and react according to the rules of a fictitious world.⁶⁷

Totalitarian organization and propaganda, according to her, “are two sides of the same coin”,⁶⁸ designed to establish, under non-totalitarian circumstances before the movement comes to power, a “fictitious world”. A lasting and functioning, but fictitious reality is created, where lies woven around ideological and mythical elements, come true.

⁶⁴ Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, p. 350.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 350.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 354.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 364.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 364.

In *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, she repeatedly comes back to the building of a “fictitious world”,⁶⁹ a “lying world”⁷⁰ of “prophetic scientificity”,⁷¹ “fit to compete with the real one”.⁷² If ancient sophistry operated with the logics of thought and was satisfied with a passing victory of the argument over truth, totalitarian organization creates a fictive world where “the ultimate victory of lie and fiction over truth” is assured.⁷³ Since the lie is an action, and an action of a kind incorporated at the heart of the totalitarian organization that establishes and institutionalizes a pattern of actions, it functions by creating an organized way in which society and reality is disclosed, a way that offers a certain stability, consistency and endurance – this is why Arendt refers to it as a “world”.

In her account of the last chapter of *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, Canovan formulates this in a precise manner, although she does not comment on the lie. If other political parties organized themselves “to win power within the world as it already exists”, totalitarian movements “prepared to launch a radical attack on existing reality”.⁷⁴ The creation of an alternative reality, however, as well as the possibility to maintain it, depended according to Arendt on “the isolation of the fictitious world of the movement from the outside world”.⁷⁵ She describes the totalitarian organization as establishing “protective walls” against the everyday, non-totalitarian world. One such wall was the division between the front organization and ordinary sympathizers of the movement. It is a division that functioned as a kind of sluice gate, or rather as a series of transforming passages between the inside world of the movement and the outer world at large, through which the latter is fictionalized. The sympathizers, who were no fanatics but appeared as relatively innocent fellow members of the non-totalitarian society, prepared and facilitated the transformation of lies into reality by providing normalization. Through them, Arendt says,

the movements make their fantastic lies more generally acceptable, can spread their propaganda in milder, more respectable forms, until the whole atmosphere is poisoned by totalitarian elements which are hardly

⁶⁹ Ibid, p. viii, 353, 361, 362, 363, 364, 373, 382, 387, 388, 391, 392, 393, 415, 417, 420, 436, 439.

⁷⁰ Ibid, p. 353.

⁷¹ Ibid, p. 350.

⁷² Ibid, p. 362.

⁷³ Ibid, p. 385.

⁷⁴ Canovan, *Hannah Arendt*, p. 56.

⁷⁵ Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, p. 438.

recognizable as such but appear to be normal political reactions or opinions.⁷⁶

Their sympathizers provide the movement with an aura of respectability and normality in the outer world, but they also function as a shield for the inner circle of the movement against the outer world. The front organization, consisting of party members with respectable professions in the outside world who socialized and participated in the non-totalitarian society, also functions both ways. It was the movement's façade to the non-totalitarian world, but also the non-totalitarian world's façade to the movement. This structure of layers is repeated within the movement itself, where each level is more militant and fanatic.⁷⁷ "A kind of malignant onion", Canovan remarks in her comment on Arendt's description of the totalitarian organization.⁷⁸

When the movement gains power, a totalitarian region is sealed off, described by Arendt as having the form of "a kind of laboratory" in which "an experiment with or rather against reality" is carried through.⁷⁹ It is organized according to the logicity of a scientific laboratory, as a testing ground for ideological predictions. Behind the "iron bands" against the outside world a consistent and logical replacement for the hazardous, ambiguous and inconsistent everyday reality is constituted. Its borders are patrolled by the secret police, whose role is that of "executors and guardians"⁸⁰ of the "domestic experiment in constantly transforming reality into fiction",⁸¹ whereas the task of the totalitarian leader is "to act as the magic defense of the movement against the outside world; and at the same time to be the direct bridge, by which the movement is connected to it."⁸²

The erection of camps played a central role in this system. "[U]nlikely, as it may sound, these camps are the true central institution of totalitarian organizational power."⁸³ They serve the purpose of providing "special laboratories"⁸⁴ within the larger laboratory that constitutes the totalitarian world. "[T]he experiment of total domination in the concentration camps depends

⁷⁶ Ibid, p. 367.

⁷⁷ Ibid, p. 366-367.

⁷⁸ Canovan, *Hannah Arendt*, p. 56.

⁷⁹ Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, p. 392.

⁸⁰ Ibid, p. 392.

⁸¹ Ibid, p. 392.

⁸² Ibid, p. 374.

⁸³ Ibid, p. 438.

⁸⁴ Ibid, p. 392.

on sealing off the latter against the world of all others, the world of the living in general, even against the outside world of a country under totalitarian rule.”⁸⁵ Within the confines of the camp, a world with its own logic is built up, where the regime’s predictions are “tested” and prove true, when its truth-claims are transformed into facts: “In order to be believed, the Nazis had to fabricate reality itself and make the Jews *look* subhuman. So that even today, when faced by the atrocity films, common sense will say: ‘But don’t they look like criminals?’”⁸⁶ In a few, but important passages, she refers explicitly to the fabrication of reality in terms of strategies of legitimization and verification. Ultimately, she for instance says, the role of the camps in the totalitarian system is to “serve as the laboratories in which the fundamental belief of totalitarianism that everything is possible is being verified.”⁸⁷

Giorgio Agamben draws on this aspect of Arendt’s analysis, although he does not acknowledge the influence from this quite central dimension of her work. In the camps, he suggests in *Homo Sacer*, the regime was “legitimated and necessitated”,⁸⁸ or as he formulates it elsewhere, “the camp is the absolute verification of Nazi politics”.⁸⁹ His comments are further developed in *State of Exception*,⁹⁰ where he defines totalitarianism in relation to the establishment of a permanent state of exception that creates a “space” or “zone”. In *Homo Sacer* the permanent state of exception is discussed in terms of legitimization and verification. In comparison to the Weimar constitution, where the state of exception was instituted as a temporary response to situations of emergency, the permanent state of exception that according to him was a consequence of the Nazi party’s seizure power in 1933 was something new. In the Weimar constitution decisions on a state of exception were based on given factual situations, such as situations of danger to public safety. In the Nazi regime the factual situation, legitimizing the decision, was instead permanently produced by the regime itself.⁹¹ The role of the camp in the totalitarian system was to

⁸⁵ Ibid, p. 438.

⁸⁶ Hannah Arendt, “The Image of Hell” in Hannah Arendt, *Essays in Understanding*, ed. Jerome Kohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1995), p. 199.

⁸⁷ Ibid, p. 437.

⁸⁸ Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford CA: Stanford University Press, 1995), p. 120.

⁸⁹ Giorgio Agamben, *Remnants of Auschwitz: The Witness and the Archive*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (New York: Zone Books, 2002), p. 77.

⁹⁰ Giorgio Agamben, *State of Exception*, trans. Kevin Attell (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005).

⁹¹ Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, p. 170.

create a space – a “space of exception”⁹² – where the state of exception was permanently realized, as normality. As such the camp was a space where the factual situation and the juridico-political order were completely confused: “*The camp is a hybrid of law and fact in which the two terms have become indistinguishable.*”⁹³

Like Arendt, Agamben thus sees the camps in the Nazi regime as a space where the factual situations, which legitimize political decisions, are continually produced. In “The Aftermath of Nazi Rule”, where Arendt again comments on the modern lie, she points out that lies in non-totalitarian regimes are used as tools in times of emergency, whereas totalitarian regimes make permanent a state where “all facts can be changed and all lies can be made true.”⁹⁴ The role of the camp in this system creates, according to her, a region, isolated and removed from verifiable experiences, that at the same time, paradoxically, serves to verify ideology and legitimize the regime: “[T]he appalling spectacle of the camps [...] is supposed to furnish the ‘theoretical’ verification of the ideology.”⁹⁵ Totalitarianism constitutes and re-constitutes itself in the transformation of ideology into prophecy, whereby the regime is continually verified and legitimized.⁹⁶

Totalitarianism, she therefore suggests, is a metaphysical experiment that *makes use* of factual reality in order to transcend it. Its art “consists in using, and at the same time transcending, the elements of reality, of verifiable experiences, in the chosen fiction, and in generalizing them into regions which then are definitely removed from all possible control by individual experience.”⁹⁷ What was invented was the art of transcending factual reality, not abstractly by postulating a world beyond, but concretely, by staging a fictitious world *in* factual reality itself. What is important here is that Arendt indicates this as a verification strategy, where the translation of fictive elements into facts serves the function of legitimizing, and thereby grounding and re-grounding, the regime. However, equally important is to

⁹² Ibid, p. 170.

⁹³ Ibid, p. 170.

⁹⁴ Arendt, “The Aftermath of Nazi Rule”, p. 252.

⁹⁵ Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, p. 438.

⁹⁶ Despite the fact that *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, together with Foucault’s works on biopolitics, serves as a central starting point for *Homo Sacer*, Agamben never comments on Arendt’s view of the camp as a sealed off “region” producing the factual situations that legitimize the regime. According to him, the role of the camp as legitimizing and necessitating totalitarian politics is precisely what escapes her understanding, since her studies of totalitarianism lack a biopolitical perspective. (Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, p. 120).

⁹⁷ Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, p. 362.

note that the lie is presented in the form of truth-claims that in one way or another refer *beyond* the experienceable world – in predicting a future, or in the form of metaphysical or ideological claims, for instance about race or the concealed forces that drive history. Truth-claims referring beyond the material and experienceable world are staged, in reality itself, as facts.

In the essay “On the Nature of Totalitarianism”, Arendt suggests that totalitarianism exploited the occidental conception of truth as *adaequatio rei et intellectus* – as correspondence between thought and thing. According to the *adaequatio rei et intellectus* a judgment or thought is true in so far as it corresponds with the object it represents – or, as Heidegger formulates it in § 44 of *Being and Time*, in so far as it discloses beings correctly, as they are. The underlying, ontological basis of the *adaequatio*, Arendt comments, is the Western conviction that reality is truth. From this conviction totalitarianism came to the conclusion

that we can fabricate truth insofar as we can fabricate reality; that we do not have to wait until reality unveils itself and shows us its true face, but can bring into being a reality whose structures will be known to us from the beginning because the whole thing is our product. In other words, it is the underlying conviction of any totalitarian transformation of ideology into reality that it will become true whether it is true or not. Because of this totalitarian relationship to reality, the very concept of truth has lost its meaning. The lies of the totalitarian movement, as well as the forgeries committed by totalitarian regimes, are secondary to this fundamental attitude that exclude the very distinction between truth and falsehood.⁹⁸

Similar to Heidegger, Arendt saw National Socialism as accomplishing a transformation of the sense of truth. However, if Heidegger, before the war, saw the National Socialist movement as politics with the potential of bringing to an end the mode of disclosure that according to him is expressed in the notion of truth as *adaequatio*, Arendt instead, after the war, sees a movement that exploits the concept of truth as *adaequatio* to a point where it has lost its meaning. In the previous chapter we saw that for Heidegger National Socialism carried with it the hope of accomplishing the transformation of disclosure he saw as urgent in order for the people to experience and assume their origin. Mythical elements, such as that of a people’s destiny in a world-historical struggle between beginning and end, I argued, become

⁹⁸ Arendt, “On the Nature of Totalitarianism”, p. 354.

effective in organizing a people when transformed into experienceable realities that can be recognized and appropriated in political space itself.

From Arendt's perspective, the problem here is not primarily the content of the fictive elements. In "The Seeds of a Fascist International" she claims that overly rational debates, or "counter-propaganda", with respect to the modern lie is "senseless."⁹⁹ Debating over the truth of its statements

is as though one were to debate with a potential murderer as to whether his future victim were dead or alive, completely forgetting that man can kill and that the murderer, by killing the person in question, could promptly provide proof of the correctness of this statement.¹⁰⁰

Her point is not that all debate about the content of lies is meaningless, or dangerous, but that the modern lie cannot be countered simply on the level of representation, by exposing its misrepresentations of reality. To think that the modern lie is refuted when proved as a lie is to neglect that it does not operate with false representations of reality that can be exposed and corrected. It creates credibility, legitimizes and asserts itself, at a different level, by transforming its truth-claims into prophecies that come true. As such it is itself an action, but an action of a special kind.

After the war, Arendt writes, reports from the camps were characterized by a "peculiar unreality and lack of credibility".¹⁰¹ The more authentic they were, the more unbelievable:

[A]nyone speaking or writing about concentration camps is still regarded as suspects; and if the speaker has resolutely returned to the world of the living, he himself is often assailed with doubts with regard to his own truthfulness, as though he had mistaken a nightmare for reality.¹⁰²

The problem is not that truths were taken as lies and lies received as truths. The camp was instead a place where the distinction between truth and falsity, reality and fiction, no longer made sense. In a parallel way, the elite formations in the totalitarian movement are not composed of ideologists, instead "its members' whole education is aimed at abolishing their capacity for distinguishing between truth and falsehood, between reality and fiction."¹⁰³

⁹⁹ Arendt, "The Seeds of a Fascist International", p. 147.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, p. 147.

¹⁰¹ Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, p. 438.

¹⁰² Ibid, p. 439.

¹⁰³ Ibid, p. 385.

In her essay on the modern lie, Caruth stresses the lie as an action of replacement, which substitutes and thereby destroys reality itself.¹⁰⁴ In the camp, Arendt writes, “a place is established”¹⁰⁵ where a “skillfully manufactured unreality”,¹⁰⁶ a “phantom world”,¹⁰⁷ is erected. What, then, is according to Arendt replaced, and destroyed, by the lie? In order to develop the meaning of the lie I will investigate Arendt’s notion of “the space between”¹⁰⁸ in *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. It is later, in the *Human Condition*, developed into the “in-between”,¹⁰⁹ in the sense of a world between men, and is seen by Arendt as the space in which a scene of appearances can arise.

IV. The Modern Lie as an Action of Replacement

The “between” is a concept Arendt picks up from Heidegger, though she develops it in a different direction. In *Being and Time* Heidegger uses the word “between” for referring to the equiprimordial character of disclosure, meaning that neither world, nor existence or being-with can provide a central, primordial ground [*Urgrund*] from which the others can be derived. Disclosure of world, existence and being-with has no central actor: it happens “between” them and Dasein “*is the being* of this ‘between’.”¹¹⁰ As such Dasein is, as we have seen, a “there”, a *Da*, in the sense of a historical site where disclosure happens. As such the “there” is a singular, historical site that determines a totality of beings, in disclosing a world.

When Arendt refers to the space between in *The Origins of Totalitarianism* it is a name for the contradictory, multifaceted and ambiguous space between a plurality of agents, speakers and objects, required for the disclosure of reality. It is the space of a plurality, where a hazardous, experienceable reality is disclosed that is not a unified whole, but in itself contradictory and inconsistent. It could be argued that the situation, as the authentic site of disclosure in *Being and Time*, provides a site for plurality – which is also sustained by a plurality – in this sense, in distinction to publicness seen by Heidegger as disclosing a uniformly available world. However, in Chapter 2 and 3 I argued that the situation, as well as the sites

¹⁰⁴ Caruth, “Lying and History”, p. 82-83.

¹⁰⁵ Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, p. 445.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid*, p. 445.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid*, p. 445.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid*, p. 466.

¹⁰⁹ Arendt, *The Human Condition*, p. 53.

¹¹⁰ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 132.

for the beginning in the 1930s – such as the university and “the metaphysical site” revealed by Hölderlin – are sites for disclosure that admits no differentiation within the communities they disclose. Nor does publicness in *Being and Time*, or “machination” that Heidegger in the 1930s sees as the historical mode of disclosure determining the West. To Arendt the space between is not the site of a single mode of disclosure, determining a totality of beings. It is defined in *The Origins of Totalitarianism* as “the living space of freedom.”¹¹¹ Freedom, according to her, “is identical with the fact that men are being born and that therefore each one of them *is* a new beginning, begins, in a sense, the world anew.”¹¹² Each man is a “small” beginning, and history to Arendt is a plurality of small beginnings – rather than the history of a few grand beginnings.

Birmingham stresses how for Arendt natality refers to the irruption of an event carrying its rule or principle within itself. It is *arche* in the double sense of origin and rule.¹¹³ What is interesting in Birmingham’s account is that the principles that natality carries within itself are “moving principles”, emerging in action; action itself is seen by Arendt as rooted in natality.¹¹⁴ They are not laws, which define borders and regulate the political realm. Instead they are “moving principles” in the double sense of the word – they orient action, all the while emerging in action. Birmingham points out that the principles of movement “are at work in both the public and private realms. Indeed, the principles of movement and action unify the public and the private”.¹¹⁵

For Arendt, the space between is disclosed when a plurality of agents, in action and speech, assume for themselves the beginnings they are. Fundamentally, it is also a space required for beginnings to acquire reality. As already mentioned, in *The Human Condition* Arendt develops what she had previously called “the space between” in *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, into the “in-between”, where a public realm and a scene of appearances arise.¹¹⁶ The scene of appearances is that into which man enters by way of action and speech; it is, significantly, a setting created and maintained, as an historical artifact, by these activities and the principles at work in them. To enter the scene of appearances, she writes, is like a second birth:

¹¹¹ Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, p. 466.

¹¹² *Ibid*, p. 466.

¹¹³ Birmingham, *Hannah Arendt and Human Rights*, p. 9.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 12; Arendt, *The Human Condition*, p. 185.

¹¹⁵ Birmingham, *Hannah Arendt and Human Rights*, p. 13.

¹¹⁶ Arendt, *The Human Condition*, p. 53.

With word and deed we insert ourselves into the human world, and this insertion is like a second birth, in which we confirm and take upon ourselves the naked fact of our original appearance. This insertion is not forced upon us by necessity [...], and it is not prompted by utility [...]; its impulse springs from the beginning which came into the world when we were born and to which we respond by beginning something new on our own initiative.¹¹⁷

To speak and act is to freely assume the condition of natality and birth – that man, as she states in *The Origins of Totalitarianism* by referring to Augustine, is inserted in the historical world as a beginning.¹¹⁸ The word appearance should be understood in this sense: it refers not to illusion or distortion, but to natality and birth – to the mortal being as someone who exists on the condition of natality, by constantly appearing from non-being to being. Action and speech are a second birth where the fact of birth is freely affirmed, and the scene of appearances is the space that makes affirmation in this sense possible.

For Arendt the scene of appearances is, as suggested by Villa, a site for disclosure.¹¹⁹ It is a site where beginnings are disclosed, which is why entering the scene of appearances, according to Arendt, is also a risk. “Although nobody knows whom he reveals when he discloses himself in deed and word, he must be willing to risk the disclosure”.¹²⁰ The political realm is understood by her as a site where beginnings are disclosed, in contrast to the realm of labor and production, yet at the same time – as stressed by Birmingham – the “moving principles” emerging in action unite these realms. The distinction between the political, the social and the private is often criticized in the reception of Arendt, a point to which I will return in Chapter 5. For now, however, it is important to see the scene of appearances is a space where beginnings acquire *reality*.

Beginnings in Arendt are relational: they take their starting point in a world already there, and happen “in between” agents. As such they must be recognized and asserted in order to become real, in the sense of gaining mortal and historical endurance. It is on the scene of appearances that beginnings acquire “the reality that comes from being seen and being heard”.¹²¹ Or, as she formulates it in the 1954 lecture “Philosophy and

¹¹⁷ Ibid, p. 135.

¹¹⁸ Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, p. 479.

¹¹⁹ Villa, *Heidegger and Arendt*, p. 130.

¹²⁰ Arendt, *The Human Condition*, p. 179.

¹²¹ Ibid, p. 58.

Politics”: on the political scene men attain “their full reality as men, because they not only *are* [...] but *appear*.”¹²² As such this scene is “the world which lay *between*” men, “common to them all, even though opening up in a different way to each man.”¹²³ In action and speech “the world opens up differently to every man, according to his position in it”, yet what is revealed is the reality “between” them:¹²⁴ “the world, like every in-between”, she writes in *The Human Condition*, “relates and separates men at the same time.”¹²⁵

As pointed out by Cecilia Sjöholm, plurality and differentiation are inherent in Arendt’s notion of appearance: “Appearances can only be conceived of in terms of variety, multiplicity and heterogeneity”.¹²⁶ The scene of appearances is one in which a common reality is disclosed. It is not, however, determined by any one single, historical mode of disclosure. It is, rather, a multifaceted and sometimes inconsistent and contradictory reality, revealed by a plurality of “moving principles” emerging in the “between” of agents and speakers. However, appearances, as themselves varied, multiple and heterogenous, need a space. Appearances as well as natality, Sjöholm stresses, are in need of a political space for acquiring reality: “There is no way for natality to realize itself outside of the polis.”¹²⁷ The scene of appearances is this space, where a multifaceted reality that cannot be distinguished from appearance is disclosed, and where beginnings come to endure mortally.

As the scene where beginnings are afforded reality, political space is not simply a scene for man to show his capacity to act and speak, it is also a sphere making possible the historical *remembrance* of beginnings. According to Arendt this was the meaning of the organization of the Greek *polis*: it was “a kind of organized remembrance.”¹²⁸ Speech and action are activities that, “despite their material futility, possess an enduring quality of their own because they create their own remembrance.”¹²⁹ In comparison to other activities, such as labor and work, they are therefore more closely connected to natality: “Action, in so far as it engages in founding and preserving political bodies, creates the condition for remembrance, that is, for

¹²² Arendt, “Philosophy and Politics”, p. 87.

¹²³ *Ibid*, p. 82.

¹²⁴ *Ibid*, p. 80.

¹²⁵ Arendt, *The Human Condition*, p. 52.

¹²⁶ Sjöholm, *Doing Aesthetics with Arendt*, p. 13.

¹²⁷ *Ibid*, p. 20.

¹²⁸ Arendt, *The Human Condition*, p. 150.

¹²⁹ *Ibid*, p. 158.

history.”¹³⁰ It creates the condition for its own endurance in constituting a space where beginnings are recognized and remembered. This is the meaning of the Greek *polis* as a space of “organized remembrance” according to Arendt:

It assures the mortal actor that his passing existence and fleeting greatness will never lack the reality that comes from being seen, being heard, and generally, appearing before an audience of fellow men, who outside the polis could attend only the short duration of the performance and therefore needed Homer and ‘others of his craft’ in order to be presented to those who were not there.¹³¹

In *The Human Condition*, the scene of appearances is discussed in terms of the political realm, which “arises directly out of acting together, in the ‘sharing of words and deeds’”.¹³² Accordingly, speech and action are not simply connected, in an intimate way to the space in which they appear: they are constitutive for it in giving rise to “the world common to us all”.¹³³ This world, however, is not a common world in the sense of a shared and consistent set of values, norms and beliefs. More than anything else, it is for Arendt a scene where beginnings can be felt, seen and remembered, in the sense of having been granted mortal and political reality. The location of the *polis*, therefore, is not the physical location of the city-state, but the organization of a scene whose “space lies between people”.¹³⁴ She repeatedly describes this space as a human and historical “artifact”, since it is constituted and maintained through action and speech – yet it is not humanly “made” in the sense of an object of production, constructed from out of a pre-given model.

“The space of appearance”, she says, “comes into being wherever men are together in the manner of speech and action, and therefore predates and precedes all formal constitution of the public realm.”¹³⁵ The space is itself an artifact, but unlike the kind of spaces we build with our hands, “it does not survive the actuality of the movement which brought it into being, but disappears not only with the dispersal of men – as in the case of great

¹³⁰ Ibid, p. 25.

¹³¹ Ibid, p. 150.

¹³² Ibid, p. 150.

¹³³ Ibid, p. 150.

¹³⁴ Ibid, p. 151.

¹³⁵ Ibid, p. 151.

catastrophes when the body politic of a people is destroyed – but with the disappearance or arrest of these activities themselves.”¹³⁶

In her essay “Politics as Culture: Hannah Arendt and the Public Realm”,¹³⁷ Canovan shows that what Arendt calls the space of appearance is therefore not the same as the formal, political space created by institutions. On the one hand, political institutions are of crucial importance to Arendt since they can ensure a space of appearance, but on the other hand they can also become hollow, rigged assemblies incapable of housing actions in Arendt’s sense of beginnings. So while Arendt often stressed the importance of institutions, she also pointed out that spaces of appearances can spring up informally, outside of institutions – for instance in revolutions. One example to which Canovan draws attention is her comment in the preface to *Between Past and Future*, where she claims that the official Vichy state in France during the Second World War emptied the political scene, but that a real scene of appearances arose in the Resistance. A space of appearances arose underground as “a public realm where – without the paraphernalia of officialdom and hidden from the eyes of friend and foe – all relevant business in the affairs of the country was transacted in deed and word.”¹³⁸ This, of course is a paradox – the space of appearances, as Arendt defines it, is a public space where speech and action are not hidden, but recognized and seen – but her point is that a site for beginnings can arise also as an underground scene. What she emphasizes thereby is that as a site where beginnings are disclosed and afforded reality, the space of appearances is itself constituted by the actions of beginning, disappearing with them. Institutions are crucial for ensuring such a space, but they can also lose their capability to house beginnings – and moreover, as is the case with the institutions established in totalitarian regimes, prevent them.

What is important here, in the context of the lie, is to note that for Arendt there is no reality or truth somewhere *behind* or *beyond* the scene of appearances. “To be deprived of it”, she writes in *The Human Condition*, “means to be deprived of reality, which, humanly and politically speaking, is the same as appearance.”¹³⁹ Her notion of reality is in that sense ambiguous,

¹³⁶ *Ibid*, p. 151.

¹³⁷ Margaret Canovan, “Politics as Culture: Hannah Arendt and the Public Realm”, *History of Political Thought*, Vol. 6, No. 3 (1985).

¹³⁸ *Ibid*, p. 624-625; Hannah Arendt, “Preface: The Gap Between Past and Future”, p. 3 in Hannah Arendt, *Between Past and Future: Eight Exercises in Political Thought* (New York/London: Penguin Books, 2006).

¹³⁹ Arendt, *The Human Condition*, p. 151.

perhaps even contradictory. Reality as appearance is for instance defined in sharp contrast to the “skillfully manufactured unreality”¹⁴⁰ and “fictitious world” established in totalitarian rule. Yet appearance is repeatedly described by her in metaphors borrowed from the theater – and the theater, of course, is a space where fictive dramas are played out. As we have seen she for instance describes appearances as disclosed on a scene, and to enter this scene is to become part of a constant unfolding of a web of narratives and stories, spun in “the between” of actors.

According to Sjöholm, reality in Arendt may therefore seem like an enclosed realm of phantasies, corresponding to what Jacques Lacan would call the imaginary.¹⁴¹ The imaginary is a sphere of phantasies in which the self appears or can appear – phantasies structured by fictional coherence and consistency, but presented as a protruding fact. Sjöholm, however, demonstrates that Arendt’s concept of reality is more nuanced than that. Appearances are felt and sensed as real, she stresses, since they appear of their own accord, in the interaction between a plurality of agents and objects.¹⁴² As the space of a plurality of agents and objects, the scene of appearances discloses a reality that springs forth beyond our control and is not fully logical, but instead is contradictory, inconsistent and filled with gaps.¹⁴³ In *The Origins of Totalitarianism* Arendt for instance suggests that reality presents itself as “disturbing” and “never-ending shocks” tearing down expectations.¹⁴⁴ It is an experienceable reality she describes, presented to the senses – and as such it requires a space in order to be disclosed. The scene of appearances, as a space sustained by plurality, allows for the disclosure of reality, precisely because reality according to Arendt is not a coherently and consistently structured whole.¹⁴⁵

In contrast, totalitarianism builds on the assumption of a transcendence that locates reality and truth to a sphere beyond appearances. Ideological thinking in totalitarian regimes, she writes, “insists on a ‘truer’ reality concealed behind all perceptible things”.¹⁴⁶ The novelty of totalitarian rule, however, did not rest content with appealing to a world beyond: it invented a device for translating a hidden, metaphysical realm into the world of

¹⁴⁰ Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, p. 445.

¹⁴¹ Sjöholm, *Doing Aesthetics with Arendt*, p. 91.

¹⁴² *Ibid*, p. 83.

¹⁴³ *Ibid*, p. 90.

¹⁴⁴ Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, p. 353.

¹⁴⁵ See also Sjöholm, *Doing Aesthetics with Arendt*, p. 91-93.

¹⁴⁶ Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, p. 470.

perceivable things. Or to formulate it differently: what it invented was a way of staging truth-claims referring to a world beyond experience, in reality, as experienceable facts. The modern, political lie is this device, whereby a concealed sphere of metaphysical powers and forces is established in the material world itself, as “a tangible working reality of everyday life”.¹⁴⁷ What testifies to a totalitarian rise to power in a given situation, Arendt writes, is “that in one country the fictitious world of the movement has become a tangible reality.”¹⁴⁸ Or, as she also formulates it in a discussion about the camp: the camp is “a phantom world which, however, has materialized, as it were, into a world which is complete with all sense data of reality”.¹⁴⁹

Now we can begin to see what the lie replaces. The modern lie is an action that substitutes what Arendt in *The Origins of Totalitarianism* calls the space between men and sees as the space where a multifaceted, inconsistent and contradictory reality is disclosed, for regions where a concrete world of fictitious unity and coherence materializes itself. “By pressing men against each other total terror destroys the space between them”.¹⁵⁰ What is replaced, and thereby destroyed, is “the one essential prerequisite of all freedom which is simply the capacity of motion which cannot exist without a space.”¹⁵¹ The space between is the space where freedom can become a “living political reality”¹⁵² – and freedom, she stresses, is identical with birth and beginning: “Freedom as an inner capacity of man is identical with the capacity to begin, just as freedom as a political reality is identical with a space of movement between men.”¹⁵³ What is destroyed with the space between is the prerequisite needed for beginnings to acquire political reality. The camps in the totalitarian system served this purpose: they were laboratories where spontaneity, as the capacity of men to begin, were more or less completely eradicated.¹⁵⁴

If the space between, later developed by Arendt as the “in-between” where a scene of appearances arises, is a space where action is guided by “moving principles” emerging in the experience of a multifaceted reality, the lie substitutes it for regions where action is centralized to an elite of

¹⁴⁷ Ibid, p. 391.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid, p. 415.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid, p. 445.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid, p. 466.

¹⁵¹ Ibid, p. 466.

¹⁵² Ibid, p. 466.

¹⁵³ Ibid, p. 473.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid, p. 438.

leaders and guided by strict logicity. A “stringent logicity as a guide to action permeates the whole structure of totalitarian movements and governments.”¹⁵⁵ Ultimately, she understands this logicity as the operation by which fictive elements of the ideology is seamlessly translated into a fabricated world. In this situation, the “only signs which the real world still offers” are present in terms of lacunae, silences, questions that cannot be addressed publicly and rumors.¹⁵⁶ Birmingham stresses this effect of the lie. Replacing “reality with an ironclad logic [...] the whole of reality is thoroughly and systematically organized, according to a fiction with a view to total domination.”¹⁵⁷

As such, the danger of the modern, political lie is not primarily that it fabricates facts, but rather, as pointed out by Jacques Derrida, that it evolves with a history of its own.¹⁵⁸ Derrida never connects the lie to Arendt’s definition of politics as beginnings but according to Caruth the lie can be understood as the history of a replacement of beginnings themselves. The violence of the lie, she writes, consists in “replacing a history of beginnings with a history of their total erasure.”¹⁵⁹ A history of real, political beginnings is substituted for an alternative history that destroys them – to a point where the memory of beginnings in the political realm is lost.

V. Truth and the Space of Appearances

Before proceeding to discuss how the modern political lie evolves and can assume new forms, under non-totalitarian conditions in contemporary democracies, it is important to note that after *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, Arendt developed the scene of appearances as a space where truth is disclosed. This becomes clear, not the least in her critical comments on Heidegger – although they were often cautious, and sometimes even apologetic.¹⁶⁰ One example is her 1954 speech at the American Political Science Association, where she suggests that *Being and Time* at once opens

¹⁵⁵ Ibid, p. 472.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid, p. 353. See also Sjöholm, *Doing Aesthetics with Arendt*, p. 90.

¹⁵⁷ Birmingham, “A Lying World Order”, p. 77.

¹⁵⁸ Derrida, “History of the Lie”, p. 40.

¹⁵⁹ Caruth, “Lying and History”, p. 83.

¹⁶⁰ An exception is her straightforward comment in “The Image of Hell”, where she counts Heidegger among the “outstanding scholars” who “did their utmost to supply the Nazis with ideas and techniques”. (Arendt, “The Image of Hell”, p. 201).

up and closes off a radical possibility for political thinking.¹⁶¹ The concept of historicity in *Being and Time* was revolutionary according to her since it was formulated in ontological, rather than anthropological terms. In *Being and Time* – which she seems to read from out of Heidegger’s works after the so called “turn” – human history, she says, coincides with a history of being which is revealed in and through it. Historicity in this sense, she suggests, means to be “sent on one’s way” and to “take this ‘sending’ upon oneself”.¹⁶² However, since the public realm in *Being and Time* has “the function of hiding reality and preventing even the appearance of truth”,¹⁶³ Heidegger could not explore this possibility and therefore failed to address “man as an acting being”.¹⁶⁴ Thus, he conceived of the public realm, which for her is the scene of appearances sustained by plurality, as a sphere where reality is covered over, and the revelation of truth is blocked. This, in turn, closed off the possibility for him to think action; for Arendt, this meant that Heidegger failed to think beginnings.

In *Men in Dark Times*¹⁶⁵ she suggests that Heidegger saw no escape from the triviality of the “common everyday world except by withdrawal from it into that solitude which philosophers since Parmenides and Plato have opposed to the political realm.”¹⁶⁶ Her point is not necessarily that his thought is solipsistic or apolitical: her comment can instead be seen as positioning Heidegger in the history of a relation between politics and truth she traces back to Parmenides, but also, and more often, to Plato and the trial of Socrates.

According to the 1954 lecture “Philosophy and Politics”, Socrates was a figure refusing to play a political role yet insisting on his withdrawal from politics as *relevant* for the political realm. For him, Arendt maintains, the withdrawal of thinking never had the meaning of a withdrawal to a sphere beyond the scene of appearances. What it rather meant was his outsider-position *within* it. It is a position from which the political realm itself is disclosed and revealed – and it was precisely this position that, for Arendt, was at stake in the trial of Socrates. When he was sentenced to death, Plato was taught that the *polis* was not a safe place for the philosopher – not only

¹⁶¹ Hannah Arendt, “Concern with Politics in Recent European Philosophical Thought” in Hannah Arendt, *Essays in Understanding* (New York: Schocken Books, 1995).

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 432.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 432-433.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 433.

¹⁶⁵ Hannah Arendt, *Men in Dark Times* (New York: Harvest Books, 1968).

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. ix.

in the sense that his life was threatened there, but also in the more important sense that the political realm could not be trusted with preserving his memory. “If the citizens could condemn Socrates to death, they were only too liable to forget him when he was dead.”¹⁶⁷ Owing to these events, Plato came to doubt certain fundamentals of Socrates’ teachings, such as his notion of truth, and his understanding of the relation between truth and politics, at least on Arendt’s interpretation.

Arendt thus constructs a sharp division between Socrates’ and Plato’s teachings. What, however, is especially important here is that she sees Socrates as insisting on truth as dependent on the political realm – understood in the lecture as the realm of a plurality of realities – for its manifestation and preservation. For Socrates, *doxa*, political opinion “was the formulation in speech of what *dokei moi*, that is, of what appears to me.”¹⁶⁸ As such it did not have the meaning of “the probable” but revealed an understanding of “the world as it opens itself to me.”¹⁶⁹ *Doxa* was one’s “own opening to the world”,¹⁷⁰ involving “realities [that] open themselves up”; not the same, she stresses, as “subjective viewpoints”,¹⁷¹ “subjective fantasy [or] arbitrariness”.¹⁷² It was the formulation in speech of a number and variety of realities that open themselves up, according to each citizen’s position in the same world. Socrates’ assumption was that depending on a citizens’ standpoint, “the world opens up differently to every man”,¹⁷³ even though the positions taken up were in the same political world. In Socrates, she stresses, truth is bound to this opening, which for him was multifaceted and plural. As such it depends, for its manifestation and preservation, on a political sphere augmented by plurality.¹⁷⁴

Arendt repeatedly came back to Socrates in many of her writings. One example is *On Revolution*, where Socrates is contrasted not with Plato but Machiavelli. In the tradition of Greek thought, she suggests, Socrates

¹⁶⁷ Arendt, “Philosophy and Politics”, p. 75.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 80.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 80

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 80.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 80.

¹⁷⁴ The kind of truth she discusses in the lecture on Socrates, I would argue, is what she later – in “Truth and Politics” – calls philosophical truth, and discusses in relation to Socrates also here. Philosophical truth, which is dependent on each citizens’ position in the world, is not the same as factual truth in Arendt, which is valid for all. However, factual truth is also dependent on the scene of appearances for its manifestation. I will come back to her definitions of philosophical and factual truth in Chapter 5.

believed in “the truth of appearances”¹⁷⁵ and did not see truth as located somewhere behind or beyond them. Machiavelli, on the contrary, bound to the Christian tradition, “took for granted the existence of a transcendent Being behind and beyond the world of appearances”.¹⁷⁶ According to Arendt this conviction was behind his device:

‘Appear as you may wish to be’, by which he meant: ‘Never mind how you are, this is of no relevance in the world and in politics, where only appearances, not ‘true’ being, count; if you can manage to appear to others as you would wish to be, that is all that can possibly be required by the judges of this world.’¹⁷⁷

Like Socrates, Machiavelli believed in “the revelatory capacity of truth” and “thought that truth appeared of its own accord”.¹⁷⁸ However, since Machiavelli realized that what matters in politics is not the world beyond, he didn’t see truth as a relevant question within the political sphere. Although her depiction of Machiavelli’s position is problematic, her point is to contrast Socrates to political thinkers in the Western tradition who, in various ways, have insisted on the space of appearances as a space that prevents, or distorts, the revelation of truths.¹⁷⁹

Within this long established tradition Arendt situates Heidegger, for whom the space of appearances, understood as the space of plurality, has the function of hiding reality and preventing disclosure. However, she never specifies how, more precisely, Heidegger can be seen as locatable within this tradition. According to Jacques Taminiaux, her reappropriation of Socrates against Plato, where the latter is interpreted as developing truth in opposition to *doxa*, thereby requiring that truth withdraws to a sphere beyond plurality and appearance in order to be revealed, also targets Heidegger.¹⁸⁰ According to Taminiaux, Heidegger’s position is that of an apolitical and

¹⁷⁵ Arendt, *On Revolution* (London: Penguin Books, 1990), p. 101.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid*, p. 101.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid*, p. 101.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid*, p. 102.

¹⁷⁹ In Chapter 15 of *The Prince*, for instance, Machiavelli seems to suggest the opposite of Arendt’s interpretation. Stressing that appearances and reputation is what matters in politics means going to the truth of the matter. Leaving phantasy images of the prince behind, in order to discuss his appearance, he is aiming at the truth: “since my aim was to write something useful for anyone interested, I felt it would be appropriate to go to the real truth [*verità effettuale*] of the matter, not to repeat other people’s phantasies.” (Machiavelli, *The Prince*, ch. 15; Machiavelli, *Il Principe*, capitolo XV, Sansoni: 1852.)

¹⁸⁰ Taminiaux, *The Thracian Maid and the Professional Thinker*, p. 179-180.

“strictly monadological” thinker.¹⁸¹ However, a different interpretation of Arendt’s critique of Heidegger is possible.

In Chapter 2, we saw that in *Being and Time* the philosophical destruction of public Dasein provides access to truth, in its originary and authentic mode. The destruction of public Dasein at the same time retrieves a community, united in “communication” and “struggle” against the dispersed Dasein of the public space. In that sense Heidegger does not locate truth in a “monadological” or “apolitical” sphere. The problem, for Heidegger, is that a public realm, structured by equality, dispersion and the division of power, precludes truth from appearing in its “originary” mode. As we saw, it never becomes clear in *Being and Time* how the situation, as the site of a historical people, is to be understood. Should it be seen as a modification of the public realm, or as the opening up of an alternative public realm, structured in a different way than that of “fallen” Dasein? During the 1930s the site and space of the historical people is, as we saw in Chapter 3, developed extensively in his political writings. The “originary struggle” between being-historical forces, which he now defines as the essence of truth, is concealed and forgotten in the history of being, to the point that it can no longer be experienced or assumed. A radical transformation of political space is required in order for the “truth of a people” to manifest itself, that is, to be assumed and appropriated by the people. This transformation, I argued, can be seen as performed in Heidegger’s parallel lectures on Hegel and Hölderlin. The role of Hegel’s civil society in the state, characterized by the plurality of small actions and decisions, is replaced by a space of great leaders and grand deeds. It could be argued that the system of beginnings Heidegger develops in the 1934-1935 lecture on Hölderlin and “The Origin of the Work of Art” introduces plurality, since truth unfolds in the mutual resistance and limiting of one another exercised in the interplay between a plurality of agents – the poet, the thinker, the statesman and the people, as well as elements such as the earth, the rivers and the world. However, “the truth of a people” is still a common “mission” that seems not to allow for any differentiation within the people – and the people’s role is to preserve the beginning revealed to them by leading actors and grand deeds.

In an early essay, “What is Existential Philosophy?,” Arendt criticized Heidegger for positing in *Being and Time* authentic existence as that of a lonely individual. However, in comments made in her speech to the Ame-

¹⁸¹ Ibid, p. 180.

rican Political Science Association, things become more interesting. Here she emphasizes that Heidegger saw what she calls the space of appearances as blocking the disclosure of reality and preventing the revelation of truth. In the lecture on Socrates, which was given the same year as the speech at the American Political Science Association, she develops truth in the opposite direction, as bound to a public sphere existing in and through plurality.

If the problem of politics and truth, which she identified in totalitarianism, is seen as constituting the background against which her discussions of truth in this lecture play themselves out, then an important aspect of her insistence that Socrates saw truth as dependent on appearances is made more visible. The modern lie is an invention that makes possible the translation of ideological and metaphysical truth-claims, postulating fictive elements beyond the experienceable world, into a tangible, everyday reality. It stages fictions, beyond the ordinary and experienceable world, as realities within it, to the point that the ordinary, experienceable, haphazardous and inconsistent world is replaced with a consistently structured, but fictive unity. Even if not a proponent of the modern political lie as defined by Arendt, this aspect of her analysis is relevant also in relation to Heidegger. Her comment on Heidegger in *Men in Dark Times* can be understood in this direction since she positions him, in a tradition that begins with Parmenides and Plato, as a philosopher who was opposed to the everyday world.¹⁸² Now we can begin to see the complexity of the problem surroun-

¹⁸² In 1946, while the hearings of the de-Nazification committee, which resulted in Heidegger's suspension as teacher, were taking place, he revised and reinterpreted his earlier thought in "Letter on Humanism". He no longer speaks of a struggle deciding the fate of enemies and friends but puts emphasis on being as the "quiet power" that lets man be, "embraces" and "loves" him. "[T]o embrace a 'thing' or a 'person' in their essence means to love them, to favor them." (Martin Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism", trans. Frank A. Capuzzi, in *Pathmarks*, ed William Mc Neill [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998], p. 241). The "truth of being" is no longer seen as a grand event requiring a radical transformation of political space in order to be revealed – it is present in the "everyday place", which is the "abode" of an "every day and unexciting occurrence" that he sees as manifest in the anecdote about Heraclitus warming his hands on a stove, reported by Aristotle. (Ibid, p. 269-270). Heraclitus is thus no longer, as he was seen by Heidegger in the 1930s, a resource for thinking "the originary struggle", which is concealed in the everyday world, but a figure quietly revealing the ordinary. Arendt can also be criticized for separating the ordinary from extraordinary. According to Bonnie Honig, she locates an ordinary and strictly communicative and referential form of discourse to the private realm, as opposed to the extraordinary, inaugurative and performative discourse by which speakers insert themselves, as beginnings, in the political realm. She thereby failed to give an account of the extraordinary as emerging from the ordinary, according to Honig. (Honig, *Political Theory and the Displacement of Politics*, p. 93-94.)

ding politics and truth that is manifest in her treatment of the modern political lie. Corinne Enaudeau have suggested that for Arendt the problem of politics and truth in totalitarianism is that facts, which are contingent, are treated as rational truths, i.e. as principles of movement and action; where the re-writing of history in totalitarian politics bends factual truth into rational truth.¹⁸³ However, in our study, once Arendt's works are read against the backdrop of Heidegger's political thought, a different problem emerges: truth-claims in totalitarian politics play the role of mobilizing the masses to a common "cause", producing its own legitimization and verification. In so far as these truth-claims, which in one way or another refer beyond the sphere of appearances, are also principles of movement, a fictive but material world is staged *within* experienceable reality itself. Totalitarianism grounds, and re-grounds itself in this event. It creates a fictive world where truth-claims acquire a prophetic function, and ideology is continually verified as its predictions come true. As such the modern political lie does not transform or distort facts: it replaces, and thereby destroys, the haphazardous, experienceable and factual reality arising "between" men. Truth-claims in totalitarian politics paradoxically short-circuits and destroys the sense of truth and facts in political contexts. This is one of the reasons why Arendt was skeptical about truth-claims in politics. She was skeptical about truth-claims referring beyond the experienceable world, and yet she insisted on rethinking truth as dependent on appearances, seeing this kind of truth as relevant to and in politics.

VI. Contemporary Lying in Politics

In works after *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, Arendt developed the modern political lie as a phenomenon that evolves and assumes new forms, also under non-totalitarian circumstances in contemporary democracies. In "Truth and Politics", she writes, referring to Montaigne, that the lie "has a thousand shapes and a boundless field."¹⁸⁴ In the essay she develops the lie as assuming new forms within non-totalitarian and democratic contexts.

According to a letter she wrote to Mary McCarthy on October 3, 1963, the essay "Truth and Politics" was written as an implicit response to the intense debate that followed her reports on the trial of Adolf Eichmann: "I [...] intend to write an essay about 'Truth and Politics', which would be an

¹⁸³ Enaudeau, "Hannah Arendt: Politics, Opinion, Truth", p. 1032, 1034.

¹⁸⁴ Arendt, "Truth and Politics", p. 253.

implicit answer.”¹⁸⁵ Although the debate about her reports on the trial of Eichmann is never mentioned in the finished essay, she explains in a footnote that it was caused by the debate and written in order to clarify issues that arose in the controversy, in particular that of lying.¹⁸⁶ According to Ursula Ludz, who is one of the editors of Arendt’s *Denktagebuch*, Arendt also used the section entitled “Wahrheit und Politik” in volume XXIV of *Denktagebuch* for collecting material for the essay “Truth and Politics”.¹⁸⁷ In several of the notes in the *Denktagebuch*, whose theme is the lie and the relation between truth and politics, she comments on the trial of Eichmann.

The question of the relation between truth and politics is an important, but underappreciated theme in her reports from the trial, at least in so far as they discuss Eichmann’s lies.¹⁸⁸ The trial was held in Jerusalem in 1961 – a year after Eichmann, who was one of the major organizers of the Holocaust, was caught by Israel’s intelligence agency in Argentina. Arendt’s reports from the proceedings appeared for the first time in *The New Yorker* in 1963, and later the same year in book form as *Adolf Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil*.

As pointed out by Shoshana Felman, the debate that followed the publication of her reports has given rise to many misperceptions. In particular, Arendt’s reports were read as delivering a moral argument and a psychological description of the banality of Eichmann’s evil. Felman demonstrates how it was precisely on these bases that they became subject of much debate. Was Eichmann’s evil banal, as Arendt suggested, or was it monstrous? Both sides of the controversy, she says, thereby missed Arendt’s point: for her the banality of evil was never psychological, but political.¹⁸⁹

Felman does not discuss the modern political lie but at the center of Arendt’s reports stands Eichmann’s lies and self-deception, which should be understood not as a psychological manipulation but, in the context of her

¹⁸⁵ Hannah Arendt to Mary McCarthy, October 3, 1963, p. 151, in Hannah Arendt and Mary McCarthy, *Between Friends: The Correspondence of Hannah Arendt and Mary McCarthy, 1945-1975*, ed. Brightman (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1995).

¹⁸⁶ Arendt, “Truth and Politics”, p. 223 fn.

¹⁸⁷ Ursula Ludz, “On the Truth-and-Politics Section in the *Denktagebuch*” in *Artifacts of Thinking: Reading Hannah Arendt’s Denktagebuch*, eds. Berkowitz and Storey (New York: Fordham University Press, 2017), p. 38.

¹⁸⁸ Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, p. 6, 24, 26-27, 49, 51-52, 214-215.

¹⁸⁹ Shoshana Felman, “Theaters of Justice: Arendt in Jerusalem, the Eichmann Trial, and the Redefinition of Legal Meaning in the Wake of the Holocaust” in *Critical Inquiry* 27, no. 2, p. 201-204.

analysis of the political lie, as a key feature of totalitarianism.¹⁹⁰ However, in her reports she also discussed how the trial was staged by Ben Gurion, the prime minister of Israel. In the opening pages of the first report, she describes the proceedings as a spectacle, taking place on a stage, with the world as audience. The courtroom is a theater, “complete with orchestra and gallery, with proscenium and stage, and with the side doors for the actors’ entrance.”¹⁹¹ On this stage Gideon Hausner, the Attorney General and representative of the state, constantly gave press-conferences and interviews for television, broadcasted throughout the world. Behind the scenes was Ben Gurion, “rightly called ‘the architect of the state’”.¹⁹² Withdrawn from the stage, he

remains the invisible stage manager of the proceedings. Not once does he attend a session; in the courtroom he speaks with the voice of Gideon Hausner, the Attorney General, who, representing the government, does his best, his very best to obey his master.¹⁹³

The play set up in the courtroom was, according to Arendt, “the huge panorama of Jewish sufferings”,¹⁹⁴ supposed to show the world, and more importantly domestic Israelis too young to remember, “what it meant to live among non-Jews, to convince them that only in Israel could a Jew be safe and live an honorable life.”¹⁹⁵ Gurion, however, failed – the trial never became the spectacle he envisioned, since justice proved to be a competing and “much sterner master” than the state, Arendt reported.¹⁹⁶

Felman maintains that Arendt saw the trial as an event where the interests of the state were played out against justice, in a drama of potential historical repetition.¹⁹⁷ Arendt’s principal criticism of Gurion would thus reside in a choice between whether the history of the Jewish people’s victimization will be repeated in the grand narrative of suffering, broadcasted to the world, or whether the trial will bring an end to the repetition of trauma.

¹⁹⁰ Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, p. 6, 24, 26-27, 49, 51-52, 214-215.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid*, p. 4.

¹⁹² *Ibid*, p. 5.

¹⁹³ *Ibid*, p. 5.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 8.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 8.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 5.

¹⁹⁷ Felman, “Theaters of Justice”, p. 209.

However, there is more at stake in the trial for Arendt. She never describes Gurion's role of "invisible stage manager" as a way in which the modern political lie is invented anew, in a non-totalitarian context and on a political scene dominated by mass-media. Neither does she comment on "the architect of the state" as organizing the state as a work of art. However, what she repeatedly draws attention to is the trial as theater, where upon its stage a drama is played out. At stake in the courtroom is also a question of truth: whether the truths revealed in the trial will be deployed in a state-grounding event, as a way to legitimize Israel's existence in the eyes of the world, or whether they will appear as a form of resistance, setting a limit and putting an end to the reinvention and repetition in a new, non-totalitarian context of the modern political lie. As we will see in the next chapter, with respect to politics, her own understanding of truth – which covers both factual truth and what she calls philosophical truth – develops from notions of resistance and the limit, as discussed in the essay "Truth and Politics", written in response to the debate about the reports.¹⁹⁸

In note 10 of the "Truth and Politics" section in the *Denktagebuch* from 1963–1964, where Arendt collected material for the essay, she comments on the trial and writes: "The Big Lie and the Creation of an Image: the enormous power of Illusion."¹⁹⁹ She never explains what image is supposed to mean in this context, nor does she describe how it is connected to the lie. However, in the finished essay "Truth and Politics", the modern political lie

¹⁹⁸ The expression "facts on the ground" is relevant in this context. It was popularized in the 1970s as a phrase referring to the Israeli settlements on the West Bank as a strategy to gain control over Palestinian lands. In *Facts on the Ground*, Nadia Abu El-Haj analyzes Israeli archeology in relation to settlements, knowledge production, national identity and ideology. She argues that Israeli archeology has served the role not only of legitimizing political views, but also of shaping the region's political visions and imaginations. (Nadia Abu El-haj, *Facts on the Ground: Archeological Practice and Territorial Self-Fashioning in Israeli Society*, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2001). The phrase "putting facts on the ground" has been used also in relation to George W. Bush's administration. In an article in *The New York Times*, the journalist Ron Suskind recalls a meeting with one of Bush's senior advisers: "The aide said that guys like me are 'in what we call the reality-based community', which he defined as people who 'believe that solutions emerge from your judicious study of discernible reality. [...] That's not the way the world really works anymore. [...] We're an empire now, and when we act, we create our own reality. And while you're studying that reality – judiciously, as you will – we'll act again, creating other new realities, which you can study too, and that's how things will sort out. We're history's actors... and you, all of you will be left to just study what we do.'" (Ron Suskind, "Faith, Certainty and the Presidency of George W. Bush", *The New York Times*, oct. 17 [2004]).

¹⁹⁹ Arendt, *Denktagebuch*, Bd. II, heft XXIV, p. 620.

is developed as a phenomenon that reinvents itself anew, with the possibility of appearing in non-totalitarian contexts in contemporary democracies. Here she introduces the concept “image-making”, which refers to a form of modern lying, utilizing public relations methods and communication-techniques on a political scene dominated by mass-media.

By introducing the concept “image-making” in “Truth and Politics” she places the issue of modern lying in the midst of an ongoing discussion about the transformation and commodification of politics in the era of mass-media and media consumption. In 1962, five years before “Truth and Politics” appeared for the first time in *The New Yorker*, the historian Daniel Boorstin published *The Image – A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America*.²⁰⁰ While Arendt does not comment on Boorstin in “Truth and Politics”, she was well aware of him, and refers to other of his books in the discussion about the American revolution in *On Revolution*.²⁰¹

In *The Image* Boorstin analyzed what at the time were relatively new phenomena, such as image building in politics and the staging of “pseudo-events”. An image, he explains, is a public and visible “personality profile of an individual, institution, corporation, product, or service”.²⁰² A pseudo-event is an organized spectacle staging images in reality, as facts. It is designed to be repeated and reported in newspapers, which helps establishing the image as an “objective” fact, thereby making the image credible and easier to sell. Pseudo-events “are synthetic facts, which move people indirectly, by providing the ‘factual’ basis on which they are supposed to make up their minds.”²⁰³

One of his examples is the advertising program for Schlitz beer, developed by Claude C. Hopkins. When Hopkins took on the Schlitz beer account in the 1950s he began studying brewery. One of the things he learnt was that in the Schlitz brewery the bottles were sterilized by live steam before being filled. He built an image for Schlitz beer as the pure beer, because it was (scientifically) purified. Since consumers did not realize that every other respectable brand bottled their beer in this way, the

²⁰⁰ Daniel Boorstin, *The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America* (New York: Vintage Books, 1992. E-book.)

²⁰¹ Arendt, *On Revolution*, p. 219. She refers to Daniel Boorstin, *The Genius of American Politics* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1953) and Daniel Boorstin, *The Americans: The Colonial Experience* (Random House: New York, 1958). The references appear in a discussion about the role the colonial experience came to play in the preparations for the American Revolution.

²⁰² Boorstin, *The Image*, p. 165.

²⁰³ *Ibid*, p. 39.

use of live steam by Schlitz became a more vivid fact than its use by any of the competitors. Hopkins had concocted the pseudo-event he was looking for. He had made news. This pseudo-event was then given a nationally advertised dignity making it predominate over the same prosaic fact which was equally 'true' about all reputable beers.²⁰⁴

According to Boorstin the magic of advertising resides in this: the successful advertiser is not deceptive in any traditional sense, quite the opposite, he "is the master of a new art: the art of making things true by saying they are so."²⁰⁵

In politics, pseudo-events are spectacles organized in order to promote images and narratives, but also to distract the public's attention from other, irksome news. They are defined by Boorstin as "factitious", in the sense of repeatable fabrications of reality, scripted for the purpose of being reported and reproduced, in media and newspapers.²⁰⁶ As such they reveal a web of dependence between the politician and the newspaperman, both thriving on "the same synthetic commodity."²⁰⁷

Boorstin for example comments on the senator John McCarthy's morning press conferences. They often consisted in the announcement of another press conference in the evening, rendering headlines in the afternoon papers such as "New McCarthy Revelations Awaited in the Capital". When the evening came, McCarty gave something out, but often not, simply announcing that he had difficulties with a "document" or a "witness" he needed. This, in turn, generated new headlines for the morning paper about the mystery witness sought by the senator.²⁰⁸ Because of their ambiguous relation to truth, Boorstin stresses, pseudo-events are notoriously difficult to criticize. Newspaper editors, self-righteously attacking McCarthy on the editorial page inside, at the same time built up his image in front-page headlines.²⁰⁹

A contemporary example would be Donald Trump's speculation, at a press-conference during the corona virus outbreak in spring 2020, on whether ultraviolet light and disinfectants could be used as a cure for covid-19. In a few minutes the comment was headline news around the world, followed by critical warnings and scientific rejections of "the cure". When asked about his comment the following day, at a new press conference,

²⁰⁴ Ibid, p. 188.

²⁰⁵ Ibid, p. 188.

²⁰⁶ Ibid, p. 21.

²⁰⁷ Ibid, p. 29.

²⁰⁸ Ibid, p. 29.

²⁰⁹ Ibid, p. 29.

Trump replied: “I was asking a question sarcastically to reporters like you, just to see what would happen.” What is interesting is that his musings on the cure not only distracted reporters and the public from his handling of the pandemic. Consciously or unconsciously, he also “exposed” the logic behind pseudo-events – in order to stage a new one. What was staged in reality as true was not that covid-19 can be cured by ultraviolet light and disinfectants – something that the majority of the public understood – but that the media produces what the president kept referring to as “fake news”.

According to Boorstin, pseudo-events have invested truth with ambiguity, thereby transforming its everyday sense: they “put a new elusiveness, iridescence, and ambiguity into everyday truth in twentieth-century America.”²¹⁰ What is important in his analysis is that pseudo-events are designed to be repeated. In repeating them, images are established as ambiguous facts, sometimes even more so when the intention is to criticize what they establish. As repeatable events they unfold with a history of their own: “A full explanation of the origin and rise of pseudo-events would be nothing less than a history of modern America.”²¹¹ The history of advertising, public relations and the reliance of the public on dealers in pseudo-events and images, however, cannot be described as a history of increasing superficiality, according to Boorstin. “Rather these things express a world where the image, more interesting than its original, has itself become the original.”²¹²

Although Arendt does not comment on Boorstin’s discussions of image-thinking and pseudo-events, she defines image-making in “Truth and Politics” as the systematic replacement of reality with the image. Unlike an old-fashion portrait, “an image [...] is not supposed to flatter reality but to offer a full-fledged substitute for it.”²¹³ Image, in this sense, as it is referred to by Arendt, may seem close to Jean Baudrillard’s simulacra, defined as an image that replaces the reality it simulates. According to Baudrillard, the epoch of universalized and globalized simulacra is “the end of metaphysics”, since it renders the distinction between authentic reality and simulation meaningless.²¹⁴ In “The History of the Lie”, Derrida suggests an interpretation of the non-totalitarian version of modern lying that Arendt identifies

²¹⁰ Ibid, p. 186.

²¹¹ Ibid, p. 29.

²¹² Ibid, p. 179.

²¹³ Arendt, “Truth and Politics”, p. 248.

²¹⁴ Jean Baudrillard, “Simulacra and Science Fiction”, p. 124 in *Simulacra and Simulation*, trans. Sheila Faria Glaser (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994).

in “Truth and Politics” as image-making. According to him this version of the lie is “a technical transformation of the icon into a simulacrum that then passes for the thing itself, ceas[ing] to represent it so as to replace it by destroying it”.²¹⁵ Arendt, he says, at once opens for an interpretation of the lie as simulacra and closes off this possibility since she kept insisting on the possibility of distinguishing truth from falsity, although the lie, according to him, erases this distinction.

I will come back to Derrida’s interpretive strategy in the next chapter, but for now it is important to see that when Arendt defines image-making as the systematic replacement of reality with image she means something altogether different from both Baudrillard and Derrida. If simulacra, according to Baudrillard, replaces authentic reality, and Derrida sees it as replacing, and thereby destroying the thing itself, Arendt analyzes image-making in politics in terms of a completely different conflict. What the image replaces, according to her, is not an authentic, non-simulated and unmediated reality. What it replaces is not the thing itself, or as Boorstin would say, the original. In suggesting that the image replaces reality, she means that it replaces *appearances*. Appearances, as we have seen, are in themselves multifaceted, ambiguous and contradictory realities already mediated by action, narrativity and stories.

For Arendt, some, but not all, image-making in politics is a new version of the modern lie. In distinction to its totalitarian predecessor, it does not operate with terror but with techniques from “business practices and Madison Avenue”.²¹⁶ It is thus a form of deception directed at domestic voters, rather than an external enemy and it does not build an isolated world in the same way as its totalitarian predecessor. She contrasts it to the traditional, non-totalitarian, political lie which was used for keeping state-secrets in the handling of foreign affairs. If the traditional lie was directed at deceiving an external enemy, images are instead “made for domestic consumption”.²¹⁷ She does not expand any further on image-making in “Truth and Politics”, but in the essay “Lying and Politics” she develops image-making at length by analyzing “The Pentagon Papers” (officially titled “History of U.S. Decision-Making Process on Vietnam Policy”). The papers were commissioned by the Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara in 1967, documenting the United States’ military and political presence in

²¹⁵ Derrida “History of the Lie”, p. 64- 65. See also p. 52.

²¹⁶ Arendt, “Truth and Politics”, p. 250.

²¹⁷ Ibid, p. 250.

Indochina from 1945 to 1968. They were classified, but leaked to *The New York Times* in 1971, at the height of the Vietnam war – a leak that sparked an explosive debate and started the process which eventually led to Richard Nixon’s resignation.

According to Arendt, the shocking effect of the documents on the public had to do not so much with the content of the lies they exposed – such as that of the United States as a benevolent “doctor” reaching out to allies when threatened by Communism:

[T]he Pentagon Papers revealed little significant news that was not available to the average reader of dailies and weeklies; nor are there any arguments, pro or con, in the ‘History of U.S. Decision-Making Process on Vietnam Policy’ that have not been debated for years in magazines, television shows and radio broadcasts.²¹⁸

This, she suggests, is typical for the modern lie. Whereas the traditional lie concerned state secrets that had never reached public notice, its modern counterpart “deals efficiently with things that are no secrets at all but are known to practically everybody.”²¹⁹ What was new in the Pentagon Papers was not primarily the content of the lies they exposed. They had a shocking effect on the public since they revealed an organized form of lying at the heart of the Vietnam war strategy itself, aiming not at deceiving an external enemy but domestic voters. The papers documented a “policy of lying”, which “was hardly ever aimed at the enemy [...], but was destined chiefly, if not exclusively, for domestic consumption, for propaganda at home, and especially for the purpose of deceiving Congress.”²²⁰

She refers to this version of lying as a combination of image-making and problem-solving. The image-makers were public relations managers, rooted in advertising and skilled in distributing consumer goods through a market economy. The problem-solvers were intellectuals, professional game-theorists and system-analysts called to Washington from various universities and think tanks around the country to administer the war. The structure of lying at the heart of the political strategy, Caruth stresses, was the organized *combination* of image-making and problem-solving.²²¹

²¹⁸ Arendt, “Lying in Politics”, p. 45.

²¹⁹ Arendt, “Truth and Politics”, p. 247.

²²⁰ Arendt, “Lying in Politics”, p. 14.

²²¹ Caruth, “Lying and History”, p. 85

The public relations managers are described by Arendt as the generation who had been taught that “half of politics is ‘image-making’ and the other half the art of making people believe in the imagery”.²²² They were assigned the task of creating images, in the sense of promoting narratives that could “sell” the United States’ role in Vietnam to the world, but also, and more importantly, to Congress and domestic, American voters. What is important, in the context of the lie as a relation to truth, is that also this version of the lie can be understood in terms of legitimization and verification strategies.

The U.S.’s publicly proclaimed goals and objectives in Vietnam, Arendt comments, constantly shifted. As stated in “The Pentagon Papers”, the objectives changed from “seeing that the people of South Vietnam are permitted to determine their future”, to “assisting the country to win their contest against the [...] Communist conspiracy” and to protect the reputation of the U.S. as “a counter-subversive guarantor.”²²³ The tactical and strategic considerations to achieve these objectives were also flexible. In order to prevent the breaking down of government in South Vietnam, North Vietnam must be bombed. However, when the bombing started, the government had already broken down: the raids had to be postponed and so a new strategy was invented. The tactic now became that of compelling “Hanoi to stop the Vietcong and the Pathet Lao”, although The Joint Chief of Staff, as stated in the “Pentagon Papers,” did not even hope to attain it: “it would be idle to conclude that these efforts will have a decisive effect.”²²⁴

These shifting goals, Arendt comments, each addressed an “audience.” They were images of omnipotence, constantly invented anew, and designed to “demonstrate that U.S. was a ‘good doctor’ willing to keep promises, be tough, take risks, get bloodied and hurt the enemy badly”.²²⁵ However, as the situation grew more difficult, from 1965 onwards, the objective of assisting Vietnam in winning against Communism receded into the background. The goal now became “to convince the enemy that he could not win”, and “to avoid a humiliating defeat” – not for the welfare of the nation, but for “the reputation of the United States and its President”.²²⁶ That is, the goal now became to keep the image intact.

²²² Arendt, “Lying in Politics”, p. 8.

²²³ *Ibid*, p. 14-15.

²²⁴ *Ibid*, p. 15.

²²⁵ *Ibid*, p. 16-17.

²²⁶ *Ibid*, p. 16.

The only permanent goal, throughout the war, she comments, quoting leading officials, was to create, and then sustain, an image of omnipotence: “to ‘*behave like*’ (italics added) the ‘greatest power in the world’ for no other reason than to convince the world of this ‘simple fact’.”²²⁷ The trouble with image-making, however, is that it is a technique dealing with the audiences’ opinion on what to buy, and its readiness to buy, rather than, precisely, “the simple fact”:

The trouble with the mentality of the public-relations man is that he deals only in opinion and ‘good will’, the readiness to buy, that is, in intangibles whose concrete reality is at a minimum. This means that for his inventions it may indeed look as though the sky is the limit, for he lacks the politician’s power to act, to ‘create’ facts, and, thus, that simple every-day reality that sets limits to power and brings the force of imagination down to earth.²²⁸

This is where the problem-solvers come into the picture. The problem-solvers were strategists and intellectuals who, “equipped with game theories and system analyses”, were prepared to “solve all the ‘problems’ of foreign policy.”²²⁹ Working together with members of the military they were given the task of calculating “scenarios” and constructing “solutions” to “problems”.²³⁰ Each of the shifting objectives that was set in the war “addressed itself to a different ‘audience’, and for each a different ‘scenario’ had to be produced.”²³¹

The problem-solvers, who were given the task of constructing these scenarios, had what the public relations managers lacked: they traded in facts, not in opinions and “good will”. They therefore had the ability to bring the public relation managers’ imagination “down to earth”. They had something “in common with down-to-earth liars”, namely their “attempt to get rid of facts and the confidence that this should be possible because of the inherent contingency of facts.”²³²

They lied, Arendt writes, “not so much for their country – certainly not for their country’s survival, which was never at stake – as for its ‘image’.”²³³

²²⁷ Ibid, p. 17.

²²⁸ Ibid, p. 8.

²²⁹ Ibid, p. 10.

²³⁰ Ibid, p. 10-13.

²³¹ Ibid, p. 16.

²³² Ibid, p. 12.

²³³ Ibid, p. 11.

Whereas the image-makers built U.S.'s image in the war, the problem-solvers got rid of troublesome facts to sustain the image and keep it intact. However, getting rid of facts

can never be done by either theory or opinion manipulation – as though a fact is safely removed from the world if only enough people believe in its nonexistence. It can be done only through radical destruction – as in the case of a murderer who *says* that Mrs. Smith has died and then goes on to kill her.²³⁴

The “policy of lying” revealed by the Pentagon Papers, as I interpret Arendt, was the organized and combined structure of image-making and problem-solving, revealing together that *the war itself* was a legitimization and verification strategy. If the public relations managers produced images in order to sell the war, the problem-solvers created scenarios in the war that made these images true – in turn making them credible, and easier to “sell” to domestic voters. In relation to an audience of consumers, the war verified ideology as true, thereby making it possible to “sell” not only on a domestic market, but also to the world. What the “Pentagon papers” revealed, therefore, was more than the content of the lies they expose: they revealed a verification strategy that was also a method of governing. “[T]he relation, or, rather, nonrelation, between facts and decision, between the intelligence community and the civilian and military services, is perhaps the most momentous, and certainly the best-guarded, secret that the Pentagon papers revealed.”²³⁵ Arendt calls this strategy “defactualization” and sees it as “inherent in the policies and goals themselves”,²³⁶ which intensified as the war grew more difficult, and defeat became inevitable. The aim in sustaining the war at this point was no longer power or profit, nor even influence, but the image itself:

The ultimate aim was neither power nor profit. Nor was it even influence in the world in order to serve particular, tangible interests for the sake of which prestige, and image of ‘the greatest power in the world’, was needed and purposefully used. The goal was now the image itself, as is manifest in the very language of problem-solvers, with their ‘scenarios’ and ‘audiences’, borrowed from the theater. [...] Image-making as global policy – not world conquest, but victory in the battle ‘to win the people’s

²³⁴ Ibid, p. 13.

²³⁵ Ibid, p. 20.

²³⁶ Ibid, p. 42.

minds' – is indeed something new in the huge arsenal of human follies recorded in history.²³⁷

Ultimately, the war was now kept going “not for territorial gain or economic advantage, least of all to help a friend or keep a commitment, and not even for the reality, as distinguished from the image, of power”.²³⁸ Caruth draws attention to how this process increased when power, paradoxically, was lost: “[T]he production of, and adherence to, an ‘image of omnipotence’ [...] increases in dominance, paradoxically, as true power is lost.”²³⁹ According to her, Arendt saw the lie as a political action – the initiation of “something new”, as Arendt states in the quote above – but of a form that more or less completely empties itself. As the factual texture is destroyed, the action of beginning is replaced with images of action and power – and the modern political lie, Caruth suggests, *is* this exchange that paradoxically empties politics of any possibility for real, rather than fictive, beginnings.²⁴⁰

Arendt’s conception of the modern political lie reveals it as a paradoxical phenomenon that both appeals to and exploits truth, in a way that at the same time destroys it – to a point where no distinction can, in political contexts, be made between fact and fiction, true and false. It is because of the lies’ destruction of its own reference to reality and truth that Derrida suggests an interpretive strategy along the lines of simulacra, thereby overcoming the distinction truth/falsity. The modern, political lie, he says, requires “another logic”²⁴¹ in the sense of a different interpretive strategy that, contrary to the lie itself, which appeals to truth, goes “*beyond* the distinction between truth and lie.”²⁴²

Arendt, however, can be seen as suggesting something quite different. As I interpret her, the lie was for her a phenomenon that demands questioning with respect to the *position* of truth in the political realm, the way in which it can *acquire reality* in this sphere, and in relation to the action of beginning. She undertakes such a reflection in several of her works after *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, such as the lecture “Philosophy and Politics” from 1954, the essay “Truth and Politics”, and the section in the *Denk-*

²³⁷ Ibid, p. 18. See also Caruth, “Lying and History”, p. 85.

²³⁸ Arendt, “Lying in Politics”, p. 43.

²³⁹ Caruth, “Lying and History”, p. 86.

²⁴⁰ Ibid, p. 86.

²⁴¹ Derrida, “History of the Lie”, p. 57.

²⁴² Ibid, p. 61.

tagebuch on politics and truth. This led her to develop her own notion of truth as disclosure in response to the lie. As we will see, it can be interpreted as a response to Heidegger also; Arendt develops the idea of truth as disclosure in a different way than he did on several counts. I would argue, then, that for Arendt truth is not the concealed origin or ground of politics, nor does the kind of truths that are of relevance to politics have a performative or prophetic structure, revealing the future in advance. Instead, truth is a resistance and limit *within* the political sphere – a limit in relation to which politics can sometimes emerge as a beginning.

Summary

If Heidegger's political writings and Arendt's works on totalitarianism are studied together, what comes into view is the problem surrounding the relation between politics and truth in totalitarian movements. Arendt identified this problem, though partly on an implicit level, in her writings on the modern political lie, developed by her as one of the elements that crystallized into the event of totalitarianism. In this chapter, we have seen that the modern lie cannot be understood as lies usually are, in the sense of a deliberate misrepresentation that covers over or distorts reality in order to deceive. Arendt treated it as a form of lie that builds up a fictive, but lasting and functioning world, allowing for the translation of ideological statements, mythical elements and lies into factual reality itself. Propaganda and totalitarian organization are two sides of the same coin, where public disclosure is used to produce the realities it states. If her works on the lie are read in relation to Heidegger's political thought, then the role of truth-claims in totalitarian politics becomes visible and can be further developed. The lie is stated in the form of truth-claims that in one way or another refer beyond the experienceable world. They play the role of mobilizing the masses to a "common cause" that produces its own legitimization and verification. As the propaganda statements are translated into reality and come true, ideology becomes a "prophetic method", foreseeing the future.

Derrida stresses the lie as replacing and thereby destroying reality. What escapes him, however, is that what Arendt saw the lie as replacing was "the space between" or the "reality between". The "reality between" arises as a multifaceted, diverse and inconsistent reality in the "between" of a plurality of actors and speakers. For her, the lie did not replace an underlying, unmediated reality beyond narrative, phantasies or images. It staged an alternative world, of fictive logicity and coherence, in everyday, experienceable

reality itself. As such it created a sphere of “unreality”, where the sense of truth and fact in political contexts was lost.

The lie is an extreme, but marginal phenomenon that according to Arendt nevertheless evolves, and has a history of its own – it constitutes itself anew, in other forms, also under non-totalitarian conditions. In this chapter I have argued that the non-totalitarian concept of the lie she came to call “image-making”, was developed in the 1960s and 1970s in response to the trial of Eichmann. As we have seen, it is a form of lie that appears in contemporary democracies on a political scene dominated by public-relations techniques, mass-media and media consumption. The problem surrounding the relationship between politics and truth she detected was thus not solely a problem of totalitarian regimes, but can also appear, in different forms, in contemporary democracies.

It is in relation to the phenomenon of modern lying that Arendt’s comments on truth, written after *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, should be understood. She was skeptical of truth-claims in politics, which in one way or another refer beyond appearances and the experienceable world. However, she also identified the destruction of the factual texture as having a consequence: the possibility of real, political beginnings is lost. For her, the modern political lie cannot be countered simply by demanding more truthfulness in politics, nor did she see it as resulting in a situation where all references to truth and fact in politics would somehow repeat the logic of the lie or be meaningless. The lie, she seems to be saying, requires a rethinking of truth. After *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, this is what she set out to consider and develop: a notion of truth dependent on appearances.

CHAPTER 5

Limit and Resistance: Arendt's Concept of Truth

I. The Tension Between Truth and Politics

In the previous chapter I argued that the modern political lie stages metaphysical and ideological truth-claims in the experienceable world itself, as facts. Arendt's skepticism about truth-claims in politics, which in one way or another refer beyond appearances, can be understood against this background. At the same time, however, she developed her own concept of truth. Truth is a topic in most of her major works, although often it is addressed in short comments and casual remarks, rather than as the object of a formal thematization. The lecture course "Philosophy and Politics", the section in the *Denktagebuch* entitled "Wahrheit und Politik" and the essay "Truth and Politics" are exceptions. In these texts, truth is discussed at length – not, however, as a theme of its own, but within the broader context of its relation to politics. From her perspective, Jeffrey Andrew Barash comments, the philosophical problem of truth cannot "be addressed unless the discussion is grounded in political reflection."¹

What seems to escape the attention of most commentators, however, is that Arendt approaches the question of truth from out of what she saw as a historical *tension* and *conflict* between politics and truth. In "Philosophy and Politics" the problem of truth is placed in the context of a conflict between philosophy and politics, and in "Truth and Politics" the framework is a tension between politics and truth that modernity itself has transformed. That Arendt understood truth and politics as being in tension with one another seems to be the major reason why some commentators can claim that she leaves no room for truth in politics – whereas others have suggested that she saw truth and truthfulness not only as important, but as a

¹ Barash, "The Political Dimension of the Public World", p. 252.

“sacred” commitment and foundation on which politics rests.² According to Gilles Deleuze the mistake of philosophy is to presuppose a natural benevolence of truth. “Thus philosophy arrives at only abstract truths that compromise no one and do not disturb.”³ Arendt was not a traditional philosopher in this sense, and did not treat truth as a harmless phenomenon. She saw the possibility of its manifestation as dependent on a public, political realm – and moreover understood that it has a problematical reality, a tension that can vitalize, yet also conserve and even destroy this realm. In the present chapter I will show that an interpretation can be made of her sometimes contradictory thoughts on truth once we understand the constitutive conflict she stressed between truth and politics. Although there is an extensive number of commentaries that demonstrate the importance of truth, and especially factual truth, in her works, few have engaged in her definition of truth as the introduction of a tension and limit with respect to politics. She writes, for instance, that politics is “limited” by truth, and truth constitutes the “borders” of the political realm.⁴ In what sense can truth be seen as a limit with respect to politics? And what does it mean that truth constitutes the borders of the political realm? This is the topic of the present chapter.

The modern political lie is one of the ways in which the tension Arendt identified between politics and truth comes to express itself, and it is partly in relation to the lie that she developed her concept of truth. In an interesting comment in the essay “Truth and Politics”, she suggests that the threat to the modern lie is not primarily, as in the case of traditional lying, from external enemies, but comes from inside the world of the lie itself: “Contemporary history is full of instances in which tellers of factual truth were felt to be more dangerous, and even more hostile, than the real opponents.”⁵ In the previous chapter we saw that the lie “defactualizes” the political realm, but in this process, she seems to be saying, factual truth –

² Derrida seems to see truthfulness in Arendt as a “sacred” Kantian duty and commitment on which politics rests. See Derrida “History of the Lie”, p. 42-45, 67-70. A similar view, although more approvingly expressed, can be found in La Caze, “It’s Easier to Lie if You Believe it Yourself”, p. 203-204.

³ Gilles Deleuze, *Proust and Signs*, trans. Richard Howard (London and New York: Continuum, 2008), p. 11. According to Deleuze’s interpretation of Proust, truth is not something we have a natural love for, and willfully seek, out of goodness but something that befalls us. For a recent study of his reading of Proust, which also comments on truth, see Johan Sehlberg, *Of Affliction: The Experience of Thought in Gilles Deleuze by Way of Marcel Proust* (Huddinge: Södertörn Philosophical Studies, 2020).

⁴ Arendt, “Truth and Politics”, p. 259.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 251.

which is not absolute but contingent – is politicized and paradoxically becomes a relevant issue within the political sphere. What was previously “an outside matter” is transformed “into an inside issue”.⁶ A contingent and non-absolute form of truth becomes politically relevant and charged – and as such, she seems to suggest, it also becomes a possible point of resistance.

The essay “Truth and Politics”, which was written in response to the debate about her reports from the trial of Eichmann, consequently opens not by asking what truth is, but what kind of *reality* it can possess in the political sphere.⁷ The forms of truth that are of interest to her are not absolute, but dependent on a public, political sphere – yet as such they are also in conflict with this realm. Her style is casual rather than systematic, such that truth is discussed from various perspectives – it is not seen as a univocal or unequivocal phenomenon. She points out that there are different kinds of truth, some of which are not thematized in the essay: the focus is on truths that are not harmless, but of relevance in politics. According to her, the form of truth that has this position today, more than any other kind, is factual truth.

In line with her remark that factual truth is the most relevant – and most politicized – form of truth today, Johan Farkas’ and Jannick Shou’s recent study of the debate about post-truth and post-fact politics shows that countless demands for facts and fact-checking were raised in political speeches, public statements, journalistic commentaries and academic articles in the years 2015–2018.⁸ In this debate, which is ongoing, truth is more or less equated with fact – and fact-based policy is seen as the most effective cure for the post-truth malady. A recurring narrative in the debate, Farkas and Shou comments, is that the onslaught on truth is an attack on democracy itself.⁹

However, the question of why facts are important in political contexts, what role facts are supposed to play there, how facts are related to reality, if there are other forms of truths that are relevant in politics or what the word fact even means is seldom, if ever, discussed. Arendt’s works on truth is highly relevant in this context since she asks about the position of facts in the political sphere, how facts are established and afforded reality therein, and what role they can play in politics – but she also suggested that there is another form of truth relevant to the political realm besides factual truth. As

⁶ Ibid, p. 251.

⁷ Ibid, p. 223.

⁸ Farkas and Shou, *Post-Truth, Fake News and Democracy*, p. 45-63.

⁹ Ibid, p. 52.

we will see, the facts that interested her belonged to a wider range of facts than the factual truths established and validated by natural scientific methods. The facts she discussed are events and historical facts that are of high political interest, and typically cannot be repeated. They are therefore dependent on difficult processes of validation by other means than natural scientific methods – such as witnesses, documents, narratives and other kinds of evidence, used for instance in the historical and political sciences, sociology, legal procedures and journalism.

However, she also developed an idea of philosophical truth as a form of truth which is relevant in the political realm – a discussion that points back not only to both her reference to Epictetus in the last chapter of *The Origins of Totalitarianism* and to her interpretation of Socrates in the lecture “Philosophy and Politics” but also, on a general level, to the recurring question in her works about the role and place of philosophical thinking in relation to politics. In stressing the withdrawal from politics to solitude as a requirement for philosophical thinking, she can be taken to advocate a contemplative ideal for philosophical thought. However, in the present chapter I will argue that her notion of philosophical truth is instead closer to the later work of Michel Foucault, specifically his genealogical exploration of truth and truth-telling, *parrhesia*, in antiquity. In *The Government of Self and Others* and *The Courage of the Truth* Foucault, whose interpretation of Socrates comes close to Arendt’s, stresses Socrates’ withdrawal from politics as a position *within* the political sphere, and as a *relation* to politics. For Arendt, solitude was never withdrawal to a realm outside the political sphere, but precisely a position within it. Like the later Foucault, then, she conceives of philosophical thinking and truth-telling as introducing a difference and tension within the political realm itself. Philosophy cannot become politics, yet it must search for its reality in the political sphere, in relation to politics. This is to say that philosophical truth-telling demonstrates a difference and establishes a tension with respect to politics. It is a tension that politics needs, but it is destroyed if philosophy speaks the language of violence, assumes the role of leading or educating the politician or lays out the ground of the state.

What is interesting in Arendt’s concept of truth is that it also challenges the rigid distinctions she herself imposes upon politics, e.g. the private and the public, the social and the political – distinctions she referred to in concrete, political judgments such as the Little Rock case, which will be discussed in this chapter. Her own concept of truth reveals the borders of the political realm as contingent and contestable, yet at the same time these

borders are *real*. Both factual and philosophical truth opens up a gap between past and future, and in this gap the borders of the political realm are revealed as dynamical borders rather than a priori givens. The concept of truth is therefore a point in her own writings where the rigid distinctions she imposed between the private and the public, the social and the political in order to think the specificity of the political, and protect the political sphere from antipolitical intrusion, cannot be maintained. These distinctions must be understood in a different way than she herself seems to suggest.

In order to develop Arendt's view on factual and philosophical truth I will begin, in section II and III of the present chapter, by addressing the general framework of her essay "Truth and Politics". Here I will also situate her notion of factual and philosophical truth in relation to Heidegger's understanding of truth, since her version of disclosure can be seen, or at least constructed, as a response to the problem of politics and truth in his own thought. In section IV I will develop Arendt's definition of factual truth in "Truth and Politics" as a limit with respect to political action and opinion. This is followed up with a discussion of factual truth-telling in relation to the modern lie in section V. Here I will show that Arendt's own notion of factual truth challenges the rigid distinctions she herself imposed between the private and the public, the social and the political. Section VI-VII address philosophical truth and philosophical truth-telling as the introduction of a fragile, but indispensable tension with respect to politics. Like factual truth, her own understanding of philosophical truth will be addressed as revealing the borders of the political realm as contingent and contestable rather than given. In the last sections of the chapter, section VIII and IX, I will situate her notion of philosophical truth in relation to the late Foucault, but also discuss in what sense her own works can be seen as a form of philosophical truth-telling.

II. The Politicization of Facts in Modernity

The general framework within which Arendt addresses the issue of truth in "Truth and Politics" is a historical conflict between politics and truth. According to her presentation of the history of this tension, this conflict was first thematized by Parmenides and Plato, both of whom articulated it as a conflict between two different ways of life: "[T]he life of the philosopher, as interpreted first by Parmenides and then by Plato, and the way of the

citizens.”¹⁰ Like Heidegger, she comments on Plato’s cave allegory, but does not read the allegory as providing an account of the essence of truth. Rather, on her reading, it dramatizes the conflict between politics and truth that admits of no solution. Returning from his journey outside the cave, the cave dweller feels as though his own life is under threat, although Plato never explains why: “No enemy is mentioned in Plato’s story; the many live peacefully in their cave among themselves, mere spectators of images, involved in no action and hence threatened by nobody.”¹¹ Today, however, the conflict between politics and truth is according to her transformed – it no longer concerns religious or philosophical truth, but factual truth. “While probably no former time tolerated so many diverse opinions on religious or philosophical matters, factual truth, if it happens to oppose a given group’s profit or pleasure, is greeted today with greater hostility than ever before.”¹² In relation to facts, the tension between politics and truth has become increasingly more complicated, since factual truth does not belong to a region somewhere beyond or above the political realm: “[T]he reporter of factual truth [...] does not return from any journey into regions beyond the realm of human affairs, and cannot console himself with the thought that he has become a stranger in this world.”¹³ Factual truth is not located beyond the political realm, but situated firmly within it, where it appears as an issue “of immediate political relevance”.¹⁴

Although Arendt narrates the history of the relation between politics and truth in a brief and general way, what is important in the present context is that: (i) she describes a politicization of factual truth in modernity and (ii) she sees the tension between politics and truth as one that becomes *immanent* to the political sphere. This means that the conflict between politics and truth is no longer an *external* conflict between two different realms or modes of life – such as the political and the religious realm, or the political and the philosophical mode of life. In modernity the tension between politics and truth defines the political realm itself. What was previously an “outside matter” has been transformed to an “inside issue” within the political sphere, and in this process the tension between politics

¹⁰ Arendt, “Truth and Politics”, p. 228.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 225.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 231.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 233.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 232.

and truth has been displaced to factual truth – a form of truth which is not absolute but contingent and conditioned.

In “Truth and Politics” she interprets the modern political lie in the context of this transformation. As we have seen, the modern lie cannot be understood as deliberate misrepresentation of states of affairs: it makes use of truth by staging ideological and metaphysical truth-claims in reality, as facts. Precisely as such, however, it seems to destroy the very meaning of its own reference to truth. This situation led Derrida, in his essay on the lie, to suggest an interpretive strategy that, contrary to the lie, goes beyond the distinction between truth and falsity.¹⁵ Arendt’s strategy is different. She asks what kind of reality facts and truths can possess in the political realm in so far as they are situated within this sphere, where they cannot be understood as absolute, which is not to say that they are subjective or arbitrary.

In “Truth and Politics” she makes a pragmatic distinction between factual and rational truth.¹⁶ Factual truth is according to her revealed in action and interaction with the world, whereas philosophical truth – for the sake of convenience treated as a species of rational truth – is revealed in thinking’s withdrawal from the world. I will soon come back to the details of her definitions of factual and philosophical truth, but before looking closer at these two modes of truth it is instructive to compare her general understanding of factual and philosophical truth with Heidegger.

III. The Concept of Truth: Heidegger vs. Arendt

Heidegger’s account of truth in *Being and Time* rests on a sharp distinction between truth as disclosure and truth as the discovery of beings and states of affairs – where the latter is defined as a derivative notion of truth. According to § 44, a statement is true in so far as it discovers beings as they are and lets them be seen in their uncoveredness: “To say that a statement is true means that it discovers the beings in themselves. It asserts, it shows, it lets beings ‘be seen’ (*apophansis*) in their discoveredness. The *being true* (*truth*) of the statement must be understood as *discovering*.”¹⁷ Discovery and discoveredness refer to what he calls the uncoveredness of “innerwordly beings”, such as objects, states of affairs and events. This is the kind of truth that, for instance in *Black Notebooks* and *Being and Truth*, he later refers to

¹⁵ Derrida, “History of the Lie”, p. 57, 61.

¹⁶ Arendt, “Truth and Politics”, p. 226.

¹⁷ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 218.

as individual truth.¹⁸ It is often exemplified by empirical facts, although he does not use this word.¹⁹ In *Being and Time* the example is “The picture on the wall is hanging crookedly”²⁰ and in *Being and Truth* “The earth orbits the sun”, but also “On the 12th of November the German people will cast the vote that determines its ownmost future”.²¹ According to Heidegger statements of this kind depend for their truth on the disclosure of a world, defined in *Being and Time* as the originary phenomenon of truth. “[T]he discoveredness of innerwordly beings is *grounded* in the disclosedness of the world.”²² The authentic and inauthentic modes of disclosure reveal a world and determine the totality of “innerwordly beings” – i.e., how beings and “individual truths” come to presence, are uncovered, discovered and encountered within the world.

As we have seen, his concept of truth as disclosure underwent a shift in the 1930s. During this period he begins defining *aletheia* as an antagonistic struggle between forces of concealment and unconcealment that have a history. Or rather, history to Heidegger *is* the history of truth, as the history of a few decisive transitions and transformations in the essence of truth – transitions he treats as expressing themselves and articulated primarily in the history of philosophy or what he calls the history of being (which is not a historiography of philosophy).

The history that Arendt gives an account of in “Truth and Politics” is different: it is not history as such, nor the history of the essence of truth, seen as coming to its decisive articulation within a single discipline or mode of life. What she narrates is instead a historical conflict between politics and truth, as this conflict comes to be expressed in a variety of disciplines,

¹⁸ Heidegger, *Ponderings II–VI*, p. 23; Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, p. 97–98.

¹⁹ The word “fact”, *Faktum*, is often used in *Being and Time* for phenomenological findings that validate the ontological interpretation. In the methodological remarks in § 2, he comments for instance on being as something Dasein is already familiar with, in one way or the other: “*This average and vague understanding of being is a fact.*” (Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 5.) Another word for fact in German is *Tatsache*, which together with the words “factual [*tatsächlich*]” and “factuality [*Tatsächlichkeit*]” are used by Heidegger for the ontic occurrence of Dasein, i.e. its “facticity”. “[T]he ‘factuality’ of the fact of one’s own Dasein is ontologically totally different from the factual occurrence of a kind of stone. The factuality of the fact Dasein, as the way in which every Dasein actually is, we call its *facticity*.” (Ibid, p. 56). The happening of Dasein is according to Heidegger engaged in the occurrence of truth, in which it exists, in a way a stone is not.

²⁰ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 217.

²¹ Heidegger, *Being and Truth*, p. 78.

²² Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 220.

practices and modes of life that in various ways have been concerned with truth, such as religion, philosophy, science.

Although she makes a pragmatic distinction between philosophical truth and factual truth, coinciding in certain respects with Heidegger's distinction between truth as disclosure and truth as discovery/uncoveredness of "innerwordly" beings and events, for Arendt it is not a hierarchical difference between an "originary" and "derived" form of truth. What she calls philosophical truth is revealed in thinking, and she describes it as the disclosure of the world "between", which, at the same time also reveals the thinking subject as "two-in-one". It reveals a split in the being of the thinking subject – a split, which according to her, is an indication of plurality.²³ I will come back to the details of her notion of philosophical truth, but for now it suffices to note that for her philosophical truth does not reveal the world "between" as disclosed by a single mode of disclosure, determining what Heidegger would call the discovery of "innerwordly beings" and "individual truths". Factual truth, as Arendt defines it in "Truth and Politics", is not a secondary form of truth presupposing a more originary mode of disclosure encompassing and determining a totality of beings.

In a note in the section on truth and politics in the *Denktagebuch*, she comments (in a mix of English and German):

Truth by agreement: We regard these truths as self-evident; as against: Truth by revelation – only one. Are these interconnected? Through *Realitätsbewusstsein, das von Anderen abhängt*. Against both: Scientific results which do not need agreement because they compel it.²⁴

For her, truth as agreement or correspondence is related to truth understood as revelation or disclosure, seen as "one" – as a singular phenomenon. Both truth as agreement and truth as a single mode of disclosure determining a totality of beings depend on the awareness of realness and reality – and for her reality is the same as appearance. In the previous chapter, I discussed the sense of realness as depending on plurality in Arendt: reality is disclosed in the between of a plurality of agents, speakers and objects. What is disclosed in this way is not a unitary or consistent phenomenon, but the diverse and haphazardous reality "between" that brings together and separates at the same time. As she states in *The Human Condition*, what is

²³ Arendt, "Philosophy and Politics", p. 88.

²⁴ Arendt, *Denktagebuch*, Bd. II, heft XXIV, p. 622.

characteristic for every “in-between” is that it “relates and separates men at the same time.”²⁵ In her commentary on realness in Arendt, Cecilia Sjöholm develops the awareness and sensing of realness as it grows forth in experience. It is the sensing of a reality which in itself is varied, heterogenic and multiple – a reality filled with inconsistencies, gaps and wholes.²⁶

By commenting that scientific results challenge both the supposed self-evidence of truth as agreement and truth as a single mode of disclosure (as presented in the quote above), Arendt seems to suggest that none of them can account for facts. Facts have a certain resistance, or as she formulates it, they do not need agreement, but compel it. What she points to is that facts do not conform to modes of disclosure, determining how they come to presence and are interpreted: on the contrary, they compel revisions not only of particular statements, but of theories and even the way in which reality is disclosed. There is no single mode of disclosure providing a ground that allows for agreement between statements and facts: not only do facts compel agreement in calling for adjustment of interpretations and expectations but the way they appear is not always consistent with the appearance of other facts. In the essay “The Conquest of Space and the Stature of Man”, she exemplifies this with findings in quantum physics that seem to challenge even the law of non-contradiction.²⁷ In so far as Arendt herself endorses a version of truth as agreement, given her suggestion that facts compel agreement, it should be pointed out that this is not, as Heidegger would say, a notion of agreement that presupposes a single mode of disclosure as its ground. In *Being and Time*, truth as agreement rests on publicness, a mode of disclosure described by Heidegger as eradicating distances and differences, placing beings in a uniform availability. In the 1930s he sees the historical transformation of truth into “machination” as paving the way for the concept of truth as agreement. Arendt, however, develops a version of truth as agreement that does not rest on a single mode of disclosure as its ground. On the contrary: in compelling agreement, factual truth can challenge the ways in which beings, and even reality itself, are disclosed.²⁸

²⁵ Arendt, *The Human Condition*, p. 52.

²⁶ Sjöholm, *Doing Aesthetics with Arendt*, p. 90.

²⁷ Hannah Arendt, “The Conquest of Space and the Stature of Man” in Hannah Arendt, *Between Past and Future* (London: Penguin, 2006), p. 263.

²⁸ In “The Origin of the Work of Art”, Heidegger stresses the work of art as a thing in the world with a particular materiality that can transform disclosure – in contrast to *Being and Time*, where “inner wordly” beings are determined by disclosure. In the same essay,

There is a further general difference between Arendt's and Heidegger's concept of truth. In this study I have argued that if we read Heidegger's political writings together with Arendt's thought on the modern lie, a problem regarding the relation between politics and truth becomes visible in totalitarianism. Truth-claims are transformed to prophetic and performative utterances, producing the very factual situations they state. It is against this background that Arendt can be seen as asking about the position of truth in the political sphere, from out of which her own concept of truth is developed. In a note in the *Denktagebuch*, she comments on the essay "On the Essence of Truth", where Heidegger suggests that "[t]he essence of truth reveals itself as freedom",²⁹ as well as on his interpretation of Plato's allegory of the cave from this period. "On the Essence of Truth" and the related courses *The Essence of Truth* and *Being and Truth* were discussed in Chapter 3 of this study. There I argued that a political dimension of Heidegger's notion of truth shows itself in his interpretation of Plato's allegory. The concealed "originary struggle" he sees as the essence of truth is assigned the mythical role of inscribing an origin in the people. Myth becomes effective, I argued, first when mythical elements begin to have real existence, can be experienced and assumed by a people. This moment comes to the fore when Heidegger interprets the liberated cave dweller's return from his journey to the outside world. For Heidegger this is a key passage. The cave dweller is seen as liberating not only the prisoners at the bottom of the cave; he liberates the concealed struggle, which is the essence of truth, by enacting it, thereby making it manifest and real in the *polis* itself.

In the *Denktagebuch*, Arendt comments on this passage in the allegory, but reads it in a different way than Heidegger. The liberation of the cave dwellers is according to her not a stage in the analogy that liberates truth – liberation, she says, is instead what makes truth possible.³⁰ In "Truth and Politics" she stresses lying, but not necessarily truth and truth-telling, as an expression of freedom: "[O]ur ability to lie – but not necessarily our ability to tell the truth – belongs among the few obvious, demonstrable data that confirm human freedom."³¹ The lie is speech which demonstrates freedom in the sense of the capacity to begin, whereas factual and philosophical

however, he vociferously maintains that science can never play this role. (Heidegger, "The Origin of the Work of Art", p. 37.)

²⁹ Heidegger, "On the Essence of Truth", p. 147.

³⁰ Arendt, *Denktagebuch*, Bd. II, heft XXV, p. 675.

³¹ Arendt, "Truth and Politics", p. 246.

truth-telling are not expressions of freedom in this sense, nor is freedom the essence of truth. If truth to Heidegger *is* beginning, Arendt develops both factual and philosophical truth as introducing a limit with respect to freedom and the action of beginning. James Phillips stresses this difference between Heidegger and Arendt in his remarks on Arendt's essay "Truth and Politics", suggesting that truth in Arendt should be seen as limiting the freedom of beginning.³²

Seeing the lie, but not necessarily the ability to tell the truth, as a demonstration of freedom, Arendt's understanding of truth and true discourse is also different from that of Derrida, who, in his essay on the modern political lie, puts weight on the lie as producing an "effect of truth". Derrida seems to see more or less all truth-claims in politics and the media as performative in this sense.³³ In comparison, Arendt sees political action, speech and opinion as having a performative element – they take place on the scene of appearances, but they also accomplish this scene. There are, however, different kinds of performativity involved, of which the modern lie is a marginal, but an extreme example. It is speech that is itself a form of action, producing the realities it states. Factual and philosophical truth-telling, however, are not performative according to her. This becomes clear after investigating the *position* of truth in the political sphere, which differs from that of political opinions and actions.

Peg Birmingham suggests that the distinction Arendt makes between truth and opinion refers to the *location* of truth in the political sphere.³⁴ From the point of view of politics, Arendt for instance intimates that truth carries an element of "coercion".³⁵ Opinions are open to debate, persuasion and contest in a way that truth is not. "[F]actual truth, like all other truth, peremptorily claims to be acknowledged and precludes debate, and debate constitutes the very essence of political life."³⁶ Opinions are established through debate, but truth appears within the political sphere, seen by Arendt as the sphere of freedom, in terms of its resistance. It appears as a "coercive force"³⁷, possessing an "infuriating stubbornness"³⁸ since truth is not open to contest and debate in the same way opinions are. Nor is it in

³² Phillips, "Between the Tyranny of Opinion and the Despotism of Rational Truth", p. 99.

³³ Derrida, "History of the Lie", p. 50-57.

³⁴ Birmingham, "A Lying World Order", p. 75.

³⁵ Arendt, "Truth and Politics", p. 236.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 236.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 236.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 236.

need of a single mode of disclosure that makes agreement possible – it compels agreement. From a political perspective, “modes of thought and communication that deal with truth” are therefore “necessarily domineering”.³⁹ Her point is not that there is an absolute distinction between truth and political opinion, just that truth has a different way of being *established* and *asserting its validity* within the political sphere: it asserts validity in terms of resistance, something that opinions do not possess in the same way. In a similar sense truth-telling, as we will see, assumes a different position with respect to the political realm than performative utterances.

In what sense then can factual and philosophical truth be understood as limit phenomena with respect to politics and the action of beginning?

IV. Factual Truth

The weight Arendt places on factual truth in politics has been widely acknowledged in commentaries on her thought. However, few scholars have discussed her definitions of factual truth in relation to the tension that, according to her, factual truth introduces into the political sphere. She defines factual truth as revealed in action and interaction with the world: it is the invariable outcome “of men living together and acting together”.⁴⁰ In general, when facts are discussed in philosophy what is referred to is the object of statements such as Heidegger’s “The picture hangs crookedly on the wall”, or the object of judgments such as “Snow is white” or “Water consists of hydrogen and oxygen”. Arendt’s examples are of a different kind. They are not picked from politically harmless experiences, nor is her focus on the kind of facts that can be validated by repetition, such as in natural scientific laboratories and experiments – which is not to say that she leaves no room for natural scientific truths. Rather, the facts of interest to her are occurrences, events and states of affairs that are the outcome of human action and interaction. Her examples, among others, are Germany’s invasion of Belgium in 1914, France’s collapse before the German armies in 1940 and the Vatican policies during World War II.⁴¹

Factual truths of this kind differ with regard to opinions, with respect both to how they are established and how their validity is asserted in the political realm. Since they cannot be repeated, they depend upon other

³⁹ Ibid, p. 237.

⁴⁰ Ibid, p. 227.

⁴¹ Ibid, p. 232, 235

means of validation than the methods used in natural science. They are established through witnesses, testimonies, documents and other kinds of evidence, used for instance by historians, in political science, by journalists and in legal procedures such as the trial of Eichmann – where the witness hearings and the review of evidence took several months. Factual truth, Arendt writes, “need[s] testimony to be remembered and trustworthy witnesses to be established in order to find a secure dwelling place in the domain of human affairs.”⁴² It “is established by witnesses and depends upon testimony; it exists only to the extent that it is spoken about, even if it occurs in the domain of privacy.”⁴³ Factual truth depends for its reality on the political realm and is afforded reality only in so far as it is established and acknowledged there.

Once established, facts however have a special position in the public, political sphere. In contradistinction to opinions, which are established through debate, they are manifest in terms of their resistance:

Facts are beyond agreement and consent, and all talk about them – all exchanges of opinion based on correct information – will contribute nothing to their establishment. Unwelcome opinion can be argued with, rejected, or compromised upon, but unwelcome facts possess an infuriating stubbornness that nothing can move except plain lies.⁴⁴

From a political perspective, facts are located outside the public space, which is the space for freedom, debate, contest and agreement. Or rather, they appear *within* this sphere in terms of their resistance, as a limit: they constitute an *outside* within the political realm, and with respect to political opinions and political action. They are “beyond” agreement since they compel agreement in ways opinions cannot do. According to Zerilli, what Arendt saw as the “sheer stubbornness of facts” is an effect of treating them as absolute and rational truths, “which, in [Arendt’s] view, compel us and preclude debate.”⁴⁵ My point here, however, as suggested also by Birmingham and Phillips, is that factual truth, as contingent and conditioned, has a certain “stubbornness” in itself that constitutes a limit to political opinions and action.⁴⁶

⁴² Arendt, “Lying in Politics”, p. 6.

⁴³ Arendt, “Truth and Politics”, p. 234.

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, p. 236.

⁴⁵ Zerilli, “Truth and Politics”, § 43.

⁴⁶ Birmingham, “Lying in Politics”, p. 75; Phillips, “Between the Tyranny of Opinion and the Despotism of Rational Truth”, p. 97.

It is for this reason that facts are of great political interest. According to Arendt, facts are “the politically most relevant truths”,⁴⁷ they concern issues “of immediate political relevance”⁴⁸ and are “political by nature”.⁴⁹ They are of political interest, not only because they are the unpredictable outcome of political action and events. They introduce a fragile but “stubborn” tension in the political sphere, and this is precisely what makes them politically relevant and highly charged. As limit phenomena with respect to politics they can validate political claims and inform opinions – but they can also destroy the legitimacy of various political movements and groups. They are dependent on the political sphere for their reality, but they have reality within this sphere in terms of the resistance they insert.

If Plato, at least on Arendt’s interpretation, made an absolute distinction between truth and opinion, she defines this difference not as absolute or given, but as a difference in modes of asserting validity. “All truths – not only the various kinds of rational truth but also factual truth – are opposed to opinion in their *mode of asserting validity*.”⁵⁰ Truth carries a degree of coercion that opinions lack, which is not to say that the former is any more self-evident than opinions. On the contrary, facts especially are notoriously difficult to establish and far from self-evident, she stresses:

Factual evidence [...] is established through testimony by eyewitness – notoriously unreliable – and by records, documents, and monuments, all of which can be suspected as forgeries. In the event of a dispute, only other witnesses can be invoked, and settlement is usually arrived at by way of a majority; that is, in the same way as the settlement of opinions – a wholly unsatisfactory procedure, since there is nothing to prevent a majority of witnesses from being false witnesses.⁵¹

Furthermore, facts are no more contingent than opinions: as the outcome of actions there is no conclusive reason for facts to be what they are; the outcome could always have been otherwise. “[T]he surest sign of the factuality of facts and events is precisely this stubborn thereness, whose inherent contingency ultimately defies all attempts at conclusive explanation.”⁵² Facts simply are what they are, yet what they happen to be is contingent in a

⁴⁷ Arendt, “Truth and Politics”, p. 227.

⁴⁸ Ibid, p. 232.

⁴⁹ Ibid, p. 234.

⁵⁰ Ibid, p. 235.

⁵¹ Ibid, p. 239.

⁵² Ibid, p. 253.

“literally unlimited” sense.⁵³ According to her, this is the reason for the refusal of pre-modern philosophy to acknowledge facts as a meaningful form of truth:

It is because of the haphazardness of facts that pre-modern philosophy refused to [...] believe that any meaningful truth could ever be discovered in the ‘melancholy haphazardness’ (Kant) of a sequence of events which constitutes the course of this world.⁵⁴

As no more self-evident and no less contingent than opinions, facts are different from opinions yet located in the political sphere in close proximity to them. This position of simultaneous distance and closeness with respect to opinions is what makes their position in the political sphere ambiguous and insecure. As asserted by Linda Zerilli, they can be treated as absolute truths, and taken as the result of necessary developments that cannot be prevented.⁵⁵ However, facts can also, Arendt stresses, be transformed to opinions, and maneuvered out from history:

The chances of factual truth surviving the onslaught of power are very slim indeed; it is always in danger of being maneuvered out of the world not only for a time but, potentially, forever. Facts and events are infinitely more fragile things than axioms, discoveries, theories [...]. Once they are lost, no rational effort will ever bring them back.⁵⁶

It is precisely the fragile resistance inserted by factual truth in the political sphere, their contingent but “stubborn thereness”, combined with their close affinity to opinions, which constitutes the special position they occupy within this realm. From “a purely political perspective, from the viewpoint of power”, Arendt writes, factual truth, like all kinds of truth, “arises from without, has its source outside the political realm”.⁵⁷ From a purely political perspective, truth appears as the outside of politics; it is manifest within the political realm, not only in a different position with respect to opinions, but also as a limit to action. Factual truth is not open to action, since it concerns the past:

⁵³ Ibid, p. 238.

⁵⁴ Ibid, p. 238.

⁵⁵ Zerilli, “Truth and Politics”, § 43.

⁵⁶ Arendt, “Truth and Politics”, p. 227.

⁵⁷ Ibid, p. 236.

Not the past – and all factual truth, of course, concerns the past – or the present, insofar as it is the outcome of the past, but the future is open to action. If the past and present are treated as parts of the future – that is, changed back into their former state of potentiality – the political realm is deprived not only of its main stabilizing force but of the starting point from which to change, to begin something new.⁵⁸

That facts, from a political perspective, have their source outside the political realm and constitute a limit to political action, is not to say that they can be isolated from an interpretative context, from narrative, language, opinions or other facts.⁵⁹ Nor is her point that the past is fixed and cannot be rewritten. Her argument is that once established within the political realm facts appear there as limit phenomena. As such they are a stabilizing force and “constitute the very texture of the political realm”⁶⁰ – they make up the relatively stable reality that grows forth between men.

Comments like this, however, may seem to suggest that factual truth, after all, constitutes a common, stable and shared ground for political action and speech, established through agreement. In a metaphorical sense, she writes at the end of “Truth and Politics”, truth provides a ground: “Conceptually, we may call truth what we cannot change; metaphorically, it is the ground on which we stand and the sky that stretches above us.”⁶¹ In the 1954 lecture on Socrates, “Philosophy and Politics”, which was discussed in the previous chapter, she can be interpreted as suggesting that the role of both the philosopher and the statesman is to establish an agreed upon and shared, common ground of truth. Stressing Socrates’ view on truth as bound to appearances and dependent on a variety of positions in the world, which involves multiple “realities [that] open themselves up”, she for instance suggests that Socrates’ role was to help the citizens establish a common world, shared in friendship. Talking about “what is between them, it becomes ever more common to them.”⁶²

⁵⁸ Ibid, p. 254.

⁵⁹ According to Nelson, Arendt conceives of factual truth more or less as raw sense data, which constitutes a ground on which politics rests. “The realm of politics, then, lies on top of the ground of brute empirical fact”. (Nelson, “Politics and Truth”, p. 278.) This argument ignores her claim that factual truth must be established within the political sphere – they have no reality outside of it. A similar argument can be found in Albrecht Wellmer, “Hannah Arendt on Judgment” in *Hannah Arendt: Twenty Years Later*, eds. Larry May and Jerome Kohn (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1997), p. 41-42.

⁶⁰ Arendt, “Truth and Politics”, p. 227.

⁶¹ Ibid, p. 259.

⁶² Arendt, “Philosophy and Politics”, p. 82.

However, that she sees facts as constituting the texture of the political realm is not necessarily to say that they make up a unified, common ground, established through agreement. On the contrary, she stresses the haphazardness of facts, that facts have no inherent logical consistency, and she repeatedly underscores that they are beyond agreement and consent, although they are dependent on being acknowledged. Again, it is important to see that she develops a notion of truth as agreement, which does not rest on a single and unified ground of disclosure that makes agreement possible. As such facts are more than the object of scientific theories and methods: they constitute the sense of realness, arising from a plurality of contingent events and narrated circumstances that together reveal a multifaceted reality, which is unpredictable and not always consistent. Incongruities, Sjöholm stresses, belong to the fabric of reality itself in Arendt, “gaps are in themselves aspects of realness.”⁶³ Suggesting that facts make up the “texture” of the political realm, Arendt can be seen as underscoring this: the fabric of reality is contingent, unpredictable and inconsistent, but as such it is also a stabilizing force. That facts, as the invariable outcome of actions, are a stabilizing force has to do, not with necessity, but precisely with their contingency, “because it happens to be thus and not otherwise.”⁶⁴ However, as a contingent limit to action, facts also provide “the starting point from which to change, to begin something new”.⁶⁵ James Phillips formulates this tension between factual truth and political action in terms of an “intertwined autonomy”: “[T]he autonomy of the world becomes intertwined with the autonomy of action.”⁶⁶ It is by asserting the reality of the fragile, but stubborn resistance of facts, that politics can assert its reality as beginning.

The position of factual truth in the political sphere, and the role of facts in relation to politics, is thus inherently ambiguous and double, rather than self-evident and unequivocal. They provide stability, but as such they can, as stressed by Zerilli, be treated as a compelling and necessary outcome of events in a way that prevent freedom.⁶⁷ Corinne Enaudeau makes a similar point, saying that factual truth can be “bent” into rational truth. The rewriting of history in totalitarian politics transforms historical facts into predictable laws of motion, governing history, so that the “gap” between the

⁶³ Sjöholm, *Doing Aesthetics with Arendt*, p. 90.

⁶⁴ Arendt, “Truth and Politics”, p. 253.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 254.

⁶⁶ Phillips, “Between the Tyranny of Opinion and the Despotism of Rational Truth”, p. 107.

⁶⁷ Zerilli, “Truth and Politics”, § 43.

past and an unpredictable future is closed.⁶⁸ Facts, however, can also inform and validate opinions, as well as destroy the legitimacy of political movements. Finally, they provide a contingent limit to action, but as such they can also be the starting point for beginnings.

That facts constitute a contingent limit with respect to politics is interesting not the least since Arendt insisted on a strict boundary between the private sphere and the public, political realm, as well as between social and political questions. The reasons for her desire to limit the political sphere was to prevent the realization of organic and naturalistic fantasies in politics, as well as to inhibit the economization and technologization of the political realm – but also, as pointed out by Seyla Benhabib, to preserve a domain of private autonomy and nurturance.⁶⁹

In her book *Arendt and the Negro Question*, Kathryn T. Gines argues that the strict divisions imposed by Arendt in her attempt to think the specificity of politics does not obviously prevent the effects on the political realm she cautioned against. More besides, Gines claims that the imposition of such distinctions tend to inhibit political agency.⁷⁰ According to Gines, the sharp division between the political and the social risks rejecting the existence of freedom and political action of subjects excluded from the political realm, as well as the methods by which political freedom and rights are won.⁷¹ What she sees as Arendt's "profound blinders" concerning racial oppression in the United States, is "a result, in part, of the lines she draws between the public, the private, and the social."⁷² One of Gines' examples is the Little Rock case, commented on by Arendt in the essay "Reflections on Little Rock" from 1959. The topic of the essay is the enforced desegregation of schools, which belonged to the civil rights program of the Eisenhower administration. Arendt takes as her starting point a photography, circulating in the press, of a black girl on her way home from a newly integrated school, harassed by a mob of white boys and protected by a white friend of her father. She argued that enforced integration in schools "was to burden children, black and white, with the working out of a problem which

⁶⁸ Enaudeau, "Hannah Arendt: Politics, Opinion, Truth", p. 1032, 1034.

⁶⁹ Benhabib, *The Reluctant Modernism of Hannah Arendt*, p. 147

⁷⁰ Gines, *Hannah Arendt and the Negro Question*, p. 55. Jacques Rancière makes a similar point in "Who Is the Subject of the Rights of Man?" (Jacques Rancière, "Who Is the Subject of the Rights of Man?", *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, Vol. 103, no. 2/3 [2004]).

⁷¹ Gines, *Hannah Arendt and the Negro Question*, p. 55.

⁷² *Ibid*, p. 58.

adults for generations have confessed themselves unable to solve.”⁷³ Drawing a limit between the social realm, to which questions of social rights belong, and the political realm to which questions of political rights are assigned, Arendt problematically maintained that desegregation constituted not a political but a social question. Her argument rests on the conviction that segregation is enforced by politics exceeding its limits. “Segregation is discrimination enforced by law” and therefore, just as segregation should not be a political question, she claims that “desegregation can do no more than abolish laws enforcing discrimination”.⁷⁴ To “do more”, to enforce desegregation by law, would according to her be to preserve the root of the problem, namely politics exceeding its limit.

Gines, however, shows in her book that Arendt’s position with respect to the Little Rock case should instead be seen as reflecting the systematic inability in her works to recognize not the actual, but possible standpoint of the black subject – an inability, Gines demonstrates, which is also systematically tied to the rigid division imposed by Arendt between the social and the political realm.

If truth in Arendt’s writings is developed as both limit and resistance, rather than as a common and unified ground established through agreement, then the example of Little Rock shows that the rigid and problematic distinctions between the private and the public, the social and the political that she imposes cannot be maintained. Which is to say, her own concept of truth requires a more dynamic understanding of the division between the private and the public, the social and the political, than she herself endorsed. As we have seen, facts are repeatedly discussed by her in terms of their resistance, as limit phenomena in the public realm. Although never formulating it in these terms, factual truth-telling seems therefore to concern precisely the limits and borders of this sphere. On the one hand, she suggests that factual truth-telling, under normal circumstances, plays a minor role in politics: “the mere telling of facts, leads to no action whatever; it even tends, under normal circumstances, towards acceptance of things as they are.”⁷⁵ Facts bring stability to the political realm and the mere telling of facts may lead to no action whatever – it contributes to the stability and survival of the political sphere. However, in preserving the limits of this realm she seems to be saying – though never developing this – that it can also lead to

⁷³ Arendt, “Reflections on Little Rock”, p. 204.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 204.

⁷⁵ Arendt, “Truth and Politics”, p. 246.

its conservation and stagnation. On the other hand, she also saw factual truth-telling as vital for establishing and preserving a public space, and sometimes also as itself a form of legitimate political action. As we will discuss in the next section of the chapter, what seems to be at stake in the latter kind of factual truth-telling is more than a single fact. At stake is the very boundaries, and reality of a political realm. Although never developing this version of factual truth-telling beyond any rudimentary remarks, her concept of factual truth nonetheless opens up for discussions about factual truth-telling as a preserving but also a conserving force, as well as something which is indispensable for the public realm and as a method of resistance. The latter can be seen, not simply as a means for strengthening the claims of social groups, but as making possible a transformation of the limit between issues consigned to the private or social sphere, which can perhaps not even be recognized as political, and issues seen as politically relevant. Factual truth-telling of this kind was addressed, although it was never developed in a deeper sense by Arendt, especially with respect to truth-telling in relation to the modern lie.

V. Factual Truth-Telling in Relation to Modern Lying

As we saw in the previous chapter, Arendt stresses the affinity between lying and action, as well as the affinity between lying and fantasy, imagination and the production of images. If truth has to do with the past, the lie is oriented towards the future, as a performative mode of speech which is itself an action: “While the liar is a man of action, the truth-teller, whether he tells a rational or factual truth, most emphatically is not.”⁷⁶ Attempting to change the record of history, the lie is immediately situated on the political scene, but to tell the truth is according to Arendt to assume a different position: it is to point to things as they are, which in itself leads to no actions, but rather tends to preserve the status quo. In relation to the modern lie, however, things are different: in circumstances of organized lying, as opposed to lying with respect to particulars, factual truth-telling can itself become a political factor “of the first order.”⁷⁷

What is at stake in factual truth-telling in situations of organized lying is not a single fact, nor a conflict between different ways of living within a commonly recognized reality. “[T]here is more at stake here than the

⁷⁶ Ibid, p. 245.

⁷⁷ Ibid p. 247.

perhaps inevitable tension between two ways of life within the framework of a common and commonly recognized reality. What is at stake here is this common and factual reality itself".⁷⁸ When that which is at stake is factual reality itself, in its contingency and inherent inconsistency, "the truth-teller, whether he knows it or not, has begun to act; he, too, has engaged himself in political business, for, in the unlikely event that he survives, he has made a start toward changing the world."⁷⁹

What is revealed in this kind of truth-telling are "open secrets", at once known and not known: "The facts I have in mind are publicly known, and yet the same public that knows them can successfully, and often spontaneously, taboo their public discussion and treat them as though they were what they are not – namely secrets."⁸⁰ Facts are treated as secrets, and confined to the private sphere, although publicly known for what they are. In "The Political Function of the Modern Lie", which was discussed in the previous chapter, Alexandre Koyré sees the modern lie as creating "open secrets" at once known and not known. The version of modern lying discussed by Arendt in "Truth and Politics" is primarily the non-totalitarian type of lying that appear in contemporary democracies, yet it also has the structure of publicly known secrets. This version of lying can arise as an organized, intentional form of lying, but it also tends to develop into more or less unconscious forms of self-deception and denial, where the lie is both known and not known.

Daniel Ellsberg's revelation of the "Pentagon Papers", about which Arendt comments in "Lying in Politics", was the paradoxical revelation of something that was widely known, and not even tabooed in public discussion: "What calls for further close and detailed study is the fact, much commented on, that the Pentagon Papers revealed little significant news".⁸¹ The content of what was revealed had been available in the press for a long time, it had "been debated publicly for years" in the media, yet the exposure of the documents was a shock to the public.⁸²

In her essay on the modern political lie, Cathy Caruth points out that Ellsberg himself described his whistle blowing as the exposure of an "enigma".⁸³ According to her, this kind of witnessing "forgoes the possibility

⁷⁸ Ibid, p. 232.

⁷⁹ Ibid, p. 247.

⁸⁰ Ibid, p. 232.

⁸¹ Arendt, "Lying in Politics", p. 45.

⁸² Ibid, p. 45.

⁸³ Caruth, "Lying and History", p. 92.

of straightforward truth-telling [...] what occurs here is not the telling of truth [...] but the testimony to erasure”.⁸⁴ The enigma to which Ellsberg testified, at least as I interpret her comment, was the enigma of the lie’s erasure – i.e. it was a testimony to the erasure of factuality itself, and with it also the political sphere, as well as the lie’s own reference to reality and truth. Interestingly, Caruth traces the invention of the modern political lie back to processes of denial in relation to World War I, indicating that the lie can be seen as a radical form of denial of reality linked to collective historical trauma.

Arendt, however, had a somewhat different take on witnessing in relation to modern lying: she clearly understood it as straightforward truth-telling, but of a special kind. According to her, it is a particularly difficult form of truth-telling precisely since it exposes facts that are already known – facts that in the public, political sphere are kept outside of it, in a complicated process where they can at once be openly acknowledged and denied, to the point of erasure. The camps in totalitarian systems are an example she comes back to – according to her, they were at least to some extent known by the public, but tabooed.⁸⁵ In the case of the Vietnam war, it is the methods of the war itself, she seems to be saying, that while known and debated, were effectively preserved as an open secret. Within the world of the lie, a secret outside is created, one that at once is known and not known: it is the open secrets of such outsides, paradoxically appearing as the inside of the lie, that truth-telling in relation to the lie can be said to expose. What is at stake in this kind of truth-telling is not a single fact, but a web of denied facts. Moreover, it discloses the very limits of the public, political realm, and the kind of realities that can be acknowledged and recognized in this sphere.

In “Truth and Politics” she describes the difficulties in this kind of testimony. Since lying is intimately connected to political action, it requires no accommodation within the political realm. Taking advantage of “the undeniable affinity of our capacity for action, for changing reality, with this mysterious faculty of ours that enables us to say, ‘The sun is shining’, when it is raining cats and dogs”, the liar “is an actor by nature”.⁸⁶ As such he is immediately situated on the political scene: he “needs no [...] accommodation to appear on the political scene; he has the great advantage that

⁸⁴ Ibid, p. 92.

⁸⁵ Arendt, “Truth and Politics”, p. 232.

⁸⁶ Ibid, p. 246.

he always is, so to speak, already in the midst of it.”⁸⁷ To tell the truth, however, is to assume a different position: it is “to take one’s stand outside the political realm.”⁸⁸ Her point is not that the teller of factual truth speaks from a pure position, somewhere beyond the public realm, but that, taking up a place *within* this sphere, he assumes “the position of the outsider”.⁸⁹ In the public realm, he appears in an outside position with respect to politics: this “is the standpoint of the truth-teller, who forfeits his position – and, with it, the validity of what he has to say – if he tries to interfere directly in human affairs and to speak the language of persuasion or violence.”⁹⁰ It is precisely the double aspect of this position – namely, to come forward as an outsider within the political sphere – that makes truth-telling complicated. It requires a difficult accommodation with the political realm, difficulties that the liar does not experience. Nonetheless, it is within this realm that truth must be told, established and acknowledged. The fragile, but indispensable resistance that factual truth introduces in the political sphere is destroyed if it is spoken in the language of violence, used to persuade or authorize direct, political interference. The position of the truth-teller thus corresponds to the location of factual truth within the political realm.

However, there is also another difficulty in factual truth-telling with respect to the lie. The facts that are revealed are contingent, never self-evident, and they have no necessary, internal consistency. They break with the fictive logicity of the lie – which is why the lie, Arendt explains, tends to have plausibility on its side. It will appear more logical since

the element of unexpectedness – one of the outstanding characteristics of all events – have mercifully disappeared. It is not only rational truth that, in the Hegelian phrase, stands common sense on its head; reality quite frequently offends the soundness of common sense reasoning no less than it offers profit and pleasure.⁹¹

The problem is “not that the lies will now be accepted as truth, and the truth be defamed as lies, but that the sense by which we take our bearings in the real world – and the category of truth vs. falsehood is among the mental means to this end – is being destroyed.”⁹² Replacing the texture of reality for

⁸⁷ Ibid, p. 246.

⁸⁸ Ibid, p. 255.

⁸⁹ Ibid, p. 255.

⁹⁰ Ibid, p. 255.

⁹¹ Ibid, p. 247.

⁹² Ibid, p. 252.

a fictive logicity, the lie destroys both the sense of truth in political contexts and the ability to detect and recognize facts – a form of truth that is not absolute but contingent, that has no internal necessity and that, as we have seen, occupies an ambiguous rather than univocal location in the political realm.

Factual truth-telling in relation to the lie is therefore different from rational debates about the truth of single statements that Arendt saw as “senseless” with respect to the modern lie. With regards to the lie, Arendt suggests that factual truth-telling is a political action. What is at stake in this kind of truth-telling is factuality itself and the very presence of a political realm. Her own reports from the Eichmann trial can be seen as an example of this kind of truth-telling. She describes the reports as factual reports, for instance in the essay “Personal Responsibility under Dictatorship”: “I had pointed to a fact which I felt was shocking [...] to something true but not plausible.”⁹³ In a letter to Karl Jaspers she wrote that she had told the truth “on a factual level”.⁹⁴ Rather than revealing a single fact, however, the reports concerned the web of facts disclosed in the trial – facts that were not always internally consistent, did not comply with the defense of Eichmann as a mere “cog” in a bureaucratic machinery, nor with the image of his evil as radical and monstrous, nor for that matter with Gurion’s attempts to turn the trial into a state-grounding spectacle. What her reports exposed was in that sense the limits of the political realm – that is, the limits regarding what kind of realities could at all be recognized and acknowledged.⁹⁵

This is interesting in relation to the rigid distinction she draws between the public and the private, the social the political realm. According to Bonnie Honig, Arendt’s attempt to ontologically “secure” a distinction between the private and the public is an “antipolitical impulse”.⁹⁶ Honig suggests that distinctions between the public and the private should instead be seen as the result of sedimented actions, behavior, ideology, social and political institutions and power struggle. Political questioning, then, is a struggle about such distinctions and about what kind of questions that can

⁹³ Arendt, “Personal Responsibility under Dictatorship”, p. 18.

⁹⁴ Hannah Arendt and Karl Jaspers, *Hannah Arendt – Karl Jaspers: Correspondence* (San Diego/New York/London: Harcourt Brace, 1992), p. 148.

⁹⁵ In “Reporting and Story-telling”, Annabel Herzog argues that Arendt’s reports from Eichmann’s trial can be seen as a form of factual truth-telling. What Arendt testified to in her reports, Herzog says, was a political space that was destroyed; she was thus writing for the future rebuilding of this space. (Herzog, “Reporting and Story-telling”, p. 92.)

⁹⁶ Honig, *Political Theory and the Displacement of Politics*, p. 122.

at all be recognized as political questions.⁹⁷ Jacques Rancière makes a similar claim in his critique of Arendt, maintaining that her distinction between the public and the private, the social and the political is antipolitical. What Arendt thereby prevents is politicization of the border itself. “Politics is about that border.”⁹⁸ He sees few resources in Arendt to develop the distinctions between the public and the private, the social and the political in this direction; that is, as borders that are the contingent result of sedimentation and political decisions, and therefore can be politicized and contested.

However, a more nuanced reading of Arendt is possible, and here her discussion of truth is highly relevant. Rancière criticizes her treatment of the Declaration of the Rights of Man in *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, where she claims that the problem of human rights is that they are enjoyed by citizens in nation states, but not by the “stateless”, such as refugees, most in need of them.⁹⁹ Rancière’s argument builds on the assumption that she sees the former as political subjects, situated in a political realm, while the latter are condemned to fall outside of this realm. While this is not an assumption she makes, according to him, Arendt ends up depoliticizing subjects that are inscribed in the Rights of Man though not in possession of right. She thereby, according to Rancière, prevents an understanding of the Rights of Man as “the rights of those who make something of that inscription, who decide not only to ‘use’ their rights but also to build such and such a case for the verification of the power of that inscription.”¹⁰⁰

To build a case for the verification of the power of the inscription of right in subjects for whom the law had been suspended is in fact precisely what Arendt can herself be seen as doing in her reports from the trial of Eichmann. They are factual reports that reveal a web of denied facts that were not even recognized as factual truths in the political realm. What was at stake in her reports was the very limits of the political sphere. At the same time, her reports were factual, verifying the power of the inscription of law, both with respect to the victims, as well as with respect to Eichmann who stood trial and who she wanted to see convicted. And yet, to build a factual case for desegregation as a political issue is precisely what she refused to do in the Little Rock case, insisting that the matter of racial segregation in the

⁹⁷ Ibid, p. 115-125.

⁹⁸ Rancière, “Who Is the Subject of the Rights of Man?”, p. 303.

⁹⁹ Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, p. 279-280.

¹⁰⁰ Rancière, “Who Is the Subject of the Rights of Man?”, p. 303.

U.S was a social rather than political question, by referring to the difference between the social and the political more or less as an a priori given.¹⁰¹

VI. Philosophical Truth

The idea of philosophical truth in Arendt is also interesting with respect to the borders of the political sphere. Here her understanding of the border seems to be dynamic in kind even though at the same time the idea of philosophical truth can be harnessed to challenge aspects of her own thought. Although the weight she placed on factual truth has garnered considerable attention in commentaries, there are also remarks in the literature about her views on philosophical truth. The general focus on this particular topic, however, has been the role that philosophical truth plays in circumscribing one's perspective on the world, improving judgment and establishing a common world between a plurality of citizens.¹⁰² Much, though, is left to explore in this area of her thinking, once philosophical truth is seen not as revealing the ground of the political realm, but as introducing a limit and tension within politics itself.

Arendt's treatment of philosophical truth goes back to a line of thought already present in *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. Thus far, I have discussed how, in totalitarian societies, the replacement of the "space between" destroys the factual fabric. However, Arendt also claimed that the possibility of solitude is erased in this process. After *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, she developed solitude in relation to the disclosure of philosophical truths, as discussed with respect to the historical figure of Socrates. If facts are revealed in actions and interactions with the world, philosophical truths are revealed by virtue of thinking's withdrawal into solitude – which is not necessarily the position of a contemplative subject, located somewhere beyond the political realm.

¹⁰¹ For further discussion about Arendt and the Declaration of the Rights of Man, see Peg Birmingham, *Hannah Arendt and Human Rights*. According to Birmingham, Arendt worked out a reformulation of the modern notion of human rights, rooted in the event of natality and not in nature. Since the event of natality according to Birmingham should be seen as uniting the private and the public realm, it is a formulation of human rights precisely as the right to *have* rights, i.e., to build a case for the verification of the power of the inscription of right.

¹⁰² Pashkova and Pashkov, "Truth and Truthfulness in Politics", p. 450-458; Zerilli, "Truth and Politics", § 36-37; Barash, "The Political Dimension of the Public World", p. 263; Villa, *Politics, Philosophy, Terror*, p. 207-208; Taminioux, *The Thracian Maid and the Professional Thinker*, p. 177-178.

In “Ideology and Terror”, the last chapter of *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, Arendt distinguishes between isolation, loneliness and solitude – none of which are psychological concepts, but refer to the position of an acting, speaking and thinking subject with respect to the political realm. Isolation is defined as “that impasse into which men are driven when the political sphere of their lives, where they act together in the pursuit of a common concern, is destroyed.”¹⁰³ Action is according to Arendt afforded reality in contact with others and isolation, therefore, refers to a subject whose political reality is destroyed. Solitude is not isolation, but a positive concept in her works, distinguished from isolation and loneliness. It refers to the position not of an acting but thinking subject with respect to the political realm. She develops its meaning through Epictetus’ distinction between the solitary and the lonely man. Whereas the lonely man is surrounded by others with whom he cannot establish contact, the solitary man is alone and therefore in the company of himself. In solitude a split is revealed: the solitary man is “two-in-one” – and thinking is the inner dialogue between them, through which contact is established with this split. According to Arendt solitude is not loneliness, rather it is a position through which thinking *belongs* to the communal world.¹⁰⁴

The concept of solitude is introduced earlier in *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, in a discussion about Proust. Here it is described as the position of “an outsider”,¹⁰⁵ in contrast to the lonely man who has lost contact with society. Writing *In Search of Lost Time*, Proust retired into “mute and uncommunicable solitude”.¹⁰⁶ He was born as a writer “on the fringe” of society “but still rightfully belonging to it though an outsider”.¹⁰⁷ In his solitude, the world which lays between men is transformed into inner experience – an experience in which the communal world and its members are revealed. His solitude “became like a mirror in whose reflection truth might appear.”¹⁰⁸ Thus, solitude, as Arendt defines it, is not withdrawal to a realm beyond or above the political sphere: it is an outsider position within it, a position through which truths about this realm itself are revealed.

By erasing the space between men, she argues in the last chapter of *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, totalitarian politics replaces this position for an

¹⁰³ Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, p. 474.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid*, p. 476.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid*, p. 80.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid*, p. 80.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid*, p. 80.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid*, p. 80.

“organized loneliness”.¹⁰⁹ “By destroying all space between men and pressing men against each other, even the productive potentialities of isolation are annihilated”.¹¹⁰ Like all tyrannies, totalitarianism isolates citizens and destroys their political reality. The precise novelty of totalitarian organization, though, is that it reaches into the private sphere as well. As Arendt writes:

[T]otalitarian domination as a form of government is new in that it is not content with this isolation and destroys private life as well. It bases itself on loneliness, on the experience of not belonging to the world at all, which is among the most radical and desperate experiences of man.¹¹¹

If isolation refers to a subject whose political reality is annihilated, then loneliness extends into the private life of citizens, understood by her as the part of life withdrawn from the public, political realm. “While isolation concerns only the political realm of life, loneliness concerns human life as a whole.”¹¹² In reaching into the private sphere – the sphere of the family and household, for Arendt – totalitarianism oversteps what she sees as the limits of politics. In this situation, “the slim chances that loneliness may be transformed into solitude and logic into thought are obliterated.”¹¹³ The primary concern of totalitarian mass movements, she comments in “Philosophy and Politics”, “is to eliminate all possibility of solitude – except in the non-human form of solitary confinement”.¹¹⁴

Subsequent to *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, Arendt developed the concept of solitude in her interpretations of Socrates, in relation to the revelation of philosophical truths. Her interpretations of Socrates are not necessarily part of an attempt to restore the limits of politics that totalitarianism traversed. Solitude can instead be interpreted as a form of withdrawal, though not a withdrawal into privacy but developed – in line with her view on facts – as a *limit phenomenon*. If totalitarianism politicizes the outside of politics, or what Arendt describes as the part of life withdrawn from the political sphere, her return to Socrates can be seen as the return to a figure whose withdrawal from politics established an outside *within* the public, political sphere.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, p. 478.

¹¹⁰ Ibid, p. 478.

¹¹¹ Ibid, p. 475.

¹¹² Ibid, p. 475.

¹¹³ Ibid, p. 478.

¹¹⁴ Arendt, “Philosophy and Politics”, p. 90.

In “Philosophy and Politics”, Arendt’s lecture on Socrates from 1954, solitude refers to Socrates’ position in the public sphere – a position that also reflects his understanding of truth. According to her, his position was precisely at stake during his trial. After the trial “[t]he Socratic position was lost [...], not because Socrates did not leave any writings behind or because Plato willfully distorted him, but because the Socratic insights, born out of a still-intact relationship to politics *and* the specifically philosophic experience, was lost.”¹¹⁵ When the city condemned him, Plato lost trust in *polis* life and Socrates’ problem, “of how man, if he is to live in a *polis*, can live outside of politics”, was transformed.¹¹⁶ This problem, “in what sometimes seems a strange resemblance to our own times very quickly became the question of how it is possible to live without belonging to any polity – that is, in the condition of apolity.”¹¹⁷

To Socrates, the problem of how to live outside of politics was never, she maintains, a question of how to live without belonging to any polity. In the *Apology* Socrates states that he refused public office: “rest assured, Athenians, that if I had tried long ago to participate in politics, I would long ago have been dead, and unable to help you or indeed myself”.¹¹⁸ According to Arendt, however, he saw his refusal as in the best interest of the city: what he wanted was “not to play a political role – but to make philosophy relevant to politics.”¹¹⁹ He insisted on a *difference* between philosophy and politics but saw this difference as that through which philosophical truths are revealed and philosophy contributes to the political realm. For him, to live outside of politics was not a question of how to live outside a public realm, but the problem of taking up an awkward position within it.

Arendt’s own insistence on a difference between philosophical thinking and political action has sometimes been taken to reflect her inability to give up the idea that thinking is a contemplative activity, withdrawn from the world of men. Consequently, Dana Villa argues, there is a problematic tendency in the reception of Arendt to search for a missing “link” in her thought that will finally bridge this gap – a link that would provide “the

¹¹⁵ Ibid, p. 101.

¹¹⁶ Hannah Arendt, “Socrates”, p. 5 in Hannah Arendt, *The Promise of Politics*, ed. Jerome Kohn (New York: Schocken Books, 2005). The essay “Socrates” is a revised version of “Philosophy and Politics”.

¹¹⁷ Ibid, p. 5.

¹¹⁸ Plato, *Apology* in *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*, ed. Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 31d-e.

¹¹⁹ Arendt, “Philosophy and Politics”, p. 91.

crowning synthetic moment of her political philosophy, the moment in which the gap between thinking and acting is finally overcome".¹²⁰ Her interpretations of Socrates, however, makes clear that she sees Socrates as a figure who inserts a difference between philosophical thinking and political action – a difference which according to her is relevant to politics. It is a difference that must search for its reality *in* the political realm. In that sense philosophical thinking is precisely not a contemplative activity, isolated from the world of men: it belongs to the political realm through the difference it inserts.

In his work on method in Arendt, Steve Buckler formulates the meaning of withdrawal in Arendt in a precise way. Withdrawal, he says, "owes its intellectual substance to its roots in the realm of appearances rather than to supposed access to a deeper truth beyond that realm."¹²¹ That Arendt emphasizes thinking as an experience, should according to him be seen in this context. Thinking always involves withdrawal, but not into a realm of special and exclusive insight beyond the plurality of the experienceable world. It "remains rooted in concrete and common experience, to which we all have access."¹²²

According to Arendt's narrative, the death of Socrates led to a decisive shift in how philosophy and politics became related to one another, with implications for the practice and meaning of withdrawal in the Western tradition. After his death, philosophy's withdrawal from politics assumed the meaning of *apoliteia*: "only through the famous *apoliteia*, the indifference and contempt for the world of the city, so characteristic of all post-Platonic philosophy, could the philosopher protect himself against the suspicions and hostilities of the world around him."¹²³ Whereas Socrates refused to escape when sentenced to death, Aristotle, when faced with a similar threat, "left Athens immediately and without any compunction."¹²⁴ From then on, "[t]he only thing that philosophers [...] wanted with respect to politics was to be left alone; and the only thing they demanded from government was protection for their freedom to think."¹²⁵

¹²⁰ Dana Villa, "Thinking and Judging" in Dana Villa, *Politics, Philosophy, Terror: Essays on the Thought of Hannah Arendt*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), p. 88.

¹²¹ Buckler, *Hannah Arendt and Political Theory*, p. 25.

¹²² *Ibid*, p. 24.

¹²³ Arendt, "Philosophy and Politics", p. 91.

¹²⁴ *Ibid*, p. 91.

¹²⁵ *Ibid*, p. 92.

Her account of this shift is sweeping and thereby far from unproblematic – my point here, however, is not to suggest that her historical narrative is correct, though nor will I here go into details about where it may be historically problematic. In her essay on Walter Benjamin, Arendt suggests that Benjamin saw history as the crystallization of a plurality of fragments. His approach to history was to wrest small fragments from their historical context: released from their context and lifted into the present they appear as anachronisms that introduce a gap between the past and the future. Her own discussion of Socrates' death can be seen in light of this view of history: while itself a fragment, which to a certain degree is Arendt's own narrative construction, it opens up a gap between past and future where a new beginning can become possible.¹²⁶ Her account of Socrates' death is part of her demonstration that philosophy's withdrawal from politics has a history, that it has not been historically constant, but has assumed different forms. In this development, Socrates' position was forgotten, according to her, and with it also his notion of truth, which Plato is meant to have put in question after the trial. "In the process of reasoning out the implications of Socrates' trial, Plato arrived [...] at his concept of truth".¹²⁷ As we saw in the previous chapter, she interprets Plato's concept of truth as opposed to opinion: "The opposition of truth and opinion was certainly the most anti-Socratic conclusion that Plato drew from Socrates' trial."¹²⁸ According to her, Socrates did not see the difference between truth and *doxa* as absolute nor was this difference understood as an opposition – which is not to say that he did not understand it in terms of a tension.

Socrates, she says, was accredited the wisest by the Delphic oracle because

he had accepted the limitations of truth for mortals, its limitations through *dokein*, appearances, and because he at the same time, in opposition to the Sophists, had discovered that *doxa* was neither subjective illusion nor arbitrary distortion but, on the contrary, that to which truth invariably adhere.¹²⁹

¹²⁶ Hannah Arendt, "Walter Benjamin: 1892–1940", trans. Harry Zohn, in Hannah Arendt, *Men in Dark Times* (New York: Harvest Books, 1968), p. 199–206. For a recent discussion about the concept of anachronism and anachronistic imageries in Arendt, see Frida Buhre, *Speaking Other Times: Hannah Arendt and the Temporality of Politics*.

¹²⁷ Arendt, "Philosophy and Politics", p. 79.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 75.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

What Socrates accepted was that truth is dependent on appearances, and therefore that absolute truth, which is unrelated and independent of beings, cannot exist for mortals.¹³⁰ Her point is not that truth is arbitrary or subjective, but that disclosure depends on beings that appear from non-being to being. As such, truth adheres to *doxa*, where the latter is understood as the formulation in speech of the world as it opens up according to each citizen's position within it. "[E]very *doxa* depends and corresponds to one's position in the world".¹³¹ Truth, in the sense of disclosure or revelation, was seen by Socrates as *inherent* in each citizen's *doxa*: it was the moment when the world which lay between men, at once known and not known, was revealed.

She describes Socrates' view on truth in "Philosophy and Politics" as relational – truth is revealed in the interaction between a plurality of citizens, as well as between the plurality of realities that open themselves up to the citizens. "[J]ust as nobody can know beforehand the other's *doxa*, so nobody can know by himself and without further effort the inherent truth of his own opinion."¹³² The movement of disclosure has no central agent, truth is revealed in the "between" of a plurality of citizens and a heterogenic world. It is therefore dependent on the *polis* as the space of "the many". Socrates was accredited the wisest by the oracle since he knew that he could not beforehand know his truths – they flashed forth in the *polis*, in his interaction with citizens and the realities revealed in their *doxa*. He was thus dependent on this plurality, a dependency reflected in the similes of gadfly, electric fish and midwife, attributed to him.

The paralyzing effect of the electric fish, Arendt explains when she returns to Socrates in the late essay "Thinking and Moral Considerations", is reflected in thinking as an interruption of action and activities.¹³³ Whereas the fish paralyzes, she comments, the gadfly arouses.¹³⁴ In the *Apology*, Socrates suggests that the city is like "a large thoroughbred horse which because of its great size is inclined to be lazy and needs the stimulation of some stinging fly. It seems to me that God has attached me to this city to perform the office of such a fly".¹³⁵ If the electric fish interrupts action and activities, the gadfly awakens thinking. The function of the Greek midwife,

¹³⁰ Ibid, p. 84.

¹³¹ Ibid, p. 94.

¹³² Ibid, p. 81.

¹³³ Hannah Arendt, "Thinking and Moral Considerations" in *Social Research* 38:3 (1971), p. 434.

¹³⁴ Ibid, p. 433

¹³⁵ Plato, *Apology*, 30e.

finally, was to assist in the delivery of other's children, and to decide whether the child was dead or alive.¹³⁶

Although she does not use this word, she interprets the similes as describing Socrates' presence in the *polis*, not as that of an educator or leader, but as a form of resistance through which the truths about this realm are revealed. Returning to Socrates in her lectures on Kant's political philosophy, she suggests that critical thinking according to Socrates meant exposing oneself to a "test".¹³⁷ In his last lecture course on truth and truth-telling in antiquity, Foucault – to whom we will return towards the end of the chapter – makes a similar point, commenting on Socrates as a touchstone, *basanos*. Confronting him the citizens "rub" against him, thereby submitting their lives to a test, enabling them to disclose and speak the truth.¹³⁸

In comparison to Heidegger, who sees the public world in *Being and Time* as blocking access to truth in its originary and authentic sense, Arendt thus understands the public space of the *polis* in Athens as structured by a plurality of agents, required for truth to be revealed. The *polis*, as the space between citizens, is revealed in the interaction between them. In Chapter 2 we saw that what Heidegger conceives as the inauthentic criteria of truth as universal validity is an effect of the fallen spatiality and temporality of the public world. The criterion of truth as universal validity, *Allgemeingültigkeit*, has its roots in this structure, which places objects and relations in a uniform availability to everyone, described as an infinitely extended durability. In contrast, in order for it to appear, Arendt interprets truth in Socrates as requiring a public world sustained through plurality, precisely since truth is *not* absolute or uniformly available, but dependent on beings – which is not to say that it is subjective or arbitrary.

At the same time, however, the *polis* is said to be a human "artifact" whose durability also depends on truth. It affords reality, in the sense of mortal endurance and permanence, to beings – but as such its own durability is not given. It depends, she suggests in "Truth and Politics", on truth-telling:

What is at stake is survival, the perseverance in existence (*in suo esse perseverare*), and no human world destined to outlast the short life span of mortals within it will ever be able to survive without men willing to do

¹³⁶ Arendt, "Thinking and Moral Considerations", p. 432.

¹³⁷ Hannah Arendt, *Lectures on Kant's Political Philosophy* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2014. E-book.), p. 44, 47.

¹³⁸ Foucault, *The Courage of the Truth*, p. 84, 145, 153.

what Herodotus was the first to undertake consciously – namely *legein ta eonta*, to say what is. No permanence, no perseverance in existence, can even be conceived of without men willing to testify to what is and appears to them because it is.¹³⁹

Herodotus' truth-telling is a kind of factual truth-telling, but according to Arendt the public, political realm is dependent on *both* factual and philosophical truth-telling for its survival. In "Philosophy and Politics" the circular relation of mutual dependency – that truth is dependent on the *polis* for its reality and that the *polis* is dependent on truth-telling for its durability – confronts Socrates with a twofold conflict for which there is no solution. What he was confronted with was the problem of how philosophical truths can be communicated *in* the public realm, and in relation to politics, which is the only sphere in which they can "test" their reality. How can truths be told in the political realm, without being perverted, when they require withdrawal from this sphere? The other side of this conflict is that when communicated, philosophical truths introduce a tension – a tension which is indispensable for the survival of the political sphere, but it can also destroy the political reality of citizens, and even the public, political realm itself. "This, you will remember, is what happened to King Oedipus, whose whole world, the reality of his kingship, went to pieces when he began looking into it. [...] Truth, therefore, can destroy *doxa*, it can destroy the political reality of the citizens."¹⁴⁰

Arendt's claim that truth is inherent in *doxa* can be taken to mean that in every citizen's *doxa* there is a true perspective on the same, common world, which can be arrived at if prejudices are exposed and eliminated in rational dialogue and debate. However, there is something more at stake in the disclosure of philosophical truth. She often stresses philosophical truth as an experience, it is "the specifically philosophical experience".¹⁴¹ Such an experience is no more self-evident than factual truth, but just like factual truth it carries "an element of coercion"¹⁴² that can be distorted and perverted:

¹³⁹ Arendt, "Truth and Politics", p. 225.

¹⁴⁰ Arendt, "Philosophy and Politics", p. 90. Foucault also commented on Sophocles' *King Oedipus*, in several of his works. In *Government of Self and Others*, he too interprets it as a drama on truth and truth-telling: it is a "play of truth-telling, of the unveiling of the truth, of the dramatics of truth-telling, or, if you like, of alethurgy." (Foucault, *Government of Self and Others*, p. 83). Like Arendt, he sees it, in this lecture, as a play where the gradual unveiling of truth destroys the political reality of Oedipus' kingdom.

¹⁴¹ Arendt, "Truth and Politics", p. 239.

¹⁴² *Ibid*, p. 242.

Since [...] philosophical truth carries within itself an element of coercion, it may tempt the statesman under certain conditions [...]. Thus, in the Declaration of Independence, Jefferson declared certain ‘truths to be self-evident’, because he wished to put the basic consent among the men of the Revolution beyond dispute and argument; like mathematical axioms, they should express ‘beliefs of men’ that ‘depend not on their own will, but follow involuntarily the evidence proposed to their minds.’ Yet by saying ‘We hold these truths to be self-evident’, he conceded, albeit without becoming aware of it, that the statement ‘All men are created equal’ is not self-evident but stands in need of agreement and consent – that equality, if it is to be politically relevant, is a matter of opinion, and not ‘the truth’.¹⁴³

Philosophical truth is not a statement – the statement “All men are created equal” is not a philosophical truth, but an opinion. The declaration “All men are created equal” has a performative element: it is not self-evident, but if “held” as self-evident it can be realized, as a political and revolutionary beginning of something new. Philosophical truth, however, is not an expression of freedom in this sense. Nor is factual and philosophical truth-telling performative in the way opinions and actions can be. She thus makes a distinction between opinions, which are not simply constative but performative, and truth. Philosophical truth can inspire action, in the sense of beginning, but it is not *itself* a beginning. Like factual truth it introduces a tension and limit within performative utterances, as well as the actions of beginning.

How, then, is philosophical truth to be understood? She gives several examples of factual truth, but not so in the case of philosophical truth. She describes it as a “border line experience”¹⁴⁴ and as we saw she claims that Proust’s solitude was an experience “on the fringe”¹⁴⁵ of society. Philosophical truths, she also maintains, are not “above” but “between men”.¹⁴⁶ They disclose something unthought between men that perhaps also, for various reasons, *cannot* be experienced or thought. What they can be seen as revealing are not subjective limitations or prejudices that can be removed, nor is philosophical truth the inner core in *doxa*, arrived at when prejudices are exposed. Philosophical truth reveals aspects of the political realm *itself*. As an experience on the borders of the political sphere, philosophical truth can be seen as disclosing the limits of the political sphere

¹⁴³ Ibid, p. 242.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid, p. 244.

¹⁴⁵ Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, p. 80.

¹⁴⁶ Arendt, “Truth and Politics”, p. 242.

itself – limits that are present, in various ways, in each of the citizens' *doxa*. This is why the experience of philosophical truth is one of disorientation – and sometimes in a brutal sense, as in the case of Oedipus who spent the rest of his life blind and disoriented. As related earlier, in *The Origins of Totalitarianism* Arendt discusses solitude in relation to Proust's *In Search of Lost Time*. In Proust we see how the limits of the political realm appear in a variety of ways, depending on each of the citizen's position in the world. Although sharing one another's world, the protagonist Marcel is also excluded from his lover Albertine's world – the limits that apply to him are not applicable to her. If factual truth is valid for all men, this is not so in the case of philosophical truth, repeatedly stressed by Arendt as concerning man "in his singularity",¹⁴⁷ which is not to say that it is arbitrary or subjective. The plural limits of the political sphere, which are not subjective, appear and apply differently depending on each of the citizen's positions.

Enaudeau makes an important observation, pointing out that in revealing the truth in *doxa*, Arendt's Socrates shows "which world emerges from each opinion, from each principle of action."¹⁴⁸ The "moving principles", discussed by Birmingham in her study of Arendt as unfolding from the event of natality,¹⁴⁹ are thus present in each *doxa*. To Arendt, not only action, but also opinions are performative; the "moving principles" are inherent in them. According to Enaudeau, Socrates' task was to establish which principle of movement was just and true. This, however, does not seem to account for his outside position in relation to politics, nor that both philosophical and factual truth are developed by Arendt as limit with respect to actions and opinions. A different way to understand his position is that he reveals the limits of the political realm as this realm unfolds, in a variety of ways, from each citizens' *doxa*, thereby establishing a break with politics – a break, however, which is constitutive for beginnings.

This is the reason for why he was confronted with a conflict that had no solution. Although revealed in solitude and addressed to man in his singularity, philosophical truth must still be asserted and acknowledged within the political realm. According to Arendt, Socrates was confronted with a two-fold conflict that bears some resemblance to the problem of accommodation facing the teller of factual truth in situations of modern lying, described in "Truth and Politics". What he was confronted with was

¹⁴⁷ Arendt, "Truth and Politics", p. 241; Arendt, "Philosophy and Politics", p. 100.

¹⁴⁸ Enaudeau, "Hannah Arendt: Politics, Opinion, Truth", p. 1039.

¹⁴⁹ Birmingham, *Hannah Arendt and Human Rights*, p. 12.

the question of how philosophical truths can be communicated in the political realm, without destroying the tension they insert, and without violating the political realm. Jacques Taminiaux formulates this conflict in a precise way when suggesting that Arendt's Socrates "functions as a revealing agent of the essential fragility of the public world of action."¹⁵⁰

VII. Philosophical Truth-Telling as Demonstration

In order to further develop the twofold conflict with which Socrates was confronted, it is important to remember that philosophical truth is an experience. "[I]t is this relation to a concrete and unique experience which marked off the Socratic school from all former philosophies."¹⁵¹ Disclosure was experienced as speechless shocks and a loss of orientation and position that placed its subject "outside of the political realm in which the highest faculty of man is, precisely, speech – *logon echon* is what makes man a *zoon politikon*, a political being."¹⁵²

Arendt interprets Plato's cave allegory as offering an account of this experience. Ascending to the outside world, each movement is "accompanied by a loss of sense and orientation."¹⁵³ However, a loss of orientation also befalls those returning to the cave: "they can no longer see in the darkness of the cave, they have lost their sense of orientation, they have lost what we would call their common sense."¹⁵⁴ Trying to tell the others what he has seen, the returning cave dweller "has lost the common sense needed to orient himself in a world common to all, and, moreover [...] what he harbors in his thought contradicts the common sense of the world."¹⁵⁵

Here it becomes clear that she interprets the allegory of the cave in a quite different way from Heidegger. Heidegger defines truth in his interpretations of the allegory in *The Essence of Truth* and *Being and Truth* as a world-historical struggle between forces of concealment and unconcealment. He sees the allegory not only as testifying to a period before this conflict was forgotten, but as providing a key to the "fundamental experience" of truth as the people's origin. Returning from the outside world to his

¹⁵⁰ Taminiaux, *The Thracian Maid and the Professional Thinker*, p. 177-178.

¹⁵¹ Arendt, "Philosophy and Politics", p. 98.

¹⁵² *Ibid* p. 99-100.

¹⁵³ *Ibid*, p. 95.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid*, p. 95.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid*, p. 95.

fellows on the bottom of the cave, the liberated cave dweller is confronted with questions of grounding, leading and awakening a people.

For Arendt, on the other hand, what the returning cave dweller is confronted with is something else: he is faced with the two-fold problem of accommodation and communication for which no solution is admitted. On the one hand, the political realm is the sphere where philosophical truths must be communicated and acknowledged, though when communicated there they are in conflict with common sense. On the other hand, the other side of this conflict is that the political realm is dependent for its survival on truth, even though truth can itself destroy the reality of this sphere.

In "Philosophy and Politics" Arendt defines common sense not as the expression of an "everyday" mode of disclosure, encompassing the whole of beings in a way that determines how they are uncovered and interpreted. Common sense is, rather regarded as the "sixth sense that we not only all have in common but which fits us into, and thereby makes possible, a common world."¹⁵⁶ A few years later, in *The Human Condition*, it is discussed as the sense that unites the other five senses in disclosure of reality:

[I]t is the one sense that fits into reality as a whole our five strictly individual senses and the strictly particular data they perceive. It is by virtue of common sense that the other sense perceptions are known to disclose reality and are not merely felt as irritations of our nerves or resistance sensations of our bodies.¹⁵⁷

It is the sense that "fit man into the reality that surrounds him".¹⁵⁸ She contrasts common sense to the modern conception of a shared faculty of sensibility, "called common merely because it happened to be common to all."¹⁵⁹ In his discussion of truth in Arendt, Barash maintains that common sense makes a common, public world available. It therefore also makes "possible for our opinions to pass beyond the limits of a particular viewpoint to encompass the viewpoint of others."¹⁶⁰ Common sense allows for "opinions to move beyond the horizon of purely personal interests to rise to the level of an 'impersonal generality'", required for the ability to judge according to the criteria of objectivity and impartiality.¹⁶¹ In so far as philo-

¹⁵⁶ Ibid, p. 100.

¹⁵⁷ Arendt, *The Human Condition*, p. 159.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid, p. 205.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid, p. 211.

¹⁶⁰ Barash, "The Political Dimension of the Public World", p. 263.

¹⁶¹ Ibid, p. 263.

sophical thinking facilitates common sense it thus makes judgment not based on prejudice possible, according to him.

Sjöholm suggests that Arendt held a conception of common sense as a shared ground of agreement in her early works, for instance in *The Human Condition*, where it is seen as growing out of a plurality of narratives and forms of storytelling, ensuring that the perceived world is real. Later, in *The Life of the Mind*¹⁶², the sixth sense is laid out as *sensus communis* and understood as a sense of realness, emerging not simply through agreement, but also through provocation and disturbance as the sensing of a multi-faceted reality.¹⁶³

Arendt often made comments, throughout her works, that sustain an interpretation of common sense as disclosure of a shared world, established through agreement, thereby making impartiality in the sense suggested by Barash possible. In the essay on Lessing in *Men in Dark Times*, she for instance praises Lessing as a revolutionary thinker, constantly prepared to question “the best-known truths”, only to state in the next sentence that

The ‘pillars of the best-known truths’ (to stay with this metaphor), which at that time were shaken, today lie shattered; we need neither criticism nor wise men to shake them anymore. We need only look around to see that we are standing in the midst of a veritable rubble heap of such pillars.¹⁶⁴

To a certain extent, she suggests, this could be an advantage in promoting a thinking which is in need of no pillars and standards. However

[L]ong ago it became apparent that the pillars of the truths have also been the pillars of the political order, and that the world (in contrast to the people who inhabit it and move freely about in it) needs such pillars in order to guarantee continuity and permanence, without which it cannot offer mortal men the relatively secure, relatively imperishable home they need.¹⁶⁵

What kind of truths constitute “the pillars of the political order” in providing stability and permanence? In passages like this she seems to suggest that these

¹⁶² Hannah Arendt, *The Life of the Mind* (New York: Harvest Books, 1978).

¹⁶³ Sjöholm, *Doing Aesthetics with Arendt*, p. 83-85.

¹⁶⁴ Hannah Arendt, “On Humanity in Dark Times: Thoughts about Lessing”, trans. Clara Winston and Richard Winston, in Hannah Arendt, *Men in Dark Times* (New York: Harvest Books, 1968), p. 10.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 10-11.

truths constitute a lost common ground on which the political order rests, which is disclosed by common sense as the sixth sense, common to all.

I will return to her essay on Lessing later, but for now it is important to note that philosophical truth is also seen by Arendt, already in relatively early works such as “Philosophy and Politics”, as introducing a difference with respect to common sense, which gives rise to a conflict that has no solution. In the case of factual truth-telling in relation to the lie, what was at stake was not a single fact, but factual reality itself – a situation where truth-telling, according to her, was particularly complicated since it comes into conflict with common sense. However, philosophical truth-telling is in conflict with common sense also under normal circumstances, when the political sphere is not determined by organized lying. For example, in a perhaps overly dramatic remark, she claims that the disclosure of philosophical truths contradicts “the common sense of the world”¹⁶⁶. In Socrates’ Athens, she underscores, it was an experience of differentiation: “The philosophical shock [...] strikes man in his singularity, that is, neither in his equality with all others nor in his absolute distinctness from them.”¹⁶⁷ Disclosure of truth places its subject in a position where it, to a certain extent, is “alienated from the city of men, which can only look with suspicion on everything that concern man in the singular.”¹⁶⁸ The truths revealed in thinking effectuate both a difference and a split: the subject is “two-in-one”, at once outside and within the political sphere. This experience is according to her the beginning of solitude, understood as “the thinking dialogue of the two-in-one”,¹⁶⁹ “required for all forms of thinking”.¹⁷⁰

Insisting on solitude as a requirement for thinking she is not suggesting that thinking is a solipsistic act that takes place in a region free from political struggle and ideology. Nor can solitude, as the experience of “two-in-one”, be understood as a dyadic relation to the “other”. Hegel’s master and slave dialectic in *The Phenomenology of Spirit* is a dyadic relation which has not yet developed into a relation of plurality, since the latter requires recognition as well as a whole series of subsequent steps.¹⁷¹ In Husserl’s *Cartesian Meditations*, the relation between self and other in a similar sense

¹⁶⁶ Arendt, “Philosophy and Politics”, p. 95.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid, p. 100.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid, p. 100.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid, p. 101.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid, p. 90.

¹⁷¹ G. W. F., Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), § 178-196.

requires something more – in Husserl’s case “the commonness of Nature” – in order to establish itself as an intersubjective relation, so that plurality is recognized.¹⁷² The concept of solitude in Arendt, however, is not a dyadic relation between self and other, outside of or prior to plurality, but in itself a relation to “the world of men”. “[W]hile engaged in the dialogue of solitude in which I am strictly by myself, I am not altogether separated from that plurality which is the world of men”.¹⁷³ This plurality “is indicated already in the fact that I am two-in-one.”¹⁷⁴

Solitude in Arendt can be interpreted as a position where the thinking subject is situated at once in a political realm, determined by plurality, and withdrawn from this realm, in the sense of being distinguished from it. According to Sjöholm, thinking is an experience “in-between public and private”, where thought “is engaged with the world in its very retreat.”¹⁷⁵ A gap is inserted within the public sphere itself, and the thinking subject is situated in this position, at once within and outside of the world of men. *In* this gap the limits of the political realm itself becomes manifest.

This is the background to Arendt’s comments on Plato and Heidegger, where she suggests that they saw the withdrawal of philosophy from the political realm as opposing this realm.¹⁷⁶ The withdrawal of thinking is a relation to the space “of the many” – it is a relation of plurality, though this relation can assume different historical forms, one of which is opposition. As situated within a political realm, there is a trace of plurality within the thinking subject itself, which is actualized in thinking, but in different ways.

Her insistence that Socrates’ role in the *polis* was to help the citizens to establish a common shared world must be seen in this context. His role is not simply to facilitate a shared ground of agreement: he also inserts a tension and demonstrates a split. When returning to the figure of Socrates in

¹⁷² “The first thing constituted in the form of community, and the foundation for all other intersubjectively common things, is the commonness of Nature, along with that of the Other’s organism and his psychophysical Ego, as paired with my own psychophysical Ego.” (Edmund Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations: An Introduction to Phenomenology*, trans. Dorion Cairns [Hague/Boston/London: Martinus Nijhoff, 1982], § 55). There is in fact a latent tension in Husserl between the Cartesian way of establishing intersubjectivity, and a way that instead starts off with intersubjectivity.

¹⁷³ Arendt, “Philosophy and Politics”, p. 88.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 88.

¹⁷⁵ Cecilia Sjöholm, *Speech in the Belly? Hannah Arendt and the Ear of Critical Thought* (Königshausen and Neumann: Würzburg, 2020), p. 56.

¹⁷⁶ Arendt, *Men in Dark Times*, p. ix.

“Truth and Politics” she formulates the conflict with which he was confronted in a somewhat different way, in comparison to “Philosophy and Politics:

[T]eaching by example is, indeed, the only form of ‘persuasion’ that philosophical truth is capable of without perversion or distortion; by the same token, philosophical truth can become ‘practical’ and inspire to action without violating the rules of the political realm only when it manages to become manifest in the guise of an example.¹⁷⁷

Demonstration through example is according to her the only way in which philosophy can assert its truths in the political realm, without destroying the difference it introduces, and without violating this realm. If common sense is the sixth sense, common to all, which unites the other senses in the perception of reality, philosophical truth-telling is a mode of veridiction – a way of asserting truth – that introduces a difference. It is a fragile difference that must be converted and acknowledged *within* the political sphere.

In “Truth and Politics” she describes the transformation of philosophical truths into examples as a limit phenomenon and “border line experience”.¹⁷⁸ Socrates, she says, set an example not when facing his judges but when he refused to escape his death sentence.¹⁷⁹ While she never explains the meaning of his exemplarity in any detail he can be seen as demonstrating the twofold conflict with which he was confronted, tied as this confrontation was to his own understanding of truth. It is within the public, political sphere that his truths have meaning – they are of no relevance outside of the *polis*. As such, they are not the truths of politics, revealing its inner essence or ground, nor is his role to lead or educate. As a philosopher, Arendt claims, he “did not want to educate the citizens”.¹⁸⁰ He did not “possess any special teachable truth”¹⁸¹ and did not see himself as a pedagogue or leader. “The role of the philosopher, then, is not to rule the city but to be its ‘gadfly’, not to tell philosophical truths but to make the citizens more truthful.”¹⁸² He demonstrates a position, which is also a resistance, in relation to which the limits of the political realm are itself revealed – limits that concerned him in his singularity, and were revealed at his own risk. To make the citizens more truthful is therefore not to assist them in arriving at

¹⁷⁷ Arendt, “Truth and Politics”, p. 243.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid*, p. 244.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid*, p. 244.

¹⁸⁰ Arendt, “Philosophy and Politics”, p. 81.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid*, p. 91.

¹⁸² *Ibid*, p. 81.

a truth, hidden beneath prejudices, nor to provide them with insight into the inner nature of the state or what a “true” and just state is. It is the difficult task of introducing resistance into politics, without violating the integrity of the political realm.

In the essay on Lessing in *Men in Dark Times* Arendt stresses Lessing’s motto “Let each man say what he deems truth, and let truth itself be commended unto God!”¹⁸³ He insisted on this device, according to Arendt, since he saw truth as dependent “on an area in which there are many voices”.¹⁸⁴ To “deem true” is not to pose an arbitrary or subjective truth, but to insist that philosophical truth is dependent on the various positions of men in the world, and revealed in the interaction between them. This is the kind of truth that, earlier in the same essay, she discussed as constituting the “pillars of the political order.” They reveal the world between, rather than constitute a foundation, and as such they link and separate men at the same time: “[T]he announcement of what each ‘deems true’ both links and separates men, establishing in fact those distances between men which together comprise the world.”¹⁸⁵ Contrary to truth, which in this sense is dependent on an area of many voices, every

truth outside this area, no matter whether it brings men good or ill, is inhuman in the literal sense of the word; but not because it might rouse men against one another and separate them. Quite the contrary, it is because it might have the result that all men would suddenly unite in a single opinion, so that out of many opinions one would emerge, as though not men in their infinite plurality but man in the singular, one species and its exemplars, were to inhabit the earth.¹⁸⁶

What she sees totalitarianism replacing, and thereby destroying, is not a set of truths that constitute the transcendental ground of politics, but the space of appearances where truth, in a plurality of ways, introduces both a tension and an outside with respect to politics.

Stressing the mutual relation of dependency and tension between truth and politics, Foucault interprets Socrates in a way that comes quite close to Arendt in his last lectures on truth and truth-telling in antiquity. Like her, he sees philosophical truth-telling as faced with a problem of accommodation for which no solution is admitted. Yet there are also significant

¹⁸³ Arendt, “On Humanity in Dark Times”, p. 31.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 30-31.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

differences regarding his view of Socrates that can clarify Arendt's own position. Situating her concept of philosophical truth and philosophical truth-telling in relation to Foucault's interpretation of truth-telling in antiquity can therefore help us to nuance and develop her position further.

VIII. The Test of Philosophy's Reality

The last lecture courses Foucault held before his death, *The Government of Self and Others* and *The Courage of the Truth*, traces the history of *parrhesia*, free truth-telling, in antiquity. Like Arendt, he develops Socrates' version of philosophical truth-telling as a mode of veridiction, authorized through demonstration: as a philosopher, Socrates "demonstrates the truth, and is the individual of truth in his way of being."¹⁸⁷ Or, to formulate it differently: he sees Socratic truth-telling as a specific philosophical way in which truth is asserted by demonstration. In Socrates, truth is expressed "as much through what he is as by what he says (through *ergo* as much as through *logo*)".¹⁸⁸ Like Arendt, he sees the Socratic mode of veridiction as appearing at a specific point of time in Athens, when the democratic constitution, although still functioning, was falling apart. Socrates entered a scene where truth had no central agent, was revealed in the between of a plurality of agents and was dependent on this plurality for its revelation, yet at the same time this scene was in decay. Comparing Euripides' *Ion* with Sophocles' *King Oedipus*, Foucault stresses the latter as a play about a sovereign king, personally undertaking a search for the truth, whereas *Ion*, which is interpreted as giving an account of the founding of Athens, is seen as a drama where truth is revealed between characters. In *Ion*, truth flashes forth as a number of characters confront each other: "it is from the clash, the lightning flash of [their] passions that, without the characters really willing it, the truth arises between them."¹⁸⁹

He stresses Socratic *parrhesia*, truth-telling, as requiring withdrawal from politics – a withdrawal, however, that cannot be seen as withdrawal from the *polis*, but is the difficult insertion of a difference within it. As such, the philosophical truth-telling embodied by Socrates is interpreted in relation to two major historical shifts that *parrhesia* underwent in antiquity. The first occurred around 500 BC when democracy was grounded and

¹⁸⁷ Foucault, *The Government of Self and Others*, p. 321.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid*, p. 321.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid*, p. 116.

parrhesia was transferred from Delphi to Athens. In Delphi, truth was told in oracular form and delivered as prophecies. Specific to this kind of truth-telling is that truth is spoken in advance, through signs: although reticent and enigmatic the prophecy ineluctably foretells the future by saying what is and will be. The prophet does not speak in his own name – his words transmit another’s voice, typically the God’s, addressing a truth to men that is necessarily hidden from them as it predicts a future to come.¹⁹⁰ In contrast to oracular truth-telling, with its seat in Delphi, a democratic-political *parrhesia* grew forth when democracy was grounded. It was practiced by the human being itself, who does not foretell the future but says what is and has been, in his own name and at the cost of risk. It was practiced in the Assembly and within the framework of *isegoria* – everyone’s equal right to speak. The second shift happened when the democratic constitution fell apart. In response to this crisis, truth-telling was transferred from the Assembly to philosophy. From here a philosophical *parrhesia* arose, embodied in an exemplary way by Socrates who insisted on not playing a political role, yet undertook his *parrhesia* in the city and in relation to politics. That truth-telling underwent these shifts in antiquity, however, does not mean that they replaced one another: they “will no doubt be found, in displaced and different guises, in other societies, as well as our own.”¹⁹¹

Like Arendt, Foucault distinguishes the forms of truth-telling that are not oracular, from performative utterances.¹⁹² Similar to her, he also defines the relation between the democratic *polis* of Athens and truth in terms of a double conflict, although he formulates this conflict in a different way to Arendt, by focusing on the concept of *isegoria*, everyone’s right to speak. On Foucault’s reading, the specific philosophical mode of truth-telling arose in response to the relation of mutual dependency between *isegoria* and *parrhesia*. On the one hand, *isegoria*, which guarantees the space of equality and plurality, was required in Athens for truth to be disclosed since it was revealed in the interaction, jousts and conflicts between citizens. On the other hand, to exercise true discourse was to introduce an indispensable and irreducible difference with respect to the egalitarian structure of *isegoria*.¹⁹³ Free truth-telling is according to Foucault the exercise of a differentiation, it places the individual in an ascendant position, as the one who

¹⁹⁰ Ibid, p. 81; Foucault, *The Courage of the Truth*, p. 15.

¹⁹¹ Foucault, *The Courage of the Truth*, p. 14-15.

¹⁹² Foucault, *The Government of Self and Others*, p. 61-66.

¹⁹³ Ibid, p. 183.

exercises influence over others through speech. Within the equal space of “the many” *parrhesia* introduces a *ceasura* with regards to *isegoria*, since it inserts both difference and ascendancy.¹⁹⁴ The circular relation of mutual dependency between *isegoria* and *parrhesia* is according to him what upholds democracy – but democracy is also threatened by this circularity. Like Arendt, he identifies a double conflict, tied to the circular relation between the democratic *polis* and truth-telling. On the one hand, if everyone is free to tell the truth, no difference can be made between that truth-telling which is good for the city and truth-telling that imperils it. On the other hand, true discourse can be perverted when communicated in the *polis*, and reduced to silence. This two-fold problem, he maintains, is neither a problem of power, nor of the transparency and opacity of public space, nor for that matter is it the relation between civil society and the state. It is, rather a problem inherent to democracy itself.¹⁹⁵

Philosophical *parrhesia* arose in response to the double conflict to which the circular relation between *isegoria* and *parrhesia* gave rise, at a time when democracy was in decay. It is indexed to a mode of life, set forth in the city, which “stands back in relation to politics”.¹⁹⁶ According to Foucault, the philosophical mode of veridiction is authorized through the difference it demonstrates with respect to politics – a difference Socrates saw as beneficial for the city. Philosophy introduces a break, and in this break it demonstrates its truth, and becomes an “agent of the truth”:

Being an agent of the truth, being a philosopher, and as a philosopher claiming for oneself the monopoly of *parrhesia*, will not just mean claiming that one can state the truth in teaching, in the advice one gives, and in the speeches one makes, but that one really is in fact, in one’s life, an agent of the truth.¹⁹⁷

He describes Socrates’ role as that of a touchstone, *basanos*. Socrates is the resistance through which citizens submit their own mode of life to a test, enabling them to disclose and speak the truth.¹⁹⁸ What Socrates demonstrates and reveals is the conflict, inherent in democracy itself, for which no solution is admitted. Like Arendt, Foucault thus stresses philosophical

¹⁹⁴ Ibid, p. 183-185.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid, p. 184.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid, p. 320

¹⁹⁷ Ibid, p. 320

¹⁹⁸ Foucault, *The Courage of the Truth*, p. 84, 145, 153.

truth-telling in relation to a problem of accommodation. The difference that philosophical *parrhesia* introduces cannot be communicated in the language of violence or as a transcendental ground, without being destroyed. "A discourse which only protested, challenged, shouted, and raged against power and tyranny would not be philosophy. No more would a violent discourse, which forces its way into the city and spreads threats and death around it, find its philosophical reality."¹⁹⁹ The non-coincidence between philosophy and politics is preserved, not when philosophy assumes the role of educating the politician or prescribing what he must do, but when defining "for the governor, the politician, what he has to be. What is at stake is the politician's being, his mode of being."²⁰⁰ The test of philosophy's reality is according to Foucault the listening it meets with in politics.²⁰¹ The tension it introduces must be converted in a way that allows it to be recognized and preserved *in* the political realm. It finds its reality in so far as there is recognition, in the political sphere, by the politician, of the non-coincidence between philosophy and politics as something which is beneficial for the city.

IX. The Tension Between Thinking and Action

One of the important differences between Arendt's and Foucault's interpretations of Socrates is that Foucault stresses philosophical veridiction – the way in which philosophy asserts its truths – as demonstrating a mode of being, and way of life. According to Arendt, the solitude advocated by Socrates was a temporary experience rather than a mode of being encompassing the whole of life. The decisive difference between Plato and Socrates, she says, was that Plato developed the experience of philosophical disclosure into a mode of life, whereas Socrates saw it as a fleeting moment.²⁰² For her, then, there is no mode of life with a privileged access to, or "monopoly" on the truth: the outside position of solitude is not a specifically philosophical position, but a variation of the position that all forms of truth-telling must assume.²⁰³ There are many ways to assume an outside position in the political sphere, which is not in opposition to the political realm. "Only when one of them is adopted as a way of life is it likely

¹⁹⁹ Foucault, *The Government of Self and Others*, p. 235.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid*, p. 295

²⁰¹ *Ibid*, p. 235-236.

²⁰² Arendt, "Philosophy and Politics", p. 101.

²⁰³ Arendt, "Truth and Politics", p. 255.

to conflict with the demands of the political.”²⁰⁴ To adopt solitude as a mode of life would, from Arendt’s perspective, be likely to transform what she sees as an experience to which everyone has access into something available only to a few. Accordingly, there can be no authentic or true mode of life that enduringly authorizes ones’ speech – even if telling the truth requires the momentary assumption of a difficult and awkward position, within the political realm.

On the other hand, Foucault sees philosophical truth-telling as more than a discursive practice, whereas Arendt tends to emphasize it primarily as a matter of dialogue and thinking. For Foucault, philosophical *parrhesia* involves more than discursive elements, such as prejudices – it involves desires, emotions, habits and bodily affect. It is therefore practiced precisely as a mode of life, attentive to and engaged in practices, desires, habits, diet etc. Arendt’s emphasis on philosophical truth as revealed in dialogue and thinking, and her neglect of other elements than discursive, can again be related to the rigid distinction she draws between the private and the public. As pointed out by Julia Kristeva, Arendt sees the body as “apolitical” and locates it firmly in the sphere of the private, which according to Kristeva for instance prevented her from analyzing the role of unconscious desire in totalitarian politics.²⁰⁵ With respect to the way Arendt develops philosophical truth, however, her own sharp distinctions cannot be maintained. Whether she likes it or not, the body of Socrates belongs not to the private sphere: it is rather on the borders of the political realm. What the difference and gap, introduced by philosophical truth in the political sphere, makes possible is precisely a *questioning* of these borders once they are recognized as real. The problem with which he was confronted was how this could be done without destroying doxa, that is, the “moving principles” and the capability to action and beginning.

A further difference between Foucault and Arendt is that Foucault, at least in his interpretation of *parrhesia*, tends to stress it as a practice that was not yet institutionalized. Arendt instead underscores that the outside position assumed in truth-telling is facilitated by independent institutions, relatively protected from political power. In “Truth and Politics”, she develops the judiciary, the free press and the institutions of higher learning as places that to some extent reflect the position of solitude. It is in terms of

²⁰⁴ Ibid, p. 255.

²⁰⁵ Kristeva, *Hannah Arendt – Life is a Narrative*, p. 63, 66.

their relative independence that they are of immediate political importance, she for instance maintains.²⁰⁶

Although there are a variety of ways to assume an outside position in the public realm – with philosophical solitude being one among many – she nevertheless, like Foucault, sees philosophical truth-telling as a special mode of veridiction. Philosophy has its own way, in the political sphere, of establishing, asserting and validating its truths. Her view on philosophical truth-telling becomes visible, not only in her interpretations of figures like Socrates and Lessing, but also, and especially so, in the method she adopted in her own works.

In an interview from 1964, broadcast on West German television, she insisted that her works were not examples of “political philosophy” – a term that according to her was overburdened with tradition. Buckler emphasizes this comment in his study of Arendt’s method, where he shows that her commitment to the condition of plurality is reflected in methodological considerations and style.²⁰⁷ According to Buckler, her own method was not that of a political philosopher, seeking to define the principles that ground the political order.²⁰⁸ She consistently advocated a method requiring a withdrawal from politics, a withdrawal, however, that cannot be understood as a quest for truth outside the realm of appearances. Withdrawal in Arendt answers to a “constitutive tension” between thinking and political action, where both thinking and acting exercise a difference in relation to one another.²⁰⁹ On the one hand, thinking can, as Arendt says, have a “paralyzing effect” on action.²¹⁰ It interrupts the principles of movement established in action and activities, but it can also, when the capacity for action is threatened and blocked, open paths for action, and inspire new beginnings. On the other hand, action can transform the way we think and challenge our very categories of thought.

Buckler tends to emphasize how the methodological concerns that subtend her views on the relation between thinking and political action result from a search not for truth but meaning.²¹¹ For instance, in *The Life of the Mind*, she comments on the need for reason and thinking in Kant as “not

²⁰⁶ Arendt, “Truth and Politics”, p. 256-257.

²⁰⁷ Buckler, *Hannah Arendt and Political Theory*, p. 1.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid*, p. 9.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid*, p. 27.

²¹⁰ Arendt, “Thinking and Moral Considerations”, p. 434.

²¹¹ Buckler, *Hannah Arendt and Political Theory*, p. 25.

inspired by the quest for truth but by the quest for meaning".²¹² However, in this chapter I have shown that she also developed withdrawal and solitude in relation to philosophical truth and philosophical truth-telling, seen as a special mode of veridiction. Several of Arendt's texts, which have been discussed during the course of this study, can be interpreted from out of her conception of philosophical truth. As we have seen, her works make manifest how truth-claims function in concrete political events, such as totalitarianism, the trial against Eichmann and the Vietnam war. They reveal political events as constituted and complicated within paradoxical legitimization processes that sometimes cannot be distinguished from the policy of rule itself. In this sense, her own works position their own mode of veridiction, their own way of asserting truth, in relation to that of politics. They effectuate both a difference and demonstrate a break. The difference introduced is a difference that cannot be preserved if philosophy assumes the role of leading the politician or grounding the political order. It must search for its reality in relation to politics, by concrete interventions in political events.

The tension between philosophical thinking on the one hand, and acting on the other, is what Heidegger could not maintain, according to the late Arendt. In *Life of the Mind* she claims that the acting, *handeln*, called forth by the call of conscience in *Being and Time* is an "inner" form of acting requiring that man opens himself to the fact that he is thrown, as opposed to the "visible actions of public life".²¹³ That is, the kind of acting called forth by the call of conscience is a form of thinking, it "can exist only in the activity of thinking."²¹⁴ Arendt never comments on the political themes of *Being and Time*, nor on those of Heidegger's works from the beginning of the 1930s that were available to her – such as the "Rectoral address", which she mentions but chooses not to interpret.²¹⁵ Her remark on *Being and Time* seems to imply that Heidegger was incapable of thinking action as beginning since this, according to her, requires the acting in concert of a plurality of subjects in a public world. However, had she investigated the relation between the call of conscience and the historical people in § 74 of *Being and Time*, or the theme of beginning and the role of the university in the "Rectoral Address", she would have discovered a quite different

²¹² Arendt, *The Life of the Mind*, p. 15.

²¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 184-185.

²¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 185.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 173.

problem – namely, that the role of true discourse in its “originary” sense of call summons, performs and enacts a possibility for a historical people in *Being and Time*, and that the role of the university in the “Rectoral Address” is to provide a site for a political beginning. This problem is not that of a thinker withdrawn from the political realm; here the tension between philosophy and politics is annulled since philosophy becomes politics.

In Heidegger’s late works after the war, she suggests that agency is located within the history of being that determines human destiny. To respond to this destiny is “the thinking of being”, which according to Arendt now appears more or less as the only, and proper, action of man.²¹⁶ In the later Heidegger, she says, “*acting and thinking coincide*”.²¹⁷ Thus, to her, beginnings arise in the tension between thinking and action, which, on the one hand, means that if the action of beginning is undertaken as a form of thinking, in solitude and withdrawal, it cannot be afforded political reality. Action acquires reality in a public realm. On the other hand, however, it also means that philosophical thinking cannot *become* politics – it has reality in the difference it inserts with respect to politics. Although Arendt never addressed the latter question in relation to Heidegger, she did respond to this problem in his thought by elaborating her own concept of truth, and developing it in a different direction.

To conclude, I have argued in this chapter that Arendt developed her notion of truth in response to the problem of politics and truth in totalitarian movements. This problem comes to express itself through Heidegger’s thought as well as through instantiations of the modern political lie. The traditional lie, which concerns particular facts and intentions, kept in secret from the public, is according to her limited by truth.²¹⁸ The modern political lie is different: it is politics exceeding and destroying its limit. In this process, however, the limit is politicized and paradoxically becomes an internal issue, of relevance within the political sphere. It is against this background, I have argued, that her concept of truth can be understood. Both factual and philosophical truth are developed by her as non-absolute forms of truth that have reality within the political realm and serve to constitute limits with respect to politics – limits that at the same time provide the starting point for new beginnings. Her own concept of truth therefore questions the rigid distinctions she imposed between the private

²¹⁶ Ibid, p. 186.

²¹⁷ Ibid, p. 180.

²¹⁸ Arendt, “Truth and Politics”, p. 248.

and the public, the social and the political. It opens up a different way to understand the borders of the political realm, which cannot be seen as *apriori* givens – they are real, but contingent and contestable.

For both Heidegger and Arendt, truth is tied to the specificity of politics proper, namely politics as the initiation of a beginning. This insight into political beginnings is expressed in quite contrasting ways. In Heidegger, politics proper must be rooted and grounded in truth. It is in relation to truth that the masses can be summoned as a people, and maintain itself as a people. For Arendt truth is instead limit to, and of, politics. Her works reveal a relational tension between politics and truth – a tension that undermines her own distinctions surrounding the sharp difference between the private and the public, the social and the political.

Summary

In this chapter we have seen that an interpretation of Arendt's contradictory comments on truth is possible once we have considered how the relation between politics and truth is one predicated on tension and conflict. The modern political lie is one way in which this tension comes to express itself, and it is partly in relation to the lie that she developed her own concept of truth in works after *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. Arendt was skeptical about truth-claims in politics that in one way or another refer beyond experience. At the same time, she also saw both factual and philosophical modes of truth as relevant to politics. Factual and philosophical truth are developed in her works as introducing a tension and resistance in the political realm, both disclose the limits of and for politics.

That Arendt saw factual and philosophical truth as limit phenomena can be understood against the background of the problem of politics and truth in totalitarian movements, which has been investigated in this study. I have argued that if we read Heidegger's political writings together with Arendt's analysis of the lie, a paradoxical relation between politics and truth becomes visible not only in totalitarianism but in non-totalitarian forms and contexts. Embedded in complicated legitimization processes truth-claims are transformed to prophetic and performative utterances to the point where the sense of truth and the ability to detect facts in political contexts is destroyed. Arendt did not respond to this situation by demanding more truthfulness in politics, but by investigating the *position* of truth in the political sphere and by asking what *reality* it can possess there. If Heidegger saw the essence of truth as freedom, and true discourse in its "originary" sense as the enactment of a beginning, Arendt develops truth as a limit

phenomenon in relation to the action of beginning, distinguishing truth-telling from performative utterances.

The method she adopted in her reflections on truth mirrors the notion of truth that emerges in her works. Truth is investigated from various perspectives, and from out of this plurality of perspectives, she considers several kinds of truths, some of which are more relevant to politics than others. Truth has many shapes and faces – it is not a unitary or univocal phenomenon. The kind of truths she saw as relevant to politics are not absolute, but contingent, and dependent on the existence of a public, political realm.

In this chapter I have shown that, for Arendt, factual truth and philosophical truth are the most relevant forms of truth in political contexts. Her distinction between factual and philosophical truth bears a certain resemblance to Heidegger's distinction between the discovery of "innerwordly" beings and events, and the "originary" form of truth as disclosure that according to him is indicated and enacted by philosophical method. In Heidegger the discovery of "innerwordly" beings and events is a derived form of truth that presupposes "originary" truth in the sense of the disclosure of a world. Arendt's distinction between philosophical truth and factual truth is not hierarchical in this sense. Factual truth is defined by her as revealed in action and interaction with the world, whereas philosophical truth is revealed in thinking's withdrawal from the world. The former is not a secondary form of truth – facts can challenge categories of thought and ways in which reality is disclosed. Correspondingly, the truths revealed in thinking can interrupt action, whose end results are the revelation of factual truths – but they can also inspire action, and in that sense reveal new facts.

According to Heidegger the theory of truth as agreement presupposes a single and unified mode of disclosure as its ground. Arendt instead argues that factual truth *compels* agreement, compelling revision of theories and interpretations, and even challenging ways in which reality is disclosed. On these bases, factual truth has a special position in the political realm, where it is present as a contingent limit with respect to political opinions, debate and political action. It constitutes the texture of the political realm, which is not to say that it constitutes the ground of politics other than in a metaphorical sense. Facts make up the multifaceted, haphazardous and heterogenic reality "between" men, which while contingent and not always consistent are at the same time present in terms of resistance. It is precisely because of the contingent resistance of facts that they are relevant in politics, and as such they have a precarious position in the political sphere.

From a political point of view they arise from without the political realm, and constitute an outside to politics *in* the political sphere. They can validate and inform opinions, but also destroy the legitimacy of political claims and political movements. Since they are different from opinions yet positioned in the political realm in close affinity to opinions, and dependent on the political sphere for their existence, they can be maneuvered out of history and erased if transformed into opinions. However, their position in the political sphere is ambiguous also in other respects. As a limit to action they provide stability to the political realm, but factual truth-telling and factual reports can also conserve and lead to its stagnation. At the same time facts provide the starting points for political action in the sense of beginning: it is in relation to the contingent resistance of facts that politics can emerge as beginning.

Philosophical truth in Arendt has for the most part been interpreted in the secondary literature in light of Socrates attempt to make the city more “truthful” by removing prejudices and improving judgment. In this chapter, however, I have argued that there is more at stake in Arendt’s comments on Socrates. Philosophical truth is revealed in thinking’s withdrawal into solitude, seen by her not as a position somewhere outside of, or beyond the political sphere, but as an outside position within it. What is revealed in solitude and Socrates’ maieutic, I have argued, are the multifaceted limits of the political realm itself, present, in various ways, in each of the citizen’s *doxa*. Or rather, philosophical truth reveals the “moving principles”, and with them the contingent way in which the political realm unfolds, in each of the citizens *doxa*. It establishes a break with politics, and according to Arendt this confronted Socrates with a twofold problem that had no solution. Philosophical truth introduces a difference, but this difference must be communicated and asserted *in* the political realm. On the one hand, the political realm is the only sphere in which philosophical truths have meaning and can “test” their reality, but on the other hand the communication of philosophical truths requires a difficult accommodation with this realm, where they can be perverted and are in conflict with common sense. The other side of this conflict is that the political realm is dependent for its survival on the fragile tension that philosophical truth-telling introduces, a tension, though, that also can destroy the political reality of citizens and even the political realm itself.

Communicating his truths, Arendt stresses Socrates’ insistence on a difference between philosophy and politics, though he saw this difference as indispensable to the political realm. According to her, his teachings were

defined by the double conflict this position confronted him with. For her, the only way in which philosophical truths can be communicated and “test” their reality in the political realm, without either destroying the tension they insert or violating the political sphere, is by demonstration through example. The conflict that confronted Socrates, I have argued, can be seen as defining also the methods she adopted. Works such as *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, *Eichmann in Jerusalem* and “Lying in Politics”, which have been discussed in this study, can be understood as the insertion of a tension and difference, in the political realm and in relation to politics. Revealing how political events are constituted, in and as complicated legitimization processes, they are works that introduce their own mode of veridiction – their own way of asserting truth – in relation to politics. They establish a difference with respect to politics that can be preserved only when demonstrated in concrete interventions in political events. It is destroyed if philosophy relates to politics in an abstract way, or from above, by assuming the role of leading the citizens or laying out the transcendental grounds of the political sphere.

Interpreted as a limit phenomenon in the political realm, truth is an integral part of Arendt’s theory of action and natality. As such, however, the concept of truth constitutes a point in her own writings in which the rigid distinctions she imposed between the private and the public, the social and the political cannot be maintained. Both factual and philosophical truth are contingent, rather than absolute or a priori limits. Accordingly, they introduce a gap between past and future; in this gap the borders of the political sphere appear as both contestable and re-negotiable once they are recognized and acknowledged as real.

Concluding Remarks

In 2016 the Oxford Dictionary named “post-truth” the word of the year. It was defined as “circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief.” A general assumption in the ongoing debate about post-truth is that truth and facts have ceased to be relevant to large areas of contemporary politics. However, questions are seldom raised about the paradoxical *appeal* to truth in post-truth politics, what role truth-claims can play in politics, why facts are important in political contexts or what we mean with words such as fact, truthfulness and lies in the field of politics in the first place. The present study has shed light on these questions. Not by engaging directly in the debate about post-truth, but by studying the relation between politics and truth in the works of two philosophers, Hannah Arendt and Martin Heidegger.

In 1945, Arendt suggested that fascism had invented a way of “*lying* the truth.” She later came to call this the modern political lie and saw it as one of the elements that crystallized into the event of totalitarianism. Interpreting Heidegger’s political writings and Arendt’s works on the modern political lie this thesis has analyzed the role of truth-claims and the paradoxical relation between politics and truth in totalitarian movements, along with how this relation has invented itself anew in non-totalitarian forms and under non-totalitarian circumstances. Heidegger is not a proponent of the modern political lie but the present study shows that aspects of the problematical relation between truth and politics, which Arendt analyzes, are operative in his works. By interpreting their work together, parts of Arendt’s analysis, which otherwise would have remained implicit in her works, are made explicit. The thesis has thus explored the relation between politics and truth in Heidegger and Arendt respectively, as well as in relation to each other’s works.

There is a widely held view within commentaries on Heidegger that his early works are apolitical. Contrary to this assumption, I have shown that there are proto-political, as well as more explicitly political dimensions to

his early thoughts surrounding truth as *aletheia* already from the 1920s. Truth is developed not only, as generally seen in the secondary literature, in relation to the problems with the theoretical attitude, but also in relation to a generation, to Dasein as a “being-in-the-*polis*” and to a historical people. Here truth plays the role of awakening a generation, of revealing a possibility for political Dasein and gathering a historical people. In his early works a version of true discourse in its “originary” sense takes shape, which is partly modelled on the religious proclamation, understood by Heidegger as calling forth a community to come. During the 1930s the question of truth is rethought in relation to Hölderlin and the work of art; true discourse is now conceived as the “poetic” saying that reveals “the truth of a people” in advance, gathering the masses and grounding the state.

In the course of this study we have seen that the early Heidegger develops truth as *aletheia* in the 1920s not only by engaging with the works of Aristotle; he also reads Aristotle through the prism of Saint Paul and the phenomenon of *parousia*. While in the lecture course on Paul, *The Phenomenology of Religious Life* from 1920–21, he does not thematize truth, important and related concepts and themes, such as the situation and the givenness of self, world and the communal world, are developed. I have showed that these themes later became important for his articulation of truth as *aletheia*. In the lecture course on Paul the religious proclamation, expressed in Paul’s epistles to the congregation, is interpreted by Heidegger as a discourse that reveals a community “at the end of time”. The proclamation has a performative, perhaps even prophetic element; it engages a community which is constituted in the proclamation itself by evoking an unavoidable end that nevertheless requires the congregation’s active response.

Turning to Aristotle in the years following the lectures on Paul, and shortly after the end of World War I, Heidegger develops *aletheia* not only in relation to Aristotle, but partly through the prism of Paul. The performative element of the proclamation is preserved in his first outlines of true discourse in its “originary” sense when he interprets Aristotle’s works on politics and rhetoric in both “Being-there and Being-true According to Aristotle” and *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*. In “Being-there and Being-true According to Aristotle”, the “Ruhr-talk” that he gave in various cities around the politically turbulent Ruhr-Rein area in 1924, truth as *aletheia* appears for the first time as the ground, *Boden*, of political Dasein while the *polis* is understood as a site of disclosure. Political speech is seen as speech that can either be grounded in truth or uprooted, but it is also a mode of speech that can ground truth in a mode of being of political

Dasein. Here the thought of grounding a political community in the truth appears for the first time, which does not have the meaning of actualizing Dasein's inner and "true" nature, or to realize the ideal state. In "Being-there and Being-true According to Aristotle" and *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy* the grounding of political Dasein is accomplished in and as a confrontation with and philosophical destruction of the "everyday" mode of political Dasein in the public space of the Greek *polis*. This confrontation at the same time seeks to detect and reveal a "fundamental possibility [*Grundmöglichkeit*]" for Dasein as a "being-in-the-*polis*" – a possibility enacted in the philosophical method itself. The latter indicates, communicates and shares the *ethos* and *pathos* of the situation, understood as a mode of "being-in-the-*polis*" that grounds political Dasein in the truth.

This study has shown how alethic and political dimensions of the lecture course on Paul, the "Ruhr-talk" and *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy* are taken up in *Being and Time*, where the situation is determined as "the truth of existence" and seen as a positive possibility for the historical people discussed in § 74 as constituted in "communication and struggle". "The truth of existence" is disclosed by the call of conscience, which according to Heidegger is an "originary discourse" that can be enacted by the philosophical method. It is discourse that reveals Dasein's ground in truth as a disclosive movement, but as such it also enacts the "truth of existence" as a mode of being and disclosing that emerges in the call itself. "The truth of existence" comes to enduring presence in and as the constitution of a historical people, in struggle with publicness and public Dasein. Although the notions of a historical people and a generation developed by Heidegger in § 74 is an underdeveloped theme it can be seen as a positive and authentic possibility of "being-with", in contradistinction to the fallen "being-with" of public Dasein. Truth, in its authentic mode of "the truth of existence" plays the role of awakening and liberating a people from its fallen state in the public world, but it is also a task to be accomplished and assumed. It distinguishes the historical people from public Dasein yet at the same time it also unites them in a "common cause". The truth of existence, I argued by developing Nancy's remarks on "being-with" in *Being and Time*, is posited by Heidegger as a "pure interiority" that does not seem to allow for singulars, that is, for any differentiation within the community it constitutes.

In the 1930s, when Heidegger was a member in the National Socialist party, truth became a central issue in his political writings and concrete engagements in the political transformation of Germany. The present study

has contributed to research on Heidegger by demonstrating the mythical role truth and true discourse have in his works from this period, when the political is conceived by Heidegger as the accomplishment of a beginning in the history of being and where *aletheia* is rethought as a struggle between forces of concealment and unconcealment, beginning and end. Already in the two lecture courses in *Being and Truth* from 1933 truth is thought in relation to the “poetic” struggle, *polemos*, in Heraclitus and in relation to Plato’s cave allegory, stressed by Heidegger as myth. What is at stake in his interpretation of the cave allegory is to accomplish a transformation of disclosure that at the same time grounds a people in truth, where truth is seen as the people’s veiled origin. Truth and true discourse play the role of revealing a people’s origin in a world-historical struggle between beginning and end, and thereby gathering the masses into the community of a people.

Since this struggle is forgotten and concealed it must be made manifest in order for the people to be able to experience it and recognize it as a task that can be assumed. Myth, I have argued, becomes effective in summoning and gathering a people when mythical elements, such as a veiled struggle between world-historical forces, are transformed into reality, can be experienced and taken up. By enacting a struggle, true discourse in its “originary” mode inscribes a struggle in reality itself. The struggle itself serves to “mark” the being of a people, presenting them with a task to identify with and “give” themselves over to.

In the year he held the lecture courses in *Being and Truth*, he was head of the University of Freiburg. During his rectorship the university is described in his works as a “middle” in the state, where a political beginning is accomplished. It is a “middle” that leads the people to the struggle and grounds the state in truth by providing a site where the battle between being-historical forces is revealed and becomes possible for the people to recognize. It thereby offers paths for the people to the beginning; paths that at the same time allow the beginning to become real when taken up, assumed as a mission and preserved by a people.

After resigning as head of the university in 1934, Heidegger gave the parallel lecture courses *Hölderlin’s Hymns “Germania” and “The Rhein”* and “Hegel’s Philosophy of Right”. By following the movement of the parallel courses, this study has explored the enactment that Heidegger performs therein. The courses can be seen as performing the “space-work” that he in an earlier seminar, “On the Essence and Concept of Nature, History and State”, determined as “work” which grounds a state. In the seminar on Hegel, the state is displaced from its place in Hegel’s system to the “metaphysical site”

revealed in the parallel lecture course on Hölderlin. In this site the struggle, which is the essence of truth, is inscribed in reality itself when established in beings and given a concrete political shape by the statesman. The state itself is now transformed into a work of art, where the leaders appear as seers projecting in advance a truth that constitutes the people's destiny.

While critical of Schmitt's friend – enemy distinction, which is seen by Heidegger as an external definition of the political, his own notion of the state appears as grounded in a "pure interiority". It is grounded in a historical site that does not seem to allow for "singulars", in the sense of differentiation among the people. This site is at the same time a site where mythical elements are transformed into reality and become true, in the sense of coming into enduring presence as a people's way of disclosing itself, its world, enemies, friends and gods. It is a site where the "saying" of truth that Heidegger assigns as a mission to the poet paradoxically seems to erase the distinction between myth and reality, fiction and truth.

Here, a problematic relation between politics and truth becomes manifest in his works, which reflects aspects of the relation between politics and truth in the totalitarian movement itself. Against the background of Heidegger's political works, I have explored how Arendt, after the war, addressed and analyzed this problem in her writings on the modern political lie. Although Heidegger is not an advocate of the modern lie, his writings nevertheless make features of the relation between politics and truth in totalitarian movements visible. Aspects of Arendt's analysis that otherwise remained implicit in her works has thereby been possible to make explicit. While commentaries on the lie in Arendt has investigated it primarily as a relation to reality, I have showed that it can also be seen as a relation to truth.

The study has explored the lie as it is elaborated by Arendt in essays before the publication of *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, and we have shown how the lie is taken up and developed in *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. Here the modern political lie appears as one of the key elements around which the event of totalitarianism crystallized. Since Arendt understands the modern political lie as introducing an innovation in the history of the practice and concept of the lie, it cannot be understood, as lies usually are, as the deliberate distortion or dissimulation of the truth. It must be seen in a different way. If developed in relation to Heidegger's political writings, her analysis of the lie can instead be taken to reveal how truth-claims function in totalitarian politics.

The lie was a propaganda method that utilized truth in several ways. It appealed to real and true conditions as well as to truths supposedly suppressed by an elite. However, it also utilized truth in a different way. It was presented in the form of truth-claims that in one way or another referred beyond the experienceable world – in predicting a future to come or in appealing to concealed forces and laws driving the movement of history. Although Arendt never discusses this explicitly, truth-claims in totalitarian movements play the role of mobilizing the people to a common cause – and at the same time they produce their own legitimization and verification.

According to Arendt, propaganda and totalitarian organization were two sides of the same coin. Together they built a fictive world, where mythical and ideological elements were transformed into reality. Or to put it differently, truth-claims referring beyond the experienceable world were staged, in reality, as facts. In some important passages in her works on totalitarianism, Arendt describes this operation in terms of legitimization and verification processes. In totalitarianism, she suggests at one point, ideology becomes a “prophetic method”. Propaganda and totalitarian organization build an alternative reality that functions as a “laboratory”. A totalitarian “region” is sealed off where the factual situations, legitimating the regime, are continually produced. The problem is not that fictions, mythical elements and lies are transformed into reality and appear as factual truths in the “laboratory world” of totalitarian politics, but that the sense of facts, reality and truth in political contexts is destroyed. Testimonies from the camps, Arendt suggests, were surrounded by a peculiar lack of credibility and “unreality”.

Placing the lie within the wider context of her thought, this study has discussed it in relation to plurality, the scene of appearances and her definition of politics as beginning. What the lie replaces, and thereby destroys, is not an underlying, unmediated reality, beyond narrative and language, but the hazardous and sometimes inconsistent factual reality that according to Arendt grows forth “between” men. This means that the lie is a phenomenon that can evolve and reinvent itself anew, into, for example, non-totalitarian forms and contexts. The study has investigated the non-totalitarian version of the lie, which Arendt developed as “image-making” in the 1960s and early 1970s, in relation to her reports from the trial of Eichmann and her comments on the Vietnam war. What comes to the fore once the lie is approached as a way of utilizing truth, is that also this version of the lie can be understood in terms of legitimization processes and state-grounding events. Her analysis of the “Pentagon Papers” in “Lying and Politics” ela-

borates an organized form of lying that used public relations methods and mass communication techniques on a political scene dominated by mass media. In the Vietnam war “image-making” was a version of the modern lie, according to which images of the war were staged in reality as facts, thereby making the war “legitimate” and easier to “sell” to domestic voters and congress. Or rather, the war itself became a legitimization strategy, continuously verifying ideology as true in relation to an “audience” of consumers. The war made ideology possible to “sell” on a domestic market, but also to the world.

On a general level, the relation between politics and truth in Arendt has received considerable comment, though it has not been treated in a satisfactory way with respect to the complexity of the topic of truth in her works. On the one hand her works on the modern lie address a problem of politics and truth. On the other hand, she developed her own notion of truth in works after *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. In this thesis I have shown that her concept of truth is an integral part of her theory of action and natality. However, it also constitutes a point in her writings where the sharp distinctions she imposed between the public and the private, the social and the political cannot be maintained.

For Arendt, the phenomenon of modern lying never meant that we live in a condition of “post-truth”, if by that we mean a situation where politics has become indifferent to truth and fact. On the contrary, the lie makes use of truth and politicizes truth, which is why a questioning of the position of fact and truth in the political sphere, and in relation to politics, is needed. This is what she did in works subsequent to *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. Asking not what truth is, she asks about the *location* of truth in the political sphere, how it is established there, how it asserts validity and what kind of reality truth can have in this sphere.

If her writings on truth are approached partly as a response to the lie then her sometimes contradictory remarks on the relation between politics and truth becomes more clear. While she was skeptical about truth-claims in politics that refer beyond the experienceable world, she also saw both factual and philosophical truth as vital to politics. What has not been properly recognized in the secondary literature on truth in Arendt is that she develops truth from out of what she saw as a historical relation of *tension* and *conflict* between politics and truth. The lie is one way in which this tension comes to express itself. What is interesting and original in her notion of truth, and unexplored in the secondary literature, is that she sees both factual and philosophical truth, which to her are the forms of truth

that are relevant in politics, as positioned in the political realm in terms of the tension and resistance they insert there. It is a fragile tension which is indispensable for the survival of the political realm and for the capacity to begin anew – but a tension that can also be perverted. It can destroy the political reality of citizens and even the political sphere itself.

In this thesis, Arendt's concept of both factual and philosophical truth has been developed as limit phenomenon in the political sphere, and with respect to concrete political events. She was influenced by Heidegger's notion of truth as disclosure; this has been pointed out in the literature by several scholars. However, what has not been investigated in commentaries, is that Arendt developed a notion of truth quite distinct from Heidegger's. In the 1930s Heidegger defines the essence of truth as freedom, in the sense of beginning. True discourse in its "originary" sense is an expression of freedom since it reveals, and at the same time enacts, a beginning in advance. For Heidegger, truth *is* beginning, and true discourse in its "originary" mode is enactment of a beginning that gathers a people. Arendt instead elaborates truth as a *limit* with respect to freedom and the action of beginning. True discourse is neither performative nor a demonstration of freedom. It communicates a tension and introduces a resistance within the political sphere. It is in relation to the limitation of truth that politics can emerge as a beginning.

In contradistinction to Heidegger, there is no hierarchical relation between philosophical and factual truth in Arendt. In Heidegger, factual truth is dependent on disclosure, through which beings and state of affairs come to presence. Truth as agreement between thing and thought is seen by him as a secondary form of truth, which presupposes a unified mode of disclosure by which beings and state of affairs are given and can be interpreted. In Arendt, factual truths are in no need of a single and unified mode of disclosure, which makes agreement possible. Facts compel agreement, and as such they can challenge the ways in which reality is disclosed, as well as theories and presuppositions. Arendt thus develops a version of truth as agreement which is not dependent on a unified mode of disclosure as its ground.

Philosophical truth in Arendt has been investigated in this study as revealing the political realm itself. By suggesting that truth is inherent in *doxa* in her interpretations of Socrates, Arendt is not necessarily suggesting that there is an inner core of truth in *doxa*, which can be arrived at if prejudices are exposed and removed. Philosophical truth reveals the various limits of the political realm itself; they are present in each of the citizens *doxa*, depending on their position in the world, and as such a philosophical

truth reveals the possible worlds emerging from their *doxa*. This means that philosophical truth is an experience, irreducibly tied to the thinking subject itself. It introduces a gap in the political realm, where the borders of the political realm itself become manifest, and therefore are open to question and contestation.

Both factual and philosophical truth have an *ambiguous* position in the political sphere. In contradistinction to Heidegger, both modes of truth are dependent on a political realm sustained by plurality for their appearance, while concomitantly the political realm is also dependent on truth for its endurance. Factual and philosophical truth can vitalize the political realm, and are indispensable for its survival, even if at the same time they can also be distorted within it and violate it.

This means that truth is an integral part of Arendt's theory of action and natality. However, this study has also shown that precisely both factual and philosophical truth challenge the sharp distinctions she imposed between the private and the public, the social and the political. Her own concept of truth thereby opens up possibilities to radicalize the legacy of her works. It marks a point in her own writings where the rigid distinctions she imposed between the private and the public, the social and the political are undermined in a productive way. Both factual and philosophical truths, as developed in this study, can open up routes for questioning the borders between the private and the public, the social and the political, thereby revealing these borders as contingent rather than as a priori givens.

References

Works by Arendt

- The Origins of Totalitarianism* [1951], New York/London: Harvest, 1979.
- The Human Condition* [1958], Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998. E-book.
- Rahel Varnagen: The Life of a Jewish Woman* [1958], trans. Richard Winston and Clara Winston, New York: Harvest, 1974. (*Rahel Varnagen: Lebensgeschichte einer deutschen Jüdin aus der Romantik*, München/Berlin: Piper, 1981).
- Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* [1963], New York: Penguin Books, 1994.
- On Revolution* [1963], London: Penguin Books, 1990.
- Men in Dark Times* [1968], New York: Harvest Books, 1968.
- The Life of the Mind* [1968], New York: Harvest Books, 1978.
- Denktagebuch*, Bd. I–II, 1950–1973, München/Berlin: Piper, 2002.
- Lectures on Kant's Political Philosophy* [1982], Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2014. E-book.
- Hannah Arendt and Martin Heidegger, *Letters 1925–1975: Hannah Arendt and Martin Heidegger*, trans. Andrew Shields, New York: Harcourt, 2004.
- Hannah Arendt and Karl Jaspers, *Hannah Arendt – Karl Jaspers: Correspondence*, San Diego/New York/London: Harcourt Brace, 1992.
- Hannah Arendt and Mary McCarthy, *Between Friends: The Correspondence of Hannah Arendt and Mary McCarthy, 1945–1975*, New York: Harcourt Brace, 1995.
- "The Seeds of a Fascist International" [1945], *Essays in Understanding*, ed. Jerome Kohn, New York: Schocken Books, 1995.
- "Approaches to the 'German Problem'" [1945], *Essays in Understanding*, ed. Jerome Kohn, New York: Schocken Books, 1995.
- "What is Existential Philosophy?" [1946], *Essays in Understanding*, ed. Jerome Kohn, New York: Schocken Books, 1995.
- "The Image of Hell" [1946], *Essays in Understanding*, ed. Jerome Kohn, New York: Schocken Books, 1995.
- "The Aftermath of Nazi Rule: A Report from Germany" [1950], *Essays in Understanding*, ed. Jerome Kohn, New York: Schocken Books, 1995.

- "Philosophy and Politics" [1954/1990], *Social Research*, vol 57, no 1 (1990).
- "Socrates" [1954/2005], *The Promise of Politics*, ed. Jerome Kohn, New York: Schocken Books, 2005.
- "Concern with Politics in Recent European Philosophical Thought" [1954], *Essays in Understanding*, ed. Jerome Kohn, New York: Schocken Books, 1995.
- "On the Nature of Totalitarianism: An Essay in Understanding" [1954], *Essays in Understanding*, ed. Jerome Kohn, New York: Schocken Books, 1995.
- "Reflections on Little Rock" [1959], *Responsibility and Judgment*, ed. Jerome Kohn, New York: Schocken Books, 2003.
- "On Humanity in Dark Times: Thoughts about Lessing" [1960], trans. Clara Winston and Richard Winston, *Men in Dark Times*, New York: Harvest Books, 1968.
- "Preface: The Gap Between Past and Future" [1961], *Between Past and Future: Eight Exercises in Political Thought*, New York/London: Penguin Books, 2006.
- "The Conquest of Space and the Stature of Man" [1963], *Between Past and Future: Eight Exercises in Political Thought*, New York/London: Penguin Books, 2006.
- "Truth and Politics" [1967/1968], *Between Past and Future: Eight Exercises in Political Thought*, New York/London: Penguin Books, 2006.
- "Walter Benjamin: 1892–1940" [1968], trans. Harry Zohn, *Men in Dark Times*, New York: Harvest Books, 1968.
- "Thinking and Moral Considerations" [1971], *Social Research* 38:3 (1971).
- "Martin Heidegger at Eighty" [1971], *Heidegger and Modern Philosophy*, ed. Michael Murray, New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 1978.
- "Lying in Politics" [1972], *Crises of the Republic*, New York: Harcourt Brace and Company, 1972.
- "Home to Roost" [1975], *Responsibility and Judgment*, ed. Jerome Kohn, New York: Schocken Books, 2003.

Works by Heidegger

- The Phenomenology of Religious Life*, trans. Matthias Fritsch and Jennifer Anna Gosetti-Ferencei, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010. (*Phänomenologie des Religiösen Lebens* [1918–1921], GA 60, Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1995).
- Phenomenological Interpretation of Aristotle*, trans. Richard Rojcewicz, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001. (*Phänomenologische Interpretationen zu Aristoteles. Einführen in die phänomenologische Forschung* [1921–1922], GA 61, Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1994).
- Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*, trans. Robert D. Metcalf and Mark B. Tanzer, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009. E-book. (*Grundbegriffe der aristotelischen Philosophie* [1924], GA 18, Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2002).
- Plato's Sophist*, trans. Richard Rojcewicz and André Schuwer, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003. (*Platon: Sophistes* [1924–1925], GA 19, Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1992).

- Logic: The Question of Truth*, trans. Thomas Sheehan, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010. (*Logik. Die Frage nach der Wahrheit* [1925–1926], GA 21, Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1976).
- Being and Time*, trans. Joan Stambaugh, Albany: State University Press, 1996. (*Sein und Zeit* [1927], GA 2, Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1978).
- The Essence of Human Freedom. An Introduction to Philosophy*, trans. Ted Sadler, New York: Continuum, 2002. (*Vom Wesen der Menschlichen Freiheit. Einleitung in die Philosophie* [1930], GA 31, Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1982).
- The Essence of Truth. On Plato's Cave Allegory and Theatetus*, trans. Ted Sadler, New York: Continuum, 2002. (*Vom Wesen der Wahrheit. Zu Platons Höhlengleichnis und Theätet* [1931–1932], GA 34, Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1988).
- Der Anfang der abendländischen Philosophie. Auslegung des Anaximander und Parmenides* [1932], GA 35, Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2011.
- Being and Truth*, trans. Georg Fried and Richard Polt, Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2010. (*Sein und Wahrheit* [1933–1934], GA 36 – 37, Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2001).
- Logic as the Question Concerning the Essence of Language*, trans. Wanda Torres Gregory and Yvonne Unna, Albany: State University of New York Press, 2009. (*Logik als die Frage nach dem Wesen der Sprache* [1934], Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2020).
- Hölderlin's Hymns "Germania" and "The Rhine", trans. William McNeill and Julia Ireland, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014. (*Hölderlins Hymnen "Germanien" und "Der Rhein"* [1934–1935], GA 39, Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1980).
- Seminare Hegel – Schelling* [1927–1957], GA 86, Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2011.
- Introduction to Metaphysics*, trans. Gregory Fried and Richard Polt, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000. (*Einführung in die Metaphysik* [1935], GA 40, Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1983).
- Schelling's Treatise on the Essence of Human Freedom*, trans. Joan Stambaugh, Athens, Oh: Ohio University Press, 1985. (*Schelling: Vom Wesen der Menschlichen Freiheit* [1936], GA 42, Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1988).
- Hölderlin's Hymn "The Ister", trans. William McNeill and Julia Davis, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996. (*Hölderlins Hymne "Der Ister"* [1942], GA 53, Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1993).
- Introduction to Philosophy: Thinking and Poetizing*, trans. Phillip Jacques Braunstein, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017. (*Einleitung in die Philosophie: Denken und Dichten* [1944–1945], GA 50, Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1990).
- Ponderings II–VI: Black Notebooks 1931–1938*, trans. Richard Rojcewicz, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2016. (*Überlegungen II–IV: Schwarze Hefte 1931–1938*, GA 94, Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2014).
- Ponderings VII–XI: Black Notebooks 1938–1939*, trans. Rickard Rojcewicz, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017. (*Überlegungen VII–XI: Schwarze Hefte 1938–1939*, GA 95, Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2014).

- Ponderings XII–XV: Black Notebooks 1939–1941*, trans. Rickard Rojcewicz, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017. (*Überlegungen XII – XV: Schwarze Hefte 1939–1941*, GA 96, Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2014).
- Nietzsche, vol I–IV, trans. David Farrell Krell, New York: Harper and Row, 1991. (*Nietzsche I–IV* [1936–1946], GA 6, Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1996–1997).
- Zu Ernst Jünger*, GA 90, Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2004.
- Martin Heidegger and Hannah Arendt, *Letters 1925–1975: Hannah Arendt and Martin Heidegger*, ed. Ursula Ludz, trans. Andrew Shields, New York: Harcourt, 2004.
- Martin Heidegger and Ernst Jünger, *Correspondence 1949–1975*, trans. Timothy Sean Quinn, Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2016.
- ”Phenomenological Interpretations with Respect to Aristotle: Indication of the Hermeneutical Situation”, trans. Michael Baur, trans. modified by Theodore Kiesel and Thomas Sheehan, *Becoming Heidegger: On the Trail of His Early Occasional Writings, 1910–1927*, eds. Theodore Kiesel and Thomas Sheehan, Seattle: Noesis Press, 2010. (“Phänomenologische Interpretationen zu Aristoteles [Anzeige der hermeneutischen Situation]” [1922], *Dilthey-Jahrbuch für Philosophie und Geschichte der Geisteswissenschaften* Bd 6/1986).
- ”Being-There and Being-True” [1923], trans. Brian Hansford Bowles, *Becoming Heidegger: On the Trail of his Early Occasional Writings, 1910–1927*, eds. Theodore Kiesel and Thomas Sheehan, Seattle: Noesis Press, 2010.
- ”On the Essence of Truth”, trans. John Sallis, *Pathmarks*, ed. William McNeill, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998. (“Vom Wesen der Wahrheit” [1930], *Wegmarken*, GA 9, Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2004.)
- ”Zur Immatrikulation” [1933], *Reden und andere Zeugnisse eines Lebensweges*, GA 16, Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2000.
- ”Schlageter (May 26, 1933)”, *The Heidegger Controversy: A Critical Reader*, trans. William S. Lewis, ed. Richard Wolin, Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1993. (“Rede zu Ehren des Gedenkens an Schlageter”, Guido Schneeberger, *Nachlese zu Heidegger*, Bern: Suhr, 1962).
- ”The Self-Assertion of the German University”, trans. Steven Galt Crowell, Joel Golb and William S. Lewis, *The Heidegger Controversy: A Critical Reader*, ed. Richard Wolin, Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1993. (“Die Selbstbehauptung der deutschen Universität” [1933], *Reden und andere Zeugnisse eines Lebensweges*, GA 16, Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2000).
- ”Hier ist es Leider sehr trostlos” [1933], *Reden und andere Zeugnisse eines Lebensweges*, GA 16, Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2000.
- ”Labor Service and the University”, *The Heidegger Controversy: A Critical Reader*, trans. Steven Galt Crowell, Joel Golb and William S. Lewis, ed. Richard Wolin, Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1993. (“Arbeitsdienst und Universität” [1933], *Reden und andere Zeugnisse eines Lebensweges*, GA 16, Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2000).
- ”Schöpferische Landschaft: Warum bleiben wir in der Provinz?” [1933], *Aus Der Ehr-fahrung des Denkens*, GA 13, Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1983.

- “German Men and Women! (November 10, 1933)”, trans. William S. Lewis, *The Heidegger Controversy*, ed. Richard Wolin, Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1993. (“Aufruf zur Wahl: Deutsche Männer und Frauen! [10. November 1933]”, *Reden und andere Zeugnisse eines Lebensweges*, GA 16, Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2000.)
- “Declaration of Support for Adolf Hitler and the National Socialist State (November 11, 1933)”, trans. William S. Lewis, *The Heidegger Controversy*, ed. Richard Wolin, Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1993. (“Ansprache am 11. November 1933 in Leipzig”, *Reden und andere Zeugnisse eines Lebensweges*, GA 16, Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2000.)
- “On the Essence and Concept of Nature, History and State”, *Nature, History, State 1933–1934*, trans. Gregory Fried and Richard Polt, eds. Gregory Fried and Richard Polt, New York: Bloomsbury, 2015. (*Über Wesen und Begriff von Natur, Geschichte und Staat [1933–1934]*, *Heidegger und der Nationalsozialismus. Dokumente*, Heidegger Jahrbuch 4, eds. Alfred Denker and Holger Zabrowski, Freiburg/München: Verlag Karl Alber, 2009).
- ”Hegel’s Philosophy of Right”, trans. Andrew J. Mitchell, *On Hegel’s Philosophy of Right. The 1934–1935 Seminar and Interpretive Essays*, eds. Peter Trawny, Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback and Michael Marder, New York: Bloomsbury, 2014. (*Seminare Hegel – Schelling [1927–1957]*, GA 86, Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2011).
- “The Origin of the Work of Art”, trans. Julian Yong and Kenneth Haynes, *Off the Beaten Track*, eds. Julian Young and Kenneth Haynes, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002. (“Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes” [1935 –1936], *Holzwege*, GA 5, Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1977).
- “Plato’s Doctrine of Truth”, trans. Thomas Sheehan, *Pathmarks*, ed. William McNeill, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998. (“Platons Lehre von der Wahrheit” [1931–1932/1940], *Wegmarken*, GA 9, Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2004.)
- “Letter on Humanism”, trans. Frank A. Capuzzi, *Pathmarks*, ed. William McNeill, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998. (“Brief über den Humanismus” [1946], *Wegmarken*, GA 9, Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2004).
- “On the Question of Being”, trans. William McNeill, *Pathmarks*, ed. William McNeill, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998. (“Zur Seinsfrage” [1955], *Wegmarken*, GA 9, Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2004).
- “Time and Being”, *On Time and Being*, trans. Joan Stambaugh, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002. (“Zeit und Sein” [1962], *Zur Sache des Denkens*, GA 14, Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2007).

Other Works

- Abu El-haj, Nadja, *Facts on the Ground: Archeological Practice and Territorial Self-Fashioning in Israeli Society*, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2001.
- Adorno, Theodor W., *The Jargon of Authenticity*, trans. Kurt Tarnowski and Frederic Will, Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973.

- Agamben, Giorgio, *State of Exception*, trans. Kevin Attell, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005.
- *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995.
- *The Time that Remains. A Commentary on the Letter to the Romans*, trans. Patricia Dailey, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005.
- *Remnants of Auschwitz: The Witness and the Archive*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen, New York: Zone Books, 2002.
- Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. David Ross, Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 1980.
- *Politics*, trans. H. Rackham, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1959.
- *Rhetoric*, trans. W. Rhys Roberts, Mineola/New York: Dover Publications, 2004.
- Aurenque, Diana, *Ethosdenken. Auf der Spur einer ethischer Fragestellung in der Philosophie Martin Heideggers*, Freiburg/München: Verlag Karl Alber, 2011.
- Badiou, Alain, *Saint Paul: The Foundation of Universalism*, trans. Ray Brassier, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003.
- *Metapolitics*, trans. Jason Barker, London: Verso, 2005.
- "St. Paul, Founder of the Universal Subject", *St Paul among the Philosophers*, eds. John D. Caputo and Linda Martin Alcoff, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009.
- Baldwin, Jennifer, *How to Navigate Post-Truth and Alternative Facts*, Lanham: Lexington Books, 2020.
- Baluch, Faisal, "Arendt's Machiavellian Moment", *European Journal of Political Theory*, vol 3, no. 2 (2013).
- Bambach, Charles, *Heidegger's Roots: Nietzsche, National Socialism and the Greeks*, Ithaca/London: Cornell University Press, 2003.
- Barash, Jeffrey Andrew, "The Political Dimension of the Public World: On Hannah Arendt's Interpretation of Martin Heidegger", *Hannah Arendt: Twenty Years Later*, eds. Larry May and Jerome Kohn, Cambridge Mass.: MIT Press, 1997.
- Barrowclough, David, *Digging for Hitler: The Nazi Archeologists Search for an Aryan Past*, Fonthill Media: Stroud, 2016. E-book.
- Barth, Heinrich, "Vom Ursprung des Kunstwerks. Vortrag von Martin Heidegger", *Heidegger und der Nationalsozialismus, vol 1, Dokumente*, eds. Alfred Denker and Holger Zaborowski, Freiburg/München: Karl Aber, 2009.
- Baudrillard, Jean, "Simulacra and Science Fiction", *Simulacra and Simulation*, trans. Sheila Faria Glaser, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994.
- Belardinelli, Sergio, "Martin Heidegger und Hannah Arendt's Begriff von 'Welt' und 'Praxis'", *Zur philosophischen Aktualität Heideggers*, eds. Dietrich Papenfuss and Otto Pöggler, Frankfurt: Vittorio Klostermann, 1990.
- Beiner, Ronald, "Rereading 'Truth and Politics'", *Philosophy and Social Criticism*, vol. 3, no 1-2 (2008).

- Benhabib, Seyla, *The Reluctant Modernism of Hannah Arendt*, Lanham/Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield, 2003.
- Benjamin, Walter, *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, trans. J. A. Underwood, London: Penguin, 2008. E-book.
- Berdinesen, Hein and Storm Torjussen, Lars Petter, *Heideggers testamente: Filosofien, nazismen og de svarte heftene*, Oslo: Dreylers forlag, 2019.
- Bernasconi, Robert, “‘The Misinterpretation of Violence’: Heidegger’s Reading of Hegel and Schmitt on Gewalt”, *Research in Phenomenology*, vol. 45, no. 2 (2015).
- Bernstein, J. M., *The Fate of Art: Aesthetic Alienation from Kant to Derrida to Adorno*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992.
- Birmingham, Peg, *Hannah Arendt and Human Rights: The Predicament of Common Responsibility*, Bloomington/Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2006.
- “A Lying World Order: Political Deception and the Threat of Totalitarianism”, *Thinking in Dark Times: Hannah Arendt on Ethics and Politics*, eds. Roger Berkowitz, Jeffrey Katz and Thomas Keenan, New York: Fordham University Press, 2010.
- Bok, Sissela, *Lying: Moral Choice in Public and Private Life*, New York: Vintage Books, 1999.
- Boorstin, Daniel, *The Genius of American Politics*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1953.
- *The Americans: The Colonial Experience*, New York: Random House, 1958.
- *The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America*, New York: Vintage Books, 1992. E-book.
- Bourdieu, Pierre, *The Political Ontology of Martin Heidegger*, Cambridge: Polity, 2005.
- Brennan, Andrew and Malpas, Jeff, “The Space of Appearance and the Space of Truth”, *Action and Appearance: Ethics and the Politics of Writing in Hannah Arendt*, eds. Anna Yeatman, Phillip Hansen, Magdalena Zolkos and Charles Barbour, New York/London: Continuum, 2011.
- Brook, Angus, *The Early Heidegger and Ethics: The Notion of Ethos in Martin Heidegger’s Early Career*, Saarbrücken: VDM Verlag Dr. Müller, 2009.
- Bronner, Stephen Eric, *A Rumor About the Jews: Conspiracy, Anti-Semitism and the Protocols of Zion*, Cham: Palgrave MacMillan, 2019.
- Buckler, Steve, *Hannah Arendt and Political Theory*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012.
- Buhre, Frida, *Speaking Other Times: Hannah Arendt and the Temporality of Politics*, Uppsala: Uppsala University Press, 2019.
- Calle-Gruber, Mireille (ed.), *Heidegger, Philosophy, and Politics: The Heidelberg Conference. Jacques Derrida, Hans-Georg Gadamer and Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe*, trans. Jeff Fort, New York: Fordham University Press, 2016.
- Canovan, Margaret, *Hannah Arendt: A Reinterpretation of her Political Thought*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

- “Introduction”, Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998.
- “Politics as Culture: Hannah Arendt and the Public Realm”, *History of Political Thought*, vol. 6, no. 3 (1985).
- Caruth, Cathy, “Lying and History”, *Thinking in Dark Times: Hannah Arendt on Ethics and Politics*, eds. Roger Berkowitz, Jeffrey Katz and Thomas Keenan, New York: Fordham University Press, 2010.
- Casey, Edward, *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History*, Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998.
- Cimino, Antonio, *Enactment, Politics and Truth: Pauline Themes in Agamben, Badiou, and Heidegger*, New York: Bloomsbury, 2018.
- Cohen, Norman, *Warrant for Genocide: The Myth of the Jewish World Conspiracy and the Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, London: Serif, 2006.
- Dahlstrom, Daniel O., *Heidegger’s Concept of Truth*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- Dallery, Arleen B, Scott, Charles E. and Roberts, P. Holley (eds.), *Ethics and Danger: Essays on Heidegger and Continental Thought*, Albany: State University Press, 1992.
- Davies, Evan, *Post-Truth: Why We Have Reached Peak Bullshit and What We Can Do About It*, New York: Little, Brown and Co, 2017.
- D’Entrèves, Maurizio Passerin, “Arendt’s Theory of Judgment”, *The Cambridge Companion to Hannah Arendt*, ed. Dana Villa, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- de Beistegui, Miguel, *Heidegger and the Political Dystopias*, London/New York: Routledge, 2005.
- de Cheney, Sean Pillot, *The Post-Truth Business: How to Rebuild Brand Authenticity in a Distrusting World*, London: Kogan Page Ltd, 2018.
- Deleuze, Gilles, *Proust and Signs*, trans. Richard Howard, London and New York: Continuum, 2008.
- de Mann, Paul, “Hegel on the Sublime”, *Displacement – Derrida and After*, ed. Mark Krupnick, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983.
- Derrida, Jacques, *Of Spirit. Heidegger and the Question*, trans. Geoffrey Bennington and Rachel Bowlby, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991.
- “History of the Lie: Prolegomena”, *Without Alibi*, ed. Kamuf, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002.
- “Of an Apocalyptic Tone Recently Adopted in Philosophy”, trans. John P. Leavey, *Oxford Literary Review*, vol 6, no. 2 (2012).
- de Sá, Franco, “Politics and Ontological Difference”, *On Hegel’s Philosophy of Right. The 1934–1935 Seminar and Interpretive Essays*, eds. Peter Trawny, Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback and Michael Marder, New York: Bloomsbury, 2014.
- di Cesare, Donatella, *Heidegger and the Jews: The Black Notebooks*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2018.

- Duff, Alexander, *Heidegger and Politics: The Ontology of Radical Discontent*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015.
- Ehrmantraut, Michael, *Heidegger's Philosophic Pedagogy*, London/New York: Continuum, 2010.
- Enaudeau, Corinne, "Hannah Arendt: Politics, Opinion, Truth", trans. Dorothée Bonnigal Katz, *Social Research*, vol 74, no. 4 (2007).
- Farias, Viktor, *Heidegger and Nazism*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989.
- Farin, Ingo and Malpas, Jeff, (eds.), *Reading Heidegger's Black Notebooks 1931–1941*, Cambridge Mass.: MIT Press, 2016.
- Farkas, Johan and Shou, Jannick, *Post-Truth, Fake News and Democracy: Mapping the Politics of Falsehood*, New York and London: Routledge, 2020.
- Faye, Emmanuel, *The Introduction of Nazism into Philosophy in the Light of the Unpublished Seminars of 1933–1935*, New Haven: Yale University, 2009.
- Felman, Shoshana, "Theaters of Justice: Arendt in Jerusalem, the Eichmann Trial, and the Redefinition of Legal Meaning in the Wake of the Holocaust", *Critical Inquiry* 27, no. 2.
- Fenichel Pitkin, Hanna, *The Attack of the Blob: Hannah Arendt's Concept of the Social*, Chicago/London: The University of Chicago Press, 1998.
- Foucault, Michel, *The Government of Self and Others: Lectures at the Collège de France 1982–1983*, trans. Graham Burchell, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011. E-book.
- *The Courage of the Truth: Lectures at the Collège de France 1983–1984*, trans. Graham Burchell, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011. E-book.
- "What is Enlightenment", trans. Catherine Porter, *Ethics, Subjectivity and Truth*, ed. P. Rabinow, New York: The New Press, 1997.
- Franck, Didier, *Heidegger et le problème de l'espace*, Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1986.
- Fuller, Steve, *Post-Truth: Knowledge as a Power Game*, London: Anthem Press, 2018.
- Gauthier, David J., *Martin Heidegger, Emmanuel Levinas, and the Politics of Dwelling*, Lanham/New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2011.
- Gines, Kathryn T., *Hannah Arendt and the Negro Question*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014.
- Gordon, Haim and Gordon, Rivca, *Heidegger on Truth and Myth: A Rejection of Post-modernism*, New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 2006.
- Groys, Boris, *The Total Art of Stalinism: Avant-garde, Aesthetic Dictatorship, and Beyond*, trans. Charles Rougle, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992.
- Grossner, Florian, *Revolution denken: Heidegger und das Politische 1919 bis 1969*, C.H. Beck: München, 2011.
- Gross, Daniel M. and Kemmann, Ansgar, (eds.), *Heidegger and Rhetoric*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005.
- Habermas, Jürgen, "Work and Weltanschauung: The Heidegger Controversy from a German Perspective", *Critical Inquiry* 15/2 (1998).

- “Hannah Arendt’s Communications Concept of Power”, *Hannah Arendt: Critical Essays*, eds. Lewis Hinchman and Sandra Hinchman, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994.
- “Hannah Arendt: On the Concept of Power”, *Philosophical-Political Profiles*, trans. Frederick Lawrence, Cambridge: MIT Press, 1985.
- Herzog, Annabel, “Reporting and Story-telling: Eichmann in Jerusalem as Political Testimony”, *Thesis Eleven*, no 69 (2002).
- Honig, Bonnie, *Political Theory and the Displacement of Politics*, Ithaca/London: Cornell University Press, 1993.
- Hegel, G. W. F., *Philosophy of Right*, trans. S. W. Dyde, New York: Prometheus Books, 1996.
- *The Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A. V. Miller, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977.
- Hitler, Adolf, *Mein Kampf: The Official 1939 Unexpurgated Edition*, trans. James Murphy (London: Hurst and Blackett Ltd., 1943): <https://archive.org/details/MeinKampf>.
- Husserl, Edmund, *Aufsätze und Vorträge*, *Husserliana XXVII*, Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1989.
- *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy*, trans. W. R. Boyce Gibson, London/New York: Routledge, 2012.
- *Logical Investigations*, trans. J. N. Findlay, London/New York: Routledge, 2001.
- *Cartesian Meditations: An Introduction to Phenomenology*, trans. Dorion Cairns, Hague/Boston/ London: Martinus Nijhoff, 1982.
- “Foundational Investigations of the Phenomenological Origin of the Spatiality of Nature”, trans. Fred Kersten, *Shorter Works*, eds. Peter McCormick and Frederick A. Elliston, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981.
- Jay, Martin, *The Virtues of Mendacity: On Lying in Politics*, Charlottesville/London: University of Virginia Press, 2010.
- “Pseudology: Derrida on Arendt and Lying in Politics”, *Essays from the Edge: Parerga and Paralipomena*, Charlottesville/London: University of Virginia Press, 2011.
- Jünger, Ernst, *The Worker: Dominion and Form*, trans. Bogdan Costea and Laurence Paul Hemming, ed. Laurence Paul Hemming, Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2017.
- Kant, Immanuel, “An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?”, trans. David L. Colclasure, *Toward Perpetual Peace and Other Writings on Politics, Peace and History*, ed. Pauline Kleingeld, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006.
- Kisiel, Theodore, “Rhetorical Protopolitics in Heidegger and Arendt”, *Heidegger and Rhetoric*, eds. Daniel M. Gross and Ansgar Kemmann, Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005.
- “Situating Rhetorical Politics in Heidegger’s Protopractical Ontology (1923–1925: The French Occupy the Ruhr)”, *International Journal of Philosophical Studies* 8 (2000).
- Koyré, Alexandre, “The Political Function of the Modern Lie”, *Contemporary Jewish Record*, vol VIII (1945).

- Kristeva, Julia, Hannah Arendt – *Life is a Narrative*, Toronto/Buffalo/London: University of Toronto Press, 2001.
- La Caze, Marguerite, “Its Easier to Lie if you Believe it Yourself: Derrida, Arendt and the Modern Lie”, *Law, Culture and the Humanities*, vol 13, no 2 (2017).
- Lacoue-Labarthe, Philippe, *Heidegger, Art and Politics*, trans. Chris Turner, Cambridge, Mass: Basil Blackwell, 1990.
- *Heidegger and the Politics of Poetry*, trans. Jeff Fort, Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2007.
- Lee, Desmond, “Translator’s Introduction”, Plato, *The Republic*, trans. Desmond Lee, London: Penguin Books, 1987.
- Lindberg, Susanna, “Hegel in 1933”, *On Hegel’s Philosophy of Right. The 1934–1935 Seminar and Interpretive Essays*, eds. Peter Trawny, Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback and Michael Marder, New York: Bloomsbury, 2014.
- Ludz, Ursula, “On the Truth-and-Politics Section in the *Denktagebuch*”, *Artifacts of Thinking: Reading Hannah Arendt’s Denktagebuch*, eds. Berkowitz and Storey, New York: Fordham University Press, 2017.
- Löwith, *My Life in Germany before and after 1933: A Report*, trans. Elizabeth King, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994.
- “The Political Implications of Heidegger’s Existentialism”, *The Heidegger Controversy: A Critical Reader*, ed. Richard Wolin, Cambridge Mass/London: MIT Press, 1993.
- Machiavelli, Niccoló, *The Prince*, trans. Tim Parks, London: Penguin Books, 2009.
- Niccoló Machiavelli, *Il Principe*, capitolo XV, Sansoni: 1852.
- Malpas, Jeff, *Heidegger’s Topology: Being, Place, World*, Cambridge Mass: MIT Press, 2006.
- Marcuse, Herbert, “Heidegger’s Politics: An Interview”, *Marcuse: Critical Theory and the Promise of Utopia*, eds. Robert Pippen et al., South Hadley, Mass.: Bergin and Garvey, 1987.
- McComiskey, Bruce, *Post-Truth Rhetoric and Composition*, Logan: Utah State University Press, 2017.
- McIntyre, Lee, *Post-Truth*, Cambridge, Mass. and London: The MIT Press, 2018.
- McManus, Denis *Heidegger and the Measure of Truth: Themes from his Early Philosophy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.
- McNeill, William, *The Time of Life. Heidegger and Ethos*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006.
- *Glance of the Eye: Heidegger, Aristotle and the Ends of Theory*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999.
- Mitchell, Andrew J. and Trawny, Peter, (eds.), *Heidegger’s Black Notebooks: Responses to Anti-Semitism*, Columbia: Columbia University Press, 2017.
- Mouffe, Chantal, *The Return of the Political*, London: Verso, 1993.
- Nancy, Jean-Luc, “The Being-with of the Being-there”, *Continental Philosophical Review*, 41 (2008).

- Nelson, John S., "Politics and Truth: Arendt's Problematic", *American Journal of Political Science*, vol. 22, no. 2 (1978).
- Ott, Hugo, *Martin Heidegger: A Political Life*, trans. Allan Blunden, London: Fontana, 1994.
- Pashkova, Valeria and Pashkov, Mikhail, "Truth and Truthfulness in Politics: Rereading Hannah Arendt's Essay 'Socrates'", *Philosophy Today*, vol. 62, no. 2 (2018).
- Plato, *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*, ed. Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009.
- *The Republic*, trans. Desmond Lee, London: Penguin Books, 1987.
- Peters, Michael A., Rider, Sharon, Hyvönen, Mats, Besley and Tina Besley (eds.), *Post-Truth, Fake News: Viral Modernity and Higher Education*, New York: Springer Publishing, 2018.
- Phillips, James, "Between the Tyranny of Opinion and the Despotism of Rational Truth: Arendt on Facts and Acting in Concert", *New German Critique*, no. 119 (2013).
- Prado, C. G. (ed.), *America's Post-Truth Phenomenon*, Westport: Praeger Publishers Inc, 2018.
- Pringle, Heather, *The Master Plan: Himmler's Scholars and the Holocaust*, London: Harper Collins, 2014. E-book.
- Rancière, Jacques, "Who Is the Subject of the Rights of Man?", *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, Vol. 103, no. 2/3 (2004).
- Rapacioli, Paul, *Good Sweden, Bad Sweden: The Use and Abuse of Values in a Post-Truth World*, Stockholm: Volante, 2018.
- Rockmore, Tom (ed.), *The Heidegger Case: On Philosophy and Politics*, Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992.
- Sá Cavalcante Schuback, Marcia and Marder, Michael, "Philosophy without Right? Some Notes on Heidegger's Notes for the 1934/35 'Hegel Seminar'", *On Hegel's Philosophy of Right. The 1934–1935 Seminar and Interpretive Essays*, eds. Peter Trawny, Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback and Michael Marder, New York: Bloomsbury, 2014.
- Safranski, Rüdiger, *Martin Heidegger: Between Good and Evil*, trans. Ewald Osers, Cambridge Mass./London: Harvard University Press, 1998.
- Schmitt, Carl, *The Concept of the Political*, trans. George Schwab, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1996.
- *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty*, trans. George Schwab, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2005.
- *State, Movement, People: The Triadic Structure of the Political Unity*, trans. Simona Draghici, Corvallis Or.: Plutarch Press, 2001.
- Segel, Benjamin W., *A Lie and a Libel: The History of the Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, trans. Richard S. Levy, Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1995.
- Selberg, Anna-Karin, "The Contemporary Art of Lying", *Eurozine*, Eurozine.com, May, 2019 and Public Seminar, Public Seminar.com, 2020. Last checked 2021-03-18.

- Sehlberg, Johan, *Of Affliction: The Experience of Thought in Gilles Deleuze by Way of Marcel Proust*, Huddinge: Södertörn Philosophical Studies, 2020.
- Sidky, H., *Science and Anthropology in a Post-Truth World*, Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2020.
- Sim, Stuart, *Post-Truth, Skepticism and Power*, London, Berlin and New York: Springer Nature, 2019.
- Sjöholm, Cecilia, *Doing Aesthetics with Arendt: How to See Things*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2015.
- *Speech in the Belly? Hannah Arendt and the Ear of Critical Thought*, Königshausen and Neumann: Würzburg, 2020.
- Staiger, Emil, "Noch einmal Heidegger", *Heidegger und der Nationalsozialismus, vol 1, Dokumente*, eds. Alfred Denker and Holger Zaborowski, Freiburg/München: Karl Alber, 2009.
- Strauss, Leo, *The City and Man*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1964.
- Struever, Nancy, "Alltäglichkeit, Timefulness, in the Heideggerian Program", *Heidegger and Rhetoric*, eds. D. M. Gross and A. Kemman, Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005.
- Suskind, Ron, "Faith, Certainty and the Presidency of George W. Bush", *The New York Times*, oct. 17 (2004).
- Syberberg, Hans Jürgen, *Die freudlose Gesellschaft: Notizen aus dem letzten Jahr*, Munich/Vienna: Hanser, 1981.
- Taminiaux, Jacques, *The Thracian Maid and the Professional Thinker: Arendt and Heidegger*, trans. Michael Gendre, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997.
- "Heidegger and praxis", *The Heidegger Case: On Philosophy and Politics*, eds. Tom Rockmore and Joseph Margolis, Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992.
- Tchir, Trevor, "Daimon Appearances and the Heideggerian Influence in Arendt's Account of Political Action", *Action and Appearance: Ethics and the Politics of Writing in Hannah Arendt*, eds. Anna Yeatman, Phillip Hansen, Magdalena Zolkos and Charles Barbour, New York/London: Continuum, 2011.
- Trawny, Peter, *Heidegger and the Myth of a Jewish World Conspiracy*, trans. Andrew J. Mitchell, Chicago/London: The University of Chicago, 2015.
- *Freedom to Fail: Heidegger's Anarchy*, trans. Ian Alexander Moore and Christopher Turner, Cambridge/Malden: Polity, 2015.
- "Heidegger, Hegel and the Political", *On Hegel's Philosophy of Right. The 1934–1935 Seminar and Interpretive Essays*, ed. Peter Trawny, Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback and Michael Marder, New York: Bloomsbury, 2014.
- Tugendhat, Ernst, *Der Wahrheitsbegriff bei Husserl und Heidegger*, Berlin: de Gruyter, 1970.
- The Holy Bible*, King James' version, Peabody: Hendrickson, 2011.
- Villa, Dana, *Arendt and Heidegger: The Fate of the Political*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996.

- *Politics, Philosophy, Terror: Essays on the Thought of Hannah Arendt*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999.
- "The Banality of Philosophy: Arendt on Heidegger and Eichmann", Hannah Arendt: Twenty Years Later, ed Larry May and Jerome Kohn, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1997.
- Villela-Petit, Maria, "Heidegger's Conception of Space", *Critical Heidegger*, ed. Christopher Macann, London: Routledge, 1996.
- Wallenstein, Sven-Olov, "Husserl and the Earth", *Dis-Orientations: Philosophy, Literature and the Lost Grounds of Modernity*, eds. Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback and Tora Lane, London/New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2015.
- "The Destruction of Aesthetics: Benjamin, Jünger, Heidegger", *Essays, Lectures*, Stockholm: Axl Books, 2007.
- Wellmer, Albrecht, "Hannah Arendt on Judgment", *Hannah Arendt: Twenty Years Later*, eds. Larry May and Jerome Kohn, Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1997.
- Wikforss, Åsa, *Alternativa fakta: Om kunskapen och dess fiender*, Stockholm: Fri tanke, 2017.
- Wolin, Richard, *The Politics of Being: The Political Thought of Martin Heidegger*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1990.
- Wolin, Richard (ed), *The Heidegger Controversy: A Critical Reader*, Cambridge Mass/London: MIT Press, 1993.
- Wrathall, Mark A., *Heidegger and Unconcealment*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.
- Yong, Julian, *Heidegger, Philosophy, Nazism*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- Žižek, Slavoj, *The Puppet and the Dwarf: The Perverse Core of Christianity*, Cambridge: MIT Press, 2003.
- "From Job to Christ: A Paulinian Reading of Chesterton", *St Paul among the Philosophers* eds. John D. Caputo and Linda Martín Alcoff, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009.
- Zerilli, Linda, *A Democratic Theory of Judgment*, Chicago/London: The University of Chicago Press, 2016.
- *Feminism and the Abyss of Freedom*, Chicago/London: The University of Chicago Press, 2005.
- "Truth and Politics", *Theory and Event*, vol. 9, no. 4 (2006).
- Åberg, Nils, "Herman Wirth: en germansk kulturprofet", *Fornvännen*, no. 28 (1933).

Södertörn Doctoral Dissertations

1. Jolanta Aidukaite, *The Emergence of the Post-Socialist Welfare State: The case of the Baltic States: Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania*, 2004
2. Xavier Fraudet, *Politique étrangère française en mer Baltique (1871–1914): De l'exclusion à l'affirmation*, 2005
3. Piotr Wawrzeńiuk, *Confessional Civilising in Ukraine: The Bishop Iosyf Shumliansky and the Introduction of Reforms in the Diocese of Lviv 1668–1708*, 2005
4. Andrej Kotljarchuk, *In the Shadows of Poland and Russia: The Grand Duchy of Lithuania and Sweden in the European Crisis of the mid-17th Century*, 2006
5. Håkan Blomqvist, *Nation, ras och civilisation i svensk arbetarrörelse före nazismen*, 2006
6. Karin S Lindelöf, *Om vi nu ska bli som Europa: Könsskapande och normalitet bland unga kvinnor i transitionens Polen*, 2006
7. Andrew Stickley, *On Interpersonal Violence in Russia in the Present and the Past: A Sociological Study*, 2006
8. Arne Ek, *Att konstruera en uppslutning kring den enda vägen: Om folkrörelsernas modernisering i skuggan av det Östeuropeiska systemsiftet*, 2006
9. Agnes Ers, *I mänskighetens namn: En etnologisk studie av ett svenskt biståndsprojekt i Rumänien*, 2006
10. Johnny Rodin, *Rethinking Russian Federalism: The Politics of Intergovernmental Relations and Federal Reforms at the Turn of the Millennium*, 2006
11. Kristian Petrov, *Tillbaka till framtiden: Modernitet, postmodernitet och generationsidentitet i Gorbačëvs glasnost' och perestrojka*, 2006
12. Sophie Söderholm Werkö, *Patient patients? Achieving Patient Empowerment through Active Participation, Increased Knowledge and Organisation*, 2008
13. Peter Bötcker, *Leviatan i arkipelagen: Staten, förvaltningen och samhället. Fallet Estland*, 2007
14. Matilda Dahl, *States under scrutiny: International organizations, transformation and the construction of progress*, 2007
15. Margrethe B. Søvik, *Support, resistance and pragmatism: An examination of motivation in language policy in Kharkiv, Ukraine*, 2007

16. Yulia Gradskova, *Soviet People with female Bodies: Performing beauty and maternity in Soviet Russia in the mid 1930–1960s*, 2007
17. Renata Ingbrant, *From Her Point of View: Woman's Anti-World in the Poetry of Anna Świrszczyńska*, 2007
18. Johan Eellend, *Cultivating the Rural Citizen: Modernity, Agrarianism and Citizenship in Late Tsarist Estonia*, 2007
19. Petra Garberding, *Musik och politik i skuggan av nazismen: Kurt Atterberg och de svensk-tyska musikrelationerna*, 2007
20. Aleksei Semenenko, *Hamlet the Sign: Russian Translations of Hamlet and Literary Canon Formation*, 2007
21. Vytautas Petronis, *Constructing Lithuania: Ethnic Mapping in the Tsarist Russia, ca. 1800–1914*, 2007
22. Akvile Motiejunaite, *Female employment, gender roles, and attitudes: The Baltic countries in a broader context*, 2008
23. Tove Lindén, *Explaining Civil Society Core Activism in Post-Soviet Latvia*, 2008
24. Pelle Åberg, *Translating Popular Education: Civil Society Cooperation between Sweden and Estonia*, 2008
25. Anders Nordström, *The Interactive Dynamics of Regulation: Exploring the Council of Europe's monitoring of Ukraine*, 2008
26. Fredrik Doeser, *In Search of Security After the Collapse of the Soviet Union: Foreign Policy Change in Denmark, Finland and Sweden, 1988–1993*, 2008
27. Zhanna Kravchenko. *Family (versus) Policy: Combining Work and Care in Russia and Sweden*, 2008
28. Rein Jüriado, *Learning within and between public-private partnerships*, 2008
29. Elin Boalt, *Ecology and evolution of tolerance in two cruciferous species*, 2008
30. Lars Forsberg, *Genetic Aspects of Sexual Selection and Mate Choice in Salmonids*, 2008
31. Eglė Rindzevičiūtė, *Constructing Soviet Cultural Policy: Cybernetics and Governance in Lithuania after World War II*, 2008
32. Joakim Philipson, *The Purpose of Evolution: 'Struggle for existence' in the Russian-Jewish press 1860–1900*, 2008
33. Sofie Bedford, *Islamic activism in Azerbaijan: Repression and mobilization in a post-Soviet context*, 2009
34. Tommy Larsson Segerlind, *Team Entrepreneurship: A process analysis of the venture team and the venture team roles in relation to the innovation process*, 2009
35. Jenny Svensson, *The Regulation of Rule-Following: Imitation and Soft Regulation in the European Union*, 2009
36. Stefan Hallgren, *Brain Aromatase in the guppy, Poecilia reticulata: Distribution, control and role in behavior*, 2009

37. Karin Ellencrona, *Functional characterization of interactions between the flavivirus NS5 protein and PDZ proteins of the mammalian host*, 2009
38. Makiko Kanematsu, *Saga och verklighet: Barnboksproduktion i det postsovjjetiska Lettland*, 2009
39. Daniel Lindvall, *The Limits of the European Vision in Bosnia and Herzegovina: An Analysis of the Police Reform Negotiations*, 2009
40. Charlotta Hillerdal, *People in Between – Ethnicity and Material Identity: A New Approach to Deconstructed Concepts*, 2009
41. Jonna Bornemark, *Kunskapens gräns – gränsens vetande*, 2009
42. Adolphine G. Kateka, *Co-Management Challenges in the Lake Victoria Fisheries: A Context Approach*, 2010
43. René León Rosales, *Vid framtidens hitersta gräns: Om pojkar och elevpositioner i en multietnisk skola*, 2010
44. Simon Larsson, *Intelligensaristokrater och arkivmartyrer: Normerna för vetenskaplig skicklighet i svensk historieforskning 1900–1945*, 2010
45. Håkan Lättman, *Studies on spatial and temporal distributions of epiphytic lichens*, 2010
46. Alia Jaensson, *Pheromonal mediated behaviour and endocrine response in salmonids: The impact of cypermethrin, copper, and glyphosate*, 2010
47. Michael Wigerius, *Roles of mammalian Scribble in polarity signaling, virus offense and cell-fate determination*, 2010
48. Anna Hedtjärn Wester, *Män i kostym: Prinsar, konstnärer och tegelbärare vid sekelskiftet 1900*, 2010
49. Magnus Linnarsson, *Postgång på växlande villkor: Det svenska postväsendets organisation under stormaktstiden*, 2010
50. Barbara Kunz, *Kind words, cruise missiles and everything in between: A neoclassical realist study of the use of power resources in U.S. policies towards Poland, Ukraine and Belarus 1989–2008*, 2010
51. Anders Bartonek, *Philosophie im Konjunktiv: Nichtidentität als Ort der Möglichkeit des Utopischen in der negativen Dialektik Theodor W. Adornos*, 2010
52. Carl Cederberg, *Resaying the Human: Levinas Beyond Humanism and Anti-humanism*, 2010
53. Johanna Ringarp, *Professionens problematik: Lärarkårens kommunalisering och välfärdsstatens förvandling*, 2011
54. Sofi Gerber, *Öst är Väst men Väst är bäst: Östtysk identitetsformering i det förenade Tyskland*, 2011
55. Susanna Sjödin Lindenskoug, *Manlighetens bortre gräns: Tidlagsrättegångar i Livland åren 1685–1709*, 2011
56. Dominika Polanska, *The emergence of enclaves of wealth and poverty: A sociological study of residential differentiation in post-communist Poland*, 2011

57. Christina Douglas, *Kärlek per korrespondens: Två förlovade par under andra hälften av 1800-talet*, 2011
58. Fred Saunders, *The Politics of People – Not just Mangroves and Monkeys: A study of the theory and practice of community-based management of natural resources in Zanzibar*, 2011
59. Anna Rosengren, *Åldrandet och språket: En språkhistorisk analys av hög ålder och åldrande i Sverige cirka 1875–1975*, 2011
60. Emelie Lilliefeldt, *European Party Politics and Gender: Configuring Gender-Balanced Parliamentary Presence*, 2011
61. Ola Svenonius, *Sensitising Urban Transport Security: Surveillance and Policing in Berlin, Stockholm, and Warsaw*, 2011
62. Andreas Johansson, *Dissenting Democrats: Nation and Democracy in the Republic of Moldova*, 2011
63. Wessam Melik, *Molecular characterization of the Tick-borne encephalitis virus: Environments and replication*, 2012
64. Steffen Werther, *SS-Vision und Grenzland-Realität: Vom Umgang dänischer und „volksdeutscher“ Nationalsozialisten in Sønderjylland mit der „großgermanischen“ Ideologie der SS*, 2012
65. Peter Jakobsson, *Öppenhetsindustrin*, 2012
66. Kristin Ilves, *Seaward Landward: Investigations on the archaeological source value of the landing site category in the Baltic Sea region*, 2012
67. Anne Kaun, *Civic Experiences and Public Connection: Media and Young People in Estonia*, 2012
68. Anna Tessmann, *On the Good Faith: A Fourfold Discursive Construction of Zoroastrianism in Contemporary Russia*, 2012
69. Jonas Lindström, *Drömmen om den nya staden: Stadsförnyelse i det postsovetjisk Riga*, 2012
70. Maria Wolrath Söderberg, *Topos som meningsskapare: Retorikens topiska perspektiv på tänkande och lärande genom argumentation*, 2012
71. Linus Andersson, *Alternativ television: Former av kritik i konstnärlig TV-produktion*, 2012
72. Håkan Lättman, *Studies on spatial and temporal distributions of epiphytic lichens*, 2012
73. Fredrik Stiernstedt, *Mediearbete i mediehuset: Produktion i förändring på MTG-radio*, 2013
74. Jessica Moberg, *Piety, Intimacy and Mobility: A Case Study of Charismatic Christianity in Present-day Stockholm*, 2013
75. Elisabeth Hemby, *Historiemåleri och bilder av vardag: Tatjana Nazarenkos konstnärskap i 1970-talets Sovjet*, 2013
76. Tanya Jukkala, *Suicide in Russia: A macro-sociological study*, 2013

77. Maria Nyman, *Resandets gränser: Svenska resenärers skildringar av Ryssland under 1700-talet*, 2013
78. Beate Feldmann Eellend, *Visionära planer och vardagliga praktiker: Postmilitära landskap i Östersjöområdet*, 2013
79. Emma Lind, *Genetic response to pollution in sticklebacks: Natural selection in the wild*, 2013
80. Anne Ross Solberg, *The Mahdi wears Armani: An analysis of the Harun Yahya enterprise*, 2013
81. Nikolay Zakharov, *Attaining Whiteness: A Sociological Study of Race and Racialization in Russia*, 2013
82. Anna Kharkina, *From Kinship to Global Brand: The Discourse on Culture in Nordic Cooperation after World War II*, 2013
83. Florence Fröhlig, *A painful legacy of World War II: Nazi forced enlistment: Alsatian/Mosellan Prisoners of war and the Soviet Prison Camp of Tambov*, 2013
84. Oskar Henriksson, *Genetic connectivity of fish in the Western Indian Ocean*, 2013
85. Hans Geir Aasmundsen, *Pentecostalism, Globalisation and Society in Contemporary Argentina*, 2013
86. Anna McWilliams, *An Archaeology of the Iron Curtain: Material and Metaphor*, 2013
87. Anna Danielsson, *On the power of informal economies and the informal economies of power: Rethinking informality, resilience and violence in Kosovo*, 2014
88. Carina Guyard, *Kommunikationsarbete på distans*, 2014
89. Sofia Norling, *Mot "väst": Om vetenskap, politik och transformation i Polen 1989–2011*, 2014
90. Markus Huss, *Motståndets akustik: Språk och (o)ljud hos Peter Weiss 1946–1960*, 2014
91. Ann-Christin Randahl, *Strategiska skribenter: Skrivprocesser i fysik och svenska*, 2014
92. Péter Balogh, *Perpetual borders: German-Polish cross-border contacts in the Szczecin area*, 2014
93. Erika Lundell, *Förkroppsligad fiktion och fikionaliserade kroppar: Levande rollspel i Östersjöregionen*, 2014
94. Henriette Cederlöf, *Alien Places in Late Soviet Science Fiction: The "Unexpected Encounters" of Arkady and Boris Strugatsky as Novels and Films*, 2014
95. Niklas Eriksson, *Urbanism Under Sail: An archaeology of fluit ships in early modern everyday life*, 2014
96. Signe Opermann, *Generational Use of News Media in Estonia: Media Access, Spatial Orientations and Discursive Characteristics of the News Media*, 2014
97. Liudmila Voronova, *Gendering in political journalism: A comparative study of Russia and Sweden*, 2014
98. Ekaterina Kalinina, *Mediated Post-Soviet Nostalgia*, 2014

99. Anders E. B. Blomqvist, *Economic Nationalizing in the Ethnic Borderlands of Hungary and Romania: Inclusion, Exclusion and Annihilation in Szatmár/Satu-Mare, 1867–1944*, 2014
100. Ann-Judith Rabenschlag, *Völkerfreundschaft nach Bedarf: Ausländische Arbeitskräfte in der Wahrnehmung von Staat und Bevölkerung der DDR*, 2014
101. Yuliya Yurchuck, *Ukrainian Nationalists and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army in Post-Soviet Ukraine*, 2014
102. Hanna Sofia Rehnberg, *Organisationer berättar: Narrativitet som resurs i strategisk kommunikation*, 2014
103. Jaakko Turunen, *Semiotics of Politics: Dialogicality of Parliamentary Talk*, 2015
104. Iveta Jurkane-Hobein, *I Imagine You Here Now: Relationship Maintenance Strategies in Long-Distance Intimate Relationships*, 2015
105. Katharina Wesolowski, *Maybe baby? Reproductive behaviour, fertility intentions, and family policies in post-communist countries, with a special focus on Ukraine*, 2015
106. Ann af Burén, *Living Simultaneity: On religion among semi-secular Swedes*, 2015
107. Larissa Mickwitz, *En reformerad lärare: Konstruktionen av en professionell och betygssättande lärare i skolpolitik och skolpraktik*, 2015
108. Daniel Wojahn, *Språkaktivism: Diskussioner om feministiska språkförändringar i Sverige från 1960-talet till 2015*, 2015
109. Héléne Edberg, *Kreativt skrivande för kritiskt tänkande: En fallstudie av studenters arbete med kritisk metarefleksion*, 2015
110. Kristina Volkova, *Fishy Behavior: Persistent effects of early-life exposure to 17 α -ethinylestradiol*, 2015
111. Björn Sjöstrand, *Att tänka det tekniska: En studie i Derridas teknikfilosofi*, 2015
112. Håkan Forsberg, *Kampen om eleverna: Gymnasiefältet och skolmarknadens framväxt i Stockholm, 1987–2011*, 2015
113. Johan Stake, *Essays on quality evaluation and bidding behavior in public procurement auctions*, 2015
114. Martin Gunnarson, *Please Be Patient: A Cultural Phenomenological Study of Haemodialysis and Kidney Transplantation Care*, 2016
115. Nasim Reyhanian Caspillo, *Studies of alterations in behavior and fertility in ethinyl estradiol-exposed zebrafish and search for related biomarkers*, 2016
116. Pernilla Andersson, *The Responsible Business Person: Studies of Business Education for Sustainability*, 2016
117. Kim Silow Kallenberg, *Gränsland: Svensk ungdomsvård mellan vård och straff*, 2016
118. Sari Vuorenpää, *Literacitet genom interaction*, 2016
119. Francesco Zavatti, *Writing History in a Propaganda Institute: Political Power and Network Dynamics in Communist Romania*, 2016

120. Cecilia Annell, *Begärets politiska potential: Feministiska motståndsstrategier i Elin Wågners 'Pennskaftet', Gabriele Reuters 'Aus guter Familie', Hilma Angered-Strandbergs 'Lydia Vik' och Grete Meisel-Hess 'Die Intellektuellen'*, 2016
121. Marco Nase, *Academics and Politics: Northern European Area Studies at Greifswald University, 1917–1992*, 2016
122. Jenni Rinne, *Searching for Authentic Living Through Native Faith – The Maausk movement in Estonia*, 2016
123. Petra Werner, *Ett medialt museum: Lärandets estetik i svensk television 1956–1969*, 2016
124. Ramona Rat, *Un-common Sociality: Thinking sociality with Levinas*, 2016
125. Petter Thureborn, *Microbial ecosystem functions along the steep oxygen gradient of the Landsort Deep, Baltic Sea*, 2016
126. Kajsa-Stina Benulic, *A Beef with Meat: Media and audience framings of environmentally unsustainable production and consumption*, 2016
127. Naveed Asghar, *Ticks and Tick-borne Encephalitis Virus – From nature to infection*, 2016
128. Linn Rabe, *Participation and legitimacy: Actor involvement for nature conservation*, 2017
129. Maryam Adjam, *Minnesspår: Hågkomstens rum och rörelse i skuggan av en flykt*, 2017
130. Kim West, *The Exhibitionary Complex: Exhibition, Apparatus and Media from Kulturhuset to the Centre Pompidou, 1963–1977*, 2017
131. Ekaterina Tarasova, *Anti-nuclear Movements in Discursive and Political Contexts: Between expert voices and local protests*, 2017
132. Sanja Obrenović Johansson, *Från kombifeminism till rörelse: Kvinnlig serbisk organisering i förändring*, 2017
133. Michał Salamonik, *In Their Majesties' Service: The Career of Francesco De Gratta (1613–1676) as a Royal Servant and Trader in Gdańsk*, 2017
134. Jenny Ingridsson, *The Promises of the Free World: Postsocialist Experience in Argentina and the Making of Migrants, Race, and Coloniality*, 2017
135. Julia Malitska, *Negotiating Imperial Rule: Colonists and Marriage in the Nineteenth century Black Sea Steppe*, 2017
136. Natalya Yakusheva, *Parks, Policies and People: Nature Conservation Governance in Post-Socialist EU Countries*, 2017
137. Martin Kellner, *Selective Serotonin Re-uptake Inhibitors in the Environment: Effects of Citalopram on Fish Behaviour*, 2017
138. Krystof Kasprzak, *Vara – Framträdande – Värld: Fenomenets negativitet hos Martin Heidegger, Jan Patočka och Eugen Fink*, 2017
139. Alberto Frigo, *Life-stowing from a Digital Media Perspective: Past, Present and Future*, 2017

140. Maarja Saar, *The Answers You Seek Will Never Be Found At Home: Reflexivity, biographical narratives and lifestyle migration among highly-skilled Estonians*, 2017
141. Anh Mai, *Organizing for Efficiency: Essay on merger policies, independence of authorities, and technology diffusion*, 2017
142. Gustav Strandberg, *Politikens omskakning: Negativitet, samexistens och frihet i Jan Patočkas tänkande*, 2017
143. Lovisa Andén, *Litteratur och erfarenhet i Merleau-Pontys läsning av Proust, Valéry och Stendhal*, 2017
144. Fredrik Bertilsson, *Frihetstida policyskapande: Uppfostringskommissionen och de akademiska konstitutionerna 1738–1766*, 2017
145. Börjeson, Natasja, *Toxic Textiles – Towards responsibility in complex supply chains*, 2017
146. Julia Velkova, *Media Technologies in the Making – User-Driven Software and Infrastructures for computer Graphics Production*, 2017
147. Karin Jonsson, *Fångna i begreppen? Revolution, tid och politik i svensk socialistisk press 1917–1924*, 2017
148. Josefine Larsson, *Genetic Aspects of Environmental Disturbances in Marine Ecosystems – Studies of the Blue Mussel in the Baltic Sea*, 2017
149. Roman Horbyk, *Mediated Europes – Discourse and Power in Ukraine, Russia and Poland during Euromaidan*, 2017
150. Nadezda Petrusenko, *Creating the Revolutionary Heroines: The Case of Female Terrorists of the PSR (Russia, Beginning of the 20th Century)*, 2017
151. Rahel Kuflu, *Bröder emellan: Identitetsformering i det koloniserade Eritrea*, 2018
152. Karin Edberg, *Energilandskap i förändring: Inramningar av kontroversiella lokaliseringar på norra Gotland*, 2018
153. Rebecka Thor, *Beyond the Witness: Holocaust Representation and the Testimony of Images – Three films by Yael Hersonski, Harun Farocki, and Eyal Sivan*, 2018
154. Maria Lönn, *Bruten vithet: Om den ryska femininitetens sinnliga och temporala villkor*, 2018
155. Tove Porseryd, *Endocrine Disruption in Fish: Effects of 17 α -ethinylestradiol exposure on non-reproductive behavior, fertility and brain and testis transcriptome*, 2018
156. Marcel Mangold, *Securing the working democracy: Inventive arrangements to guarantee circulation and the emergence of democracy policy*, 2018
157. Matilda Tudor, *Desire Lines: Towards a Queer Digital Media Phenomenology*, 2018
158. Martin Andersson, *Migration i 1600-talets Sverige: Älvsborgs lösen 1613–1618*, 2018
159. Johanna Pettersson, *What's in a Line? Making Sovereignty through Border Policy*, 2018
160. Irina Seits, *Architectures of Life-Building in the Twentieth Century: Russia, Germany, Sweden*, 2018
161. Alexander Stagnell, *The Ambassador's Letter: On the Less Than Nothing of Diplomacy*, 2019
162. Mari Zetterqvist Blokhuis, *Interaction Between Rider, Horse and Equestrian Trainer – A Challenging Puzzle*, 2019

163. Robin Samuelsson, *Play, Culture and Learning: Studies of Second-Language and Conceptual Development in Swedish Preschools*, 2019
164. Ralph Tafon, *Analyzing the “Dark Side” of Marine Spatial Planning – A study of domination, empowerment and freedom (or power in, of and on planning) through theories of discourse and power*, 2019
165. Ingela Visuri, *Varieties of Supernatural Experience: The case of high-functioning autism*, 2019
166. Mathilde Rehnlund, *Getting the transport right – for what? What transport policy can tell us about the construction of sustainability*, 2019
167. Oscar Törnqvist, *Röster från ingenmansland: En identitetsarkeologi i ett maritimt mellanrum*, 2019
168. Elise Remling, *Adaptation, now? Exploring the Politics of Climate Adaptation through Post-structuralist Discourse Theory*, 2019
169. Eva Karlberg, *Organizing the Voice of Women: A study of the Polish and Swedish women’s movements’ adaptation to international structures*, 2019
170. Maria Pröckl, *Tyngd, sväng och empatisk timing – Förskollärares kroppsliga kunskaper*, 2020
171. Adrià Alcoverro, *The University and the Demand for Knowledge-based Growth: The hegemonic struggle for the future of Higher Education Institutions in Finland and Estonia*, 2020
172. Ingrid Forsler, *Enabling media: Infrastructures, imaginaries and cultural techniques in Swedish and Estonian visual arts education*, 2020
173. Johan Sehlberg, *Of Affliction – The Experience of Thought in Gilles Deleuze by way of Marcel Proust*, 2020
174. Renat Bekkin, *People of reliable loyalty...: Muftiates and the State in Modern Russia*, 2020
175. Olena Podolian, *The Challenge of ‘Stateness’ in Estonia and Ukraine: The international dimension a quarter of a century into independence*, 2020
176. Patrick Seniuk, *Encountering Depression In-Depth: An existential-phenomenological approach to selfhood, depression, and psychiatric practice*, 2020
177. Vasileios Petrogiannis, *European Mobility and Spatial Belongings: Greek and Latvian migrants in Sweden*, 2020
178. Lena Norbäck Ivarsson, *Tracing environmental change and human impact as recorded in sediments from coastal areas of the northwestern Baltic Proper*, 2020
179. Sara Persson, *Corporate Hegemony through Sustainability – A study of sustainability standards and CSR practices as tools to demobilise community resistance in the Albanian oil industry*, 2020
180. Juliana Porsani, *Livelihood Implications of Large-Scale Land Concessions in Mozambique: A case of family farmers’ endurance*, 2020
181. Anders Backlund, *Isolating the Radical Right: Coalition Formation and Policy Adaptation in Sweden*, 2020
182. Nina Carlsson, *One Nation, One Language? National minority and Indigenous recognition in the politics of immigrant integration*, 2021

183. Erik Gråd, *Nudges, Prosocial Preferences & Behavior: Essays in Behavioral Economics*, 2021
184. Anna Enström, *Sinnesstämning, skratt och hypokondri: Om estetisk erfarenhet i Kants tredje Kritik*, 2021
185. Michelle Rydback, *Healthcare Service Marketing in Medical Tourism – An Emerging Market Study*, 2021
186. Fredrik Jahnke, *Toleransens altare och undvikandets hänsynsfullhet: Religion och meningsskapande bland svenska grundskoleelever*, 2021
187. Benny Berggren Newton, *Business Basics – A Grounded Theory for Managing Ethical Behavior in Sales Organizations*, 2021
188. Gabriel Itkes-Sznap, *Nollpunkten. Precisionens betydelse hos Witold Gombrowicz, Inger Christensen och Herta Müller*, 2021
189. Oscar Svanelid, *Att forma tillvaron: Konstruktivism som konstnärligt yrkesarbete hos Geraldo de Barros, Lygia Pape och Lygia Clark*, 2021
190. Anna-Karin Selberg, *Politics and Truth: Heidegger, Arendt and The Modern Political Lie*, 2021

SÖDERTÖRN PHILOSOPHICAL STUDIES

20. Hans Ruin & Jonna Bornemark (red.), *Ad Marciam*, 2017.
21. Gustav Strandberg, *Politikens omskakning: Negativitet, samexistens och frihet i Jan Patočkas tänkande*, 2017.
22. Anders Bartonek & Anders Burman (eds.), *Hegelian Marxism: The Uses of Hegel's Philosophy in Marxist Theory from Georg Lukács to Slavoj Žižek*, 2018.
23. Lars Kleberg, Tora Lane & Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback (eds.), *Words, Bodies, Memory: A Festschrift in honor of Irina Sandomirskaja*, 2019.
24. Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback, Helena Mattsson, Kristina Riegert & Hans Ruin (red.), *Material: Filosofi, Estetik, Arkitektur: Festschrift till Sven-Olov Wallenstein*, 2020.
25. Johan Sehlberg, *Of Affliction: The Experience of Thought in Gilles Deleuze by Way of Marcel Proust*, 2020.
26. Hans Ruin, *Reduktion och reflektion – En inledning till Husserls fenomenologi*, 2020.
27. Anders Burman, Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback & Synne Myrebøe (red.), *En plats för tänkande – Essäer om universitetet och filosofin*, 2020.
28. Anders Bartonek & Sven-Olov Wallenstein (eds.), *Critical Theory – Past, Present, Future*, 2021.
29. Anders Burman & Sven-Olov Wallenstein (eds.), *Benjamin Höijer – Metafysik, estetik, historia*, 2021.
30. Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback & Staffan Ericson (red.), *Tidvatten – Festschrift till Hans Ruin*, 2021.
31. Anna-Karin Selberg, *Politics and Truth: Heidegger, Arendt and the Modern Political Lie*, 2021.

Södertörns högskola | publications@sh.se



Fascism, Hannah Arendt claimed in 1945, has invented a way of “*lying* the truth”. She later came to call this invention the modern political lie, and saw it as a key element in the event of totalitarianism. The present study explores a paradoxical relation between politics and truth in totalitarian movements that can reinvent itself anew, in non-totalitarian forms and under non-totalitarian conditions. Although Martin Heidegger is not a proponent of the modern political lie, the problematical relation between politics and truth, which Arendt addressed in her work, is present in his political writings from the 1930s. While parts of Arendt’s analysis remain implicit, they can be made explicit against the background of Heidegger’s writings.

By studying together Heidegger’s political works and Arendt’s writings on totalitarianism, it is possible to shed light on a problem of politics and truth that can appear again, in contemporary democracies. For Arendt the problem of the modern political lie could not be countered by demanding more truthfulness or fact-checking in politics. What we must instead ask is: what position can truth and facts have in the political realm? Arendt herself embarked upon such a questioning in works after *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. There, she can be seen as developing a new concept of truth, partly in response to the problem of politics and truth in totalitarian movements.

The aim of the present study is to explore the relation between politics and truth in Heidegger and Arendt respectively, as well as with regards to the relation between their works.

Anna-Karin Selberg is a writer and researcher in philosophy at Södertörn University. This is her doctoral dissertation.

Philosophy, Critical and Cultural Theory, School of Culture and Education, Södertörn University.

ISBN 978-91-89109-66-7 (print) / 978-91-89109-67-4 (digital) | Södertörns högskola | publications@sh.se