These commentaries touch on so many and so important aspects of Heidegger’s philosophy that I cannot address all of them within the constraints of the space available. For that reason, I focus only on some of the most important issues and discuss them in a systematic way, rather than trying to follow the actual order in which they are brought up by the different commentators. But I do so in the hope that this will be just a first step towards a much longer and intensive dialogue in the years to come.

The first issue that Bert Dreyfus raises in his commentary is whether Heidegger’s claim that there can be no access to entities without a prior understanding of their being commits him to idealism. The very question, though, makes me think that there may be a basic misunderstanding here. I do not see Heidegger’s account of access (i.e. of the conditions of possibility of experience) and his idealism as two independent claims, such that the first may or may not commit him to the second. In my view, Heidegger’s idealism consists in this account of access. In view of the kind of evidence that Dreyfus appeals to in order to contest the necessity of such commitment, it seems clear to me that the kind of idealism that Dreyfus has in mind is not the same one I am ascribing to Heidegger. The textual evidence that Dreyfus provides shows that Heidegger does not want to infer from his epistemological thesis about the conditions of our access to entities an additional, ontological thesis about the non-existence of entities or their existence-dependence on Dasein. So, he does not subscribe to any variety of what Kant called ‘empirical idealism’, à la Berkeley. Here I cannot agree more with Dreyfus. In fact, with regard to this position one does not even need to distinguish between the writings before and after the Kehre. Although after the Kehre Heidegger makes provocative remarks such as that ‘there is no thing when the word is lacking’, in the context of Heidegger’s further interpretation of this line from Stefan George’s poem it is clear that he is not claiming that things literally do not exist independently of language or that language produces them. As I make explicit in the Preface of the book, in my opinion Heidegger subscribes to a

variety of Kantian transcendental idealism; more specifically, given his aim to
detranscendentalize traditional philosophy, his attempt is to defend a
transcendental idealism based on purely hermeneutic reasons. Thus, in the
same way that Kant’s idealism by no means implies a denial of the existence
of the external world, Heidegger’s idealism has no impact whatsoever with
regard to the existence of entities independently of Dasein. In this sense,
Heidegger, like Kant, is an empirical realist and a transcendental idealist.
What Heidegger sees as the correct insight behind Kant’s transcendental
idealism is the claim that the conditions of possibility of experience are at the
same time the conditions of the possibility of the objects of experience which,
as Dreyfus agrees, is translated within Heidegger’s terminology into the claim
that there can be no access to entities without a prior understanding of their
being. As Heidegger remarks a bit later in the same lectures that Dreyfus is
quoting from

Kant sees this correlation, one which we formulate in a more basic and radical manner by
saying: Beings are in no way accessible without an antecedent understanding of being. This is
to say that beings, which encounter us must already be understood in advance in their
ontological constitution. This understanding of the being of beings, this synthetic knowledge a
priori, is crucial for every experience of beings. This is the only possible meaning of Kant’s
thesis, which is frequently misunderstood and which is called his Copernican revolution. (PIK,
p. 38)

This view of our access to entities as constituted by our prior understanding of
their being also applies to the specific case of our scientific access to occurrent
entities. Heidegger explains:

In the sciences of beings something is fixed about the objects before they are given to us. This
fixing, which is a priori and free from experience – occurs prior to all experience – makes
possible that these objects be given to us as what they are. These a priori fixings are prior to all
experience and are valid for all experience, i.e., they make experience possible. (PIK, p. 32)

In a different lecture, Heidegger explains in his own terms why occurrent
entities are only accessible to science through a prior projection of their
being:

[A] determinate scientific investigation moves within a determinate problem, a determinate
question posed to that which is its theme. Thematization presupposes the givenness of an
object. But an object can only be given to me in the act of objectivation. I can only objectify
something if this something is already manifest to me in advance. A manifest entity as entity
can only be manifest, if this entity in its Being is already understood in advance with regard to
its Being, that is, if it is projected. Thus, we see a completely determinate sequence within the
structure of science. The central phenomenon is this projection of the constitution of Being.
(GA 27, pp. 222–3)

In other words, that there are entities has nothing to do with Dasein, but what
they are depends on Dasein’s prior projection of their being. (This is what
Heidegger calls the priority of the Was-Frage over the Daû-Frage.) Needless
to say, if Heidegger’s idealism were to question the existence of the real it
would be highly problematic. But even without such a problematic claim, I
find his account of access, of the conditions of the possibility of our experience with entities, equally unacceptable in its consequences. As I argue in the book, Heidegger simply cannot have it both ways. He cannot claim that our understanding of the being of entities is ‘essentially factual’ (i.e. the result of a contingent process of projecting meaning for interpreting the world) and, at the same time, confer absolute authority to such an understanding in virtue of its alleged a priori status, for nothing essentially factual should have absolute authority over us.

It seems that Dreyfus does not have a problem with Heidegger’s account of access, because in his opinion this account does not deny the possibility that our understanding of the being of entities is ‘provisional and may well be mistaken’. Although he does not provide direct textual evidence for this claim, he argues that Heidegger’s development of the idea of ‘formal indication’ in the 20s amounts to a recognition of the possibility of direct reference or rigid designation, which could in turn allow for the revisability of our knowledge of entities.

Heidegger’s view of philosophical concepts as ‘formal indicators’ (formale Anzeige) has indeed raised much attention among Heidegger commentators in recent years, in part due to the fact that Heidegger never fully developed this view in his lectures of this period. This, in turn, has opened the door to a great deal of speculation about how ‘formal indication’ should be understood, to what extent it was supposed to constitute a genuine philosophical method, why it was not further developed later, etc. However, in my opinion the short and scattered expositions that Heidegger did offer about how to understand ‘formal indication’ are more than sufficient to answer the question raised by Dreyfus in this context.

If there is something that Heidegger makes explicitly clear about ‘formal indication’, it is that this way of using concepts is radically opposed to, and incompatible with the scientific use of concepts for the occurrent (and, in general, with any use of concepts in assertions about innerworldly entities). This can be established already on the basis of the textual evidence available, precisely because Heidegger always explains ‘formal indication’, without exception, by means of the explicit (and absolute) contrast between philosophical and scientific concepts. The need to understand philosophical assertions as formal indications is due to the essential difference between philosophy and all scientific disciplines. Whereas scientific disciplines are concerned with some domain of ‘entities’ or other, philosophy is only concerned with ‘Being’, that is, with what ‘is essentially never occurrent’ (GA 21, p. 410). According to Heidegger, the difficulty in understanding philosophical assertions is precisely that they should not be interpreted as functioning in the way that (apophantic) assertions normally function, namely, as assertions about entities in the world.

In his lectures of the winter semester 1925/26, Heidegger distinguishes
between ‘wordly’ and ‘categorical’ assertions in order to explain the difference between assertions about entities in the world and philosophical assertions. Heidegger explains that the latter, just by virtue of being expressed assertions,

must have the structure of worldly assertions, but their primary sense is not pointing to something occurrent but rather to let Dasein be understood. All assertions about the Being of Dasein, all sentences about time, all sentences within the problematic of temporality have as expressed sentences the character of indications: they indicate only Dasein, although as expressed sentences they initially refer to the occurrent. (GA 21, p. 410)

Given that scientific assertions are about entities in the world, they are based on a prior objectification of the domain of investigation they are about. This objectification is the specialty of what Heidegger calls the ‘theoretical attitude’. Philosophical phenomena, on the contrary, are never entities in the world and thus the method of formal indication ‘falls outside the realm of the attitudinal theoretical’ (GA 60, p. 59). Heidegger explains:

[formal indication] as a methodological moment belongs to the phenomenological explication itself. Why is it called ‘formal’? The formal is something relational. The indication must indicate in advance the relational sense of the phenomenon – but in a negative sense, like a warning A phenomenon must be pregiven in such a way that its relational sense is held in suspense. One must guard against assuming that its relational sense is originally theoretical. The relation to [Bezug] and the enacting of [Vollzug] the phenomenon is not determined in advance, it is held in suspense. This is an attitude that is absolutely opposed to science. There is no placing itself into a material domain but the opposite: the formal indication is a defense, a preceding safeguard, so that the enacting character [Vollzugscharakter] is still kept free. The necessity of such a precaution results from the lapsing tendency of factic life experience, always threatening to slide down into the object-like [Objektmaßige] and from which we must nevertheless draw the phenomena. (GA 60, p. 64).

In his lectures of the winter semester 1929/30 Heidegger explains the essential character of philosophical concepts as formal indications again by contrasting them to scientific and ordinary concepts. According to Heidegger, one of the crucial misinterpretations of philosophical assertions is to understand them as descriptions of occurrent entities:

All philosophical concepts are formally indicative, and only if they are taken in this way do they provide the genuine possibility of comprehending something. I shall elucidate what I mean by this fundamental character of philosophical concepts as distinct from all scientific concepts by means of a particularly incisive example, namely the problem of death, and indeed human death. (FCM, pp. 293–4)

He uses as an example an assertion from Being and Time, namely, that the existence of human beings is a being-towards-death, and then explains how it can be misunderstood if it is interpreted as an ordinary assertion, that is, as the claim that ‘in human beings a relationship to death is occurrent’ (ibid., p. 427). But in this context Heidegger not only explains the distinction between ordinary and scientific assertions (which are always about entities in the world) and philosophical assertions (which are never about such entities at all), he also makes explicit the specific sense in which philosophical concepts
are formal indicators. This explanation is very helpful in order to determine whether Heidegger’s ‘formal indication’ can be interpreted as a forerunner of Kripke’s ‘rigid designation’. Heidegger explains: philosophical concepts can only be understood as long as they are not taken to signify characteristic features or properties of something occurrent, but are taken rather as indications that show how our understanding must first twist free from our ordinary conceptions of beings and properly transform itself into the Da-sein in us. The challenge to such a transformation lies within each one of these concepts – death, resolute disclosedness, history, existence – yet not as some additional, so-called ethical application of what is conceptualized, but rather as a prior opening up of the dimension of what is to be comprehended. These concepts are indicative because, in so far as they have been genuinely acquired, they can only ever address the challenge of such a transformation to us, but can never bring about this transformation themselves. They point into Dasein itself. But Dasein – as I understand it – is always mine. These concepts are formally indicative because in accordance with the essence of such indication they indeed point into a concretion of the individual Dasein in man in each case, yet never already bring this concretion along with them in their content. (Ibid., p. 429)

Heidegger’s explanation of the specific sense in which philosophical concepts are ‘formal’ and ‘indicative’ allows us to see why they are genuinely different from any concepts about the occurrent. First, they never refer to entities, thus they ‘fall outside the realm of the attitudinal theoretical’. Second, they are merely indicative because of their essentially enacting or performative character: understanding them requires performing an action, a transformation, that the concepts as (mere) concepts can only indicate but not actually bring about. And third, they are formal, but not in the scientific sense of being general and unspecific (i.e. about no individual entity in particular), but precisely the opposite: they are as specific as they can be (the best example of this is Gemeinigkeit, as Heidegger points out), but they cannot bring along with them the respective content they point at, only the process of understanding them by the reader can bring this concretion about (they are ‘token-reflexive’, so to speak).

Regardless of whether Heidegger’s account of philosophical assertions as formal indications is plausible (and whether it actually solves Heidegger’s self-posed problem of how assertions, the objectifying tools par excellence, can be used to thematize the unobjectifiable), I think that his explanations leave no doubt that Heidegger’s understanding of ‘formal indication’ has nothing to do with ‘rigid designation’. Rigid designation is a use of concepts to refer to occurrent entities, either individual entities (Kripke) or natural kinds (Putnam), and consequently it has neither a self-reflexive nor a performative sense. Of course, one can argue that, although Heidegger himself would not have approved the extension of the idea of ‘formal indication’ from the philosophical to the scientific context, such an extension is not impossible and, if it were further developed, it would amount to something similar to the idea of ‘rigid designation’. I, for one, could only welcome such a proposal. However, it seems clear that in order to follow it,
one would have to reject Heidegger’s argument against the possibility of a merely indicative use of concepts to refer to entities, namely, his claim that entities are in no way accessible without a prior understanding of their being. This is precisely what I tried to do in the book.

Moving now to the general issue of the contrast between the pragmatist and the hermeneutic readings of *Being and Time*, I find Mark Okrent’s exposition of the basic claims that constitute the pragmatist reading very useful in this context. In keeping with a pragmatist view, Okrent claims that according to Heidegger the world can be understood as a system of equipmental relations, that there can be equipment where there is no language, and thus that there can be non-symbolic, non-linguistic worlds. In my opinion, Heidegger would never have agreed to these claims and, in what follows, I try to show why. But before I do so, I would like to make clear that this is *all* I am arguing. I do not mean to imply (here or in the book) that the claims themselves are wrong, incoherent or in any way untenable outside the context of interpreting *Being and Time*.

I entirely agree with Okrent that no interpretation of *Being and Time* can be consonant with all of Heidegger’s expressed opinions. In this sense, deciding how to better understand this work cannot be just a matter of pitting some textual evidence against another. Thus, I first refer to some general issues involved in the main differences between the pragmatist and the hermeneutic reading of *Being and Time*. In my view, one general weakness of the pragmatist reading is that it postulates a total discontinuity between *Being and Time* and Heidegger’s later work. This is surely a less than optimal hermeneutic situation, not so much because Heidegger’s later views must be seen as implausible, but rather because they cannot be seen even as coherent with or as understandable on the basis of the prior work. Within the pragmatist reading there is a priori no possibility of making internal sense of why Heidegger came to believe what he did. But in the specific context of our discussion, the situation is in fact even worse. For, with regard to the claims at issue, Heidegger himself gave a detailed account of why he came to hold his later views. Heidegger shows us how his view of language as world-disclosing (i.e. his claims that ‘there is world only where there is language’, that ‘language is the house of being’, that ‘there is no thing where the word is lacking’, etc.) follows from his interpretation of the ontological difference as already established in *Being and Time*, that is, it follows from his claim that there can be no access to entities without a prior understanding of their being. Given this continuity, the attempt to defend a pragmatist reading of *Being and Time* by postulating a sharp discontinuity with the later work seems at the very least insufficient. For if pragmatists reject the connection between language and world that Heidegger explicitly holds in his later work, it must be because the reasons that support it are wrong or, at least, incompatible with pragmatism. But if they are, if the ontological difference is the root of
Heidegger’s antipragmatism, pragmatists should reject it wherever it is defended, that is, not only in his later work but in *Being and Time* as well.

Okrent’s claims seem to me especially apt for showing the incompatibility between pragmatism and Heidegger’s interpretation of the ontological difference. As we know from *Being and Time*, the feature that distinguishes Dasein from all other entities is that Dasein has an understanding of being. That means, among other things, that only Dasein can understand entities in their being, that is, as such entities. Thus, even if chimps and bonobos can use equipment, according to Heidegger they cannot understand such entities as the entities they are, for they do not have an understanding of being. In his lectures of the winter semester 1928/29, Heidegger discusses this issue explicitly in the form of a possible objection to his view that our use of equipment presupposes an understanding of being. He remarks:

But a skilful monkey or dog can also open a door to come in and out. Certainly. The question is whether what it does when it touches and pushes something is to touch a handle, whether what it does is something like opening a door. We talk as if the dog does the same as us; but . . . there is not the slightest criterion to say that it comports itself towards the entity, even though it relates to what we know as an entity. (*GA* 27, p. 192)

His reason to reject the objection is all but surprising:

We could never recognize a thing that we rightly call knife as a knife, as something ‘in order to cut’, and could never use it, if we did not understand something like ‘a thing in order to . . .’, a piece of equipment ‘in order to cut’. We do not learn what a piece of equipment is by using a knife, writing equipment, sewing equipment, but the opposite, we can only come across such entities, because and in so far as we understand something like equipment. *This we understand in advance, we bring such understanding already with us, and only because of that can we learn to deal with such equipment. . . .* In all comportment toward entities of any kind, we always move about in a prior, preconceptual understanding of being. (*GA* 27, pp. 192–3, my italics)

In my opinion, this is the antipragmatist core of Heidegger’s interpretation of the ontological difference. According to it, our activities cannot be seen as the origin of our understanding, but it must be the other way around: an understanding of the being of entities must be *prior to all activity and experience with entities*. This is why Heidegger must argue that however similar the animals’ activity of using tools and ours may be, the former can never bring about anything resembling the latter, for no ontic activity can bring about an ontological understanding of being. Only the opposite: an understanding of being must be prior to any activity in order for it to be the activity that it is. Thus, given that animals do not have an understanding of being, it is a priori excluded that what they do is to use hammers as hammers.

Now, if according to Heidegger’s interpretation of the ontological difference there can be no access to entities without a prior understanding of their being, and Dasein is the only entity that has an understanding of being, it follows that animals do not have access to entities (as such entities,
of course). Given this basic premise of Heidegger’s philosophy, when he discusses this issue explicitly in his lectures of the winter semester of 1929/30, he has no choice but to claim that animals do not have access to entities as entities. This entails the following claims: (1) animals do not perceive in the human sense of perception (i.e. in the sense of seeing-as): ‘an animal can only behave but can never apprehend something as something – which is not to deny that the animal sees or even perceives. Yet in a fundamental sense the animal does not have perception.’ (FCM, 259); (2) animals do not have a world:  

[T]he animal certainly has access to . . . and indeed to something that actually is. But this is something that only we are capable of experiencing and having manifest as beings. . . . We must say that world does not mean the accessibility of beings but rather implies amongst other things the accessibility of beings as such. But if the accessibility of beings as such belongs to the essence of world, then in its captivation, as having the possibility for the manifestness of beings [Offenbarkeit von Seienden] withheld, the animal essentially cannot have world at all, although that which it relates to can always be experienced as a being in our experience. (FCM, p. 269)

And later:

[I]n all its behaviourally driven activity, the animal is taken by whatever it is relating to in this behaviour. That to which it stands in relation is thus never given to it in its what-being as such: it is not given as what it is and how it is, not as a being. The animal’s behaviour is never an apprehending of something as something. Insofar as we address this possibility of taking something as something as characteristic of the phenomenon of world, the ‘as’-structure is an essential determination of the structure of the world. (FCM, p. 311)

Thus, with regard to Okrent’s first claim, one would have to say that the world can indeed be understood as a system of equipmental relations, so long as ‘the possibility for the manifestness of beings’ (Offenbarkeit von Seienden) is not withheld from such a world; as we know, this possibility is, according to Heidegger, the specialty of language (‘Language makes manifest [Sprache macht offenbar]’, HCT, p. 262). This, in turn, sheds some light on Okrent’s second claim, for it explains the sense in which, according to Heidegger, there can and yet there cannot be equipment when there is no language. Entities that are equipment for us can surely exist without language, they can even be used in their function by creatures who do not have language, but they cannot be experienced as the equipment that they are by those who do not have an understanding of being, those who do not have the possibility for the manifestness of beings.

So far I have only illustrated some of the central claims that we already know from Being and Time, namely, that no entity other than Dasein has a world, and that there is an intrinsic connection between world and understanding of being. Given that those claims are already explicit in Being and Time, the only issue that is up for interpretation is the exact reason why this is so. In the lectures just quoted, the internal connection between world and language is suggested by Heidegger’s reference to what, according
to him, is language’s crucial contribution, namely, to allow for the manifestness of beings. But given that Heidegger does not mention the word ‘language’ explicitly here, it could perhaps be argued that this is just an incidental thesis that is not representative of Heidegger’s general view.

Fortunately, there is a standard context in which Heidegger systematically points to the internal connection between world and language. It is in his appeal to the Greek definition of the human being as \( zôon lógon échon \), which is a constant reference throughout Heidegger’s works.\(^\text{10}\) There may be some difference in emphasis between the earlier references and those in the later work, but the claim that there is an internal connection between world and language remains constant. As an example, I will quote the relevant passage from the lectures mentioned above. For although in these lectures the discussion of language is less prominent than it is in Being and Time, given Heidegger’s prior analysis of the essential differences between animals and humans, his commentary may be illuminating in our context. At least it seems to me that the inseparability of language and discourse, the connection between language and world, and its connection with animals’ lack of language, are pretty clear here. Heidegger remarks:

\[\text{[L]ogos means discourse [Rede], everything that is spoken and sayable [das Ganze des Gesprochenen und Sagbaren]. The Greeks really have no word corresponding to our word ‘language’. Logos as discourse means what we understand by language, yet it also means more than our vocabulary taken as a whole [das Ganze des Wortschatzes]. It means the fundamental faculty of being able to talk discursively and accordingly, to speak. If in antiquity the logos represents that phenomenon with respect to which man is understood in terms of what is proper to him, and if we ourselves are saying that the essence of man is world-forming, then this expresses the fact that if the two theses are at all connected, then logos, language, and world stand in an intrinsic connectedness. We can even go further, and connect this ancient definition with our definition of man. . . . The animal lacks the ability to apprehend as a being whatever it is open for. However, to the extent that the logos is connected with \( nòûs \) and with \( noëîn \), with apprehending something, we may say: There belongs to man a being open for . . . of such a kind that this being open for . . . has the character of apprehending something as something. This kind of relating to beings we call comportment, as distinct from the behaviour of the animal. Thus man is a \( zôon lógon échon \), whereas the animal is \( álogon \). Despite the fact that our interpretation and way of questioning is altogether different from that of antiquity, it is not saying anything substantially new, but – as always and everywhere in philosophy – purely the same. (FCM, pp. 305–6)\]

This passage illustrates the shorter remark that Heidegger makes in Being and Time, when he rejects the interpretation of \( zôon lógon échon \) as animal rationale and claims instead that ‘man shows himself as the entity which talks. This does not signify that the possibility of vocal utterance is peculiar to him, but rather that he is the entity which is such as to discover the world and Dasein itself’ (BT, p. 208).

So far, I have only tried to unpack some of the claims contained in Heidegger’s interpretation of the ontological difference, namely, his assumption of an internal connection between having an understanding of being, having a world, having access to entities as entities, and being able to
talk. This should provide some evidence against Okrent’s claim that, according to Heidegger there can be non-symbolic, non-linguistic worlds. If by non-linguistic worlds one means worlds in which creatures unable to talk live, it seems to me that we already have all the evidence that is needed to answer in the negative.

However, I know that in our context there is the widespread interpretation of Heidegger’s use of Rede as a technical term that, appearances notwithstanding, actually means (or includes) something like ‘prelinguistic telling’. With regard to this issue, I must confess that I do not understand where the sense of underdetermination in Heidegger’s use of the term comes from that would justify the need to offer an additional interpretation of the term, especially one that introduces a term that Heidegger never uses (‘prelinguistic’). Rede is indeed a technical term in Heidegger’s philosophy, it is namely his word of choice for translating the Greek term logos. For this translation, Heidegger uses indistinguishably the noun and the verb, Rede and reden. Now, whereas the use of the noun may be compatible with the idea of a ‘prelinguistic telling’, the use of the verb is not so compatible. As far as I know, there is no prelinguistic talking. Thus, if according to Heidegger in Being and Time, to say that Dasein is the entity that talks (redet) means that it is the entity ‘which is such as to discover the world and Dasein itself’, it seems hardly questionable that Dasein talks by using a language and that this is what makes it able to discover the world and itself. Thus, Heidegger would be dangerously equivocating, if under the term Rede he meant to designate two phenomena of a genuinely different kind.

Moreover, in Being and Time Heidegger gives an explicit account of what Rede consists in. He explains: ‘the items constitutive of discourse (Rede) are: what the discourse is about (what is talked about); what is said-in-the-talk, as such; the communication; and the making-known’ (BT, p. 206). It is hard to imagine how these could be characteristics of a ‘prelinguistic telling’. But, in any event, it is also interesting to point out that prior to Being and Time, in his lectures known as History of the Concept of Time, Heidegger defines language by means of the exact same characteristics. He writes:

We have thus found four structural moments which belong essentially to language itself: (1) the about-which talked over, (2) the discursive what (the said as such), (3) the communication, and (4) the manifestation. . . . The four structural moments belong together in the very essence of language, and every discourse is essentially determined by these moments. The individual moments in it can recede, but they are never absent. (HCT, pp. 263–4)

Now, if language and discourse are essentially the same, why does Heidegger needs to distinguish them? The reason is not hard to find if we look at how Heidegger defines language in Being and Time: ‘language is a totality of words’ (BT, p. 204). This is by no means an unusual or arbitrary use of the term; there is no question that, say, German, English, Swahili, etc., are
languages. However, in the wake of the ontological difference, this is a problematic sense of the term. For languages are the objects that linguistics studies and, as such, they are entities in the world. If they can be objectified as occurrent entities for empirical investigation it is because they are entities in the world that speakers encounter as something available (at least in dictionaries) and use as tools (see BT, p. 204). But entities in the world cannot be existential characteristics of Dasein. Thus, whatever is ontologically relevant about language for the constitution of the being of Dasein, it cannot be the ontic languages themselves. For there is no entity other than Dasein that is ontic and ontological at the same time. Like the other existentiale (affectivity and understanding), this one must be an ability as well, namely, the ability to talk. However, the ontological significance of this ability cannot be just the ontic property of making noises. It is the articulation of intelligibility that Dasein’s talking brings about that matters from the existential-ontological point of view, for it is what allows Dasein to discover the world and itself.

What is then the relationship between Rede and language, if they are not different? Heidegger establishes their relationship in strict parallelism with the relationship between understanding and interpretation, namely, as a relationship between the implicit and the explicit. Thus, in the same way that our implicit understanding can be made explicit or not, without meaning that when it is made explicit it becomes something essentially different (‘in interpretation, understanding does not become something different. It becomes itself’ [BT, p. 188]), the same holds for the distinction between language and discourse: ‘For the most part, discourse is expressed by being spoken out, and has always already been so expressed; it is language’ (BT, p. 211, my italics). Given that the relationship between the implicit and the explicit does not entail a commitment to a difference in kind, Heidegger does not see Taylor Carman’s problem and explicitly asserts both that they are different, and yet the same.

As Heidegger argues in Being and Time, assertions in particular, and any other kind of interpretation in general, are only possible because there is a prior articulation of intelligibility that lies before us as something expressible:

That which is understood gets articulated when the entity to be understood is brought close interpretatively by taking as our clue the ‘something as something’; and this articulation lies before our making any thematic assertion about it. In such an assertion the ‘as’ does not turn up for the first time; it just gets expressed for the first time, and this is possible only in that it lies before us as something expressible [Aussprechbares].’ (BT, p. 190, my italics)

Later in the section on Rede and language Heidegger explains: ‘The intelligibility of something has always been articulated, even before there is any appropriate interpretative of it. Discourse is the articulation of intelligibility. Therefore it underlies both interpretation and assertion’ (BT, pp. 203–4). Thus, according to Heidegger, we can use assertions to make
this prior articulation explicit, to express it, only to the extent that ‘it lies before us as something expressible’, whether we do express it or not at any specific time. But this in turn shows us that the articulation of intelligibility at issue far from being prelinguistic must be an expressible (aussprechbare) articulation, that is, it must be the kind of thing that when it is expressed in an appropriative interpretation, paraphrasing Heidegger, does not become something different, it becomes itself. However else the expressed and the unexpressed articulations differ (and Heidegger gives a very detailed account of all the differences in sections 31 to 38 of *Being and Time*), they are not different in kind, not even when the articulation ‘gets expressed for the first time’. Heidegger explains how that can be when he claims that ‘discourse has always already been expressed, it is language’; it is thus the language that we always already share before we express this or that assertion for the first time; of course, it is not the language that we share in the sense of the specific vocabulary of a given language (be it English or Swahili), but in the sense of the articulation of intelligibility that it contains or, as Heidegger puts it in his definition of *Rede*, in the sense of ‘everything that is spoken and sayable’ (*das Ganze des Gesprochenen und Sagbaren*).

In summary, the claim that Heidegger’s use of the term *Rede* is meant to include something genuinely prelinguistic seems unfounded for two reasons: first, according to Heidegger the articulation of intelligibility *must* be a genuinely expressible articulation (in order for its expression to be possible); second, and more important, it *can* be so, because ‘discourse has always already been expressed, it is language’. And if this is the case, then it is always already too late to appeal to something genuinely prelinguistic in Dasein’s articulation of intelligibility.

This relationship between the implicit expressibility and its explicit expression illuminates the sense in which Heidegger claims that animals, that is, creatures without a linguistic capacity, do not have the possibility of understanding entities as entities. If a creature can make explicit, i.e. express, *as what* it understands some entity, there is no problem in ascribing to this creature the capacity to experience that entity as such, regardless of whether or not this understanding is in fact made explicit (and, of course, without any need to dispute that it would be incomparably vaguer if it has not been so made). But if we know that a creature (animals in this case) could never in principle make such an understanding explicit, we have no grounds to think that it actually understands entities as what they are. Whether or not this view is right, we can see why Heidegger thinks that it is justified to assume that animals do not have an understanding of being, in so far as they do not have the linguistic capacity of articulating their experience with entities, so that these entities can be understood in their being, that is, *as what they are*. Only Dasein has an understanding of being because only Dasein is *zoon lógon échon*. 
This brings me to the next issue, namely, Heidegger’s analysis of signs in *Being and Time*. Here I am afraid that the argumentative intention of my reconstruction of this analysis may not come through in the book. This reconstruction tries to show that, without the analysis of signs, Heidegger’s analysis of equipment alone would not have provided him all he needed to make plausible the very specific notion of Dasein’s ‘world’ that he is putting forward in *Being and Time*. The reason can be explained in the present context in terms of the difference between using a tool and using a sign. Tools may or may not be understood as such when they are used (if they are used by animals, they are not, according to Heidegger), but signs (especially the signs that Heidegger discusses, namely, conventional signs) must be understood as such, to be understood at all. And this is so because they are very special tools, they are the tools for showing, for making explicitness possible: a sign is ‘an item of equipment which explicitly raises a totality of equipment into circumspection so that together with it the worldly character of the ready-to-hand announces itself’ (*BT*, p. 110). And in this sense: ‘signs of the kind we have described [conventional signs] let what is ready-to-hand be encountered; more precisely they let some context of it become accessible in such a way that our concernful dealings take on an orientation and hold it secure’ (Ibid.).

Keeping this in mind, when I argue in the book that without signs Heidegger would not have been able to make plausible his notion of world, this is not because I think that the world is literally a ‘system of signs’ according to Heidegger. He defines the world as a ‘system of relations’ (*BT*, pp. 121–2), but what I am trying to argue is that not any system of (meaningful) relations would do. For the world in which Dasein lives must be an expressible system of relations in order to be sharable with others as the same world. Without this feature of the world it would be problematic for Heidegger to take as a matter of course that Dasein is essentially ‘being-with’. In ‘The Concept of Time’ (1924), Heidegger explains that it is in virtue of his talking that Dasein is essentially being-with, for talking provides a genuine kind of existence to Dasein’s world, namely, it makes it possible to share the same world:

As this being-in-the-world, Dasein is, together with this, being-with-one-another, being with Others: having the same world there with Others... Being with one another in the world, having this world as being with one another, has a distinctive ontological determination. The fundamental way of the existence of world, namely, having world there with one another, is speaking. Fully considered, speaking is: oneself speaking out in speaking with another about something... In the manner in which Dasein in its world speaks about its way of dealing with its world, a self-interpretation of Dasein is also given... In speaking with one another... there lies the specific self-interpretation of the present, which maintains itself in this dialogue. (*CT*, pp. 12–13)

Similarly, Heidegger explains in *Being and Time* that it is in virtue of sharing a language that speakers and hearers can talk about the same things,
even if those things are not present, ‘not close enough for the hearers to grasp and see [them]’ (BT, p. 155). This intrinsic feature of linguistic communication originates what Heidegger calls Gerede: ‘Gerede is the possibility of understanding everything without previously making the thing one’s own’ (BT, p. 213).20 This possibility of understanding everything in advance of having direct experience of it is the intrinsic contribution of language to Dasein’s disclosedness. Moreover, it is the reason that Heidegger offers in Being and Time in support of his claim that Dasein’s experience can never be a neutral perception, can never be outside the normative structure of seeing-as. Heidegger explains:

This way in which things have been interpreted in idle talk (Gerede) has already established itself in Dasein. . . . This everyday way in which things have been interpreted is one into which Dasein has grown in the first instance, with never a possibility of extrication. In it, from out of it, and against it, all genuine understanding, interpreting and communicating, all re-discovering and appropriating anew, are performed. In no case is a Dasein, untouched and unseduced by this way in which things have been interpreted, set before the open country of a ‘world-in-itself’ so that it just beholds what it encounters. The dominance of the public way in which things have been interpreted has already been decisive even for the possibilities of having a mood. . . . The ‘one prescribes one’s affectiveness, and determines what and how one ‘sees’. (BT, p. 213)

As Heidegger had already explained in the History of the Concept of Time:

[O]ur simplest perceptions and constitutive states are already expressed, even more, are interpreted in a certain way. It is not so much that we see the objects and things but rather that we first talk about them. To put it more precisely: we do not say what we see, but rather the reverse, we see what one says about things. This peculiar determinacy of the world and its potential apprehension and comprehension through expressness, through already having been spoken and talked about, is basically what must now be brought to light in the question of the structure of categorial intuition. (HCT, p. 56)21

Heidegger’s analysis of Gerede gives a pretty clear content to his claim that language is what makes Dasein’s ‘being-with’ possible (a claim that Heidegger expresses in Being and Time by saying that ‘Gerede is the kind of being that belongs to Being-with-one-another itself’ [p. 221]).22 Correct or not, the argument here seems to be that in virtue of sharing a language Dasein shares the same articulation of intelligibility and thus the same world with others. This articulation, as part of Dasein’s understanding of being, regulates in advance Dasein’s experience. And this, in turn, explains why this experience can never be a neutral perception of something. For it has always already the essential normativity of a seeing-as, it is the normativity of seeing as what and how one should see.

This brings me to the next issue, namely, whether meaning determines reference according to Heidegger. Taylor Carman and Mark Wrathall both suggest that in order for me to ascribe this view to Heidegger I either claim or must claim that Heidegger has a subjectivist or individualist conception of meaning. Here I would like to stress, first of all, that in my book I never make or suggest such a claim. Moreover, I do not see why I would have to
do so. It is one thing to claim that our understanding of being determines our access to entities as such (i.e. in their being) and a completely different thing to claim that our understanding of being varies from individual to individual. Of these two separate issues, only the second amounts to the view that meanings are subjective or individualistic. But I do not address this second issue in my book at all. Had I done so, I would probably have agreed with Carman that, in Heidegger’s view, if meanings are anywhere, they are surely not ‘in the head’, but in ‘the one’. However, and contrary to Carman’s further suggestion, I do not think that this by itself makes Heidegger an externalist, so long as ‘the anonymous discursive norms’ of ‘the one’ are not themselves externalist norms. In my opinion, Heidegger’s analysis of Gerede points to the phenomenon of what Putnam calls the ‘division of linguistic labor’. But the very fact of a division of linguistic labor has no implication whatsoever for the issue whether meaning determines reference or not. In virtue of the division of linguistic labor, speakers rely on experts to fix the referent of the terms they use. But if a descriptive view of reference were correct with regard to those experts themselves, as many have argued (Bilgrami, Searle, etc.), then meaning would not determine reference in specific cases of individual speakers, but it would do so for the community as a whole (via its experts). As long as the prior understanding of the being of entities is constitutive for the access to such entities, meaning determines reference for those who have such access (and through them also for those who do not).

Wrathall also suggests in this context that Heidegger’s interpretation of the ontological difference only commits him to the weaker view that ‘our experience of things is guided by a meaningfully-structured understanding of the world’ and this weaker view does not involve the claim that meaning determines reference. Now, it is important to keep in mind that in order to ascribe the weaker view to Heidegger we would have to eliminate two crucial features of his actual view. First, we would have to eliminate the modal verb that Heidegger uses when he claims that ‘entities can only be discovered’ by ‘a prior projection of their being’ (BT, p. 414), in order to transform it into the weaker claim that Wrathall proposes, namely, that (de facto) there is no access to entities without a prior projection of their being. Second (and more important), we would have to deny a priori status to this projection against Heidegger’s explicit claim that ‘what is decisive is that this projection discloses something that is a priori’ (BT, p. 414). Again, I could not agree more with this rejection. What I cannot understand is why, if pragmatists agree that such apriorism is untenable, they do not feel the need to criticize it.

Wrathall offers an additional reason in favor of ascribing to Heidegger the weaker view. He argues that, according to Heidegger, ‘the unconcealment of a world is not understood as a projection which could have the content it does independently of the way things are. To the contrary, the beings that surround
us are inextricably incorporated into our understanding of being’. I entirely agree with the second claim, although I think that it is an understatement. According to Heidegger, the beings that surround us are not just incorporated ‘inextricably’ into our understanding of being; they are so a priori. With regard to the first claim, though, I must say that Heidegger explicitly denies it in the most prominent context in which he addresses the issue, namely, his discussion of the two different, metaphysical projections of nature prior and after the revolution brought about by the development of modern science. In this context, Heidegger makes considerable effort to show in all detail how the Aristotelian and Newtonian projections of nature have the absolutely different content they do (according to him), not only in spite of the fact that the things explained surely were the same way before and after the revolution, but even though in many cases the same facts were available to participants of both projections, and yet they were in each case interpreted differently on the basis of their respective projections. This is not surprising, if one keeps in mind that, according to Heidegger, in such a projection there is posited that which things are actually taken as, as what they are and how they are to be evaluated in advance... Natural bodies are only what they show themselves as, within the realm of the projection... How they show themselves is prefigured in the projection. Therefore, the projection also determines the manner of taking in and investigating what shows itself, experience, the experiri. (WT, p. 72)

One final remark about prelinguistic meanings. Wrathall also suggests that if one were to interpret the understanding of being as not linguistically articulated the problematic consequences I see in Heidegger’s interpretation of the ontological difference would not follow. Although he does not spell out the details as to how and why this would be the case, the fact that most pragmatists insist on referring to prelinguistic meanings makes me think that most of them may believe that this is the case. Here, I must confess that I do not understand how the issue of whether meaning is prelinguistic or not could have any impact whatsoever on the question whether (and in which way) our experience is essentially prejudiced by a prior understanding, linguistic or otherwise. My concern here is the allegedly a priori status of such an understanding and not its specific structure or content. If it turned out that our cognitive capacities are essentially determined by our prelinguistic interpretative access to the world, I would not feel any better about it. I still would like to identify those (normative) components of our interpretative make up that make learning, fallibilism, revisability, etc., possible, in spite of all our factual determinations.

NOTES

1 All references to Heidegger’s works are given in the text using the following abbreviations:


BT Being and Time, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York:
In this context I am quite puzzled by Dreyfus’s suggestion that ‘according to Heidegger, entities in the world are, indeed constituted by our taking them as something, but, according to Heidegger, the entities studied by science, the entities in the universe – are “deworlded”’. It is not clear to me how the view of entities studied by science as “deworlded” is supposed to have an impact on the question at issue. On the one hand, that occurs when entities are “deworlded” can hardly mean that they are not entities in the world. For, within Heidegger’s approach, it is terminologically fixed that occur and available entities are the two kinds of entities in the world, as opposed to Dasein which is never merely an entity ‘in’ the world; Heidegger explains in Being and Time: ‘The derivative form “worldly” will then apply terminologically to a kind of Being which belongs to Dasein, never to a kind which belongs to entities occur “in” the world. We shall designate these latter entities as “belonging to the world’ or “in the world” [innerweltlich]’ (BT, p. 93). Consequently, ‘Nature is itself an entity which is encountered in the world and which can be discovered in various ways and at various stages’ [BT, p. 92]). Obviously, if the entities studied in science were not entities in the world that would mean they are not accessible to Dasein and thus that Dasein could have no knowledge of them whatsoever. But on the other hand that occur entities are “deworlded” also cannot mean that they can be discovered independently of how and as what they are taken to be by the prior scientific projection of nature. Scientific knowledge is precisely the domain that Heidegger favours to illustrate his general claim that entities can only be discovered through a prior projection of their being. In What is a Thing Heidegger offers a very detailed analysis of the scientific projection of nature as a positing of ‘that which things are actually taken as, as what they are, and how they are to be evaluated in advance’ (WT, 71.) Less detailed analyses can be found in the following works: BT, PIK, GA 27, ER.

3 Direct evidence for the possibility that the prior projection of the being of entities could be mistaken would be crucial here, given that, according to Heidegger, ‘what is decisive is that this projection discloses something that is a priori’ (BT, p. 414). I discuss this issue in more detail later.
4 And it must be so, if it is to have an impact on the revisability of our empirical knowledge about those entities.

5 Heidegger makes this claim in a much stronger form in his lectures of the summer semester 1928, when he remarks: ‘Intentionality . . . is only possible on the basis [of] being-in-the-world. [This] makes possible every intentional relation to entities. [This relation] is based on a previous understanding of the being of entities. This understanding of being, however, first secures the possibility of entities revealing themselves as entities. It bears the light in whose brightness an entity can show itself’ (GA 26, p. 135).

6 These lectures are very interesting in our context. For they show how, in spite of Heidegger’s efforts to establish finer distinctions beyond the absolute dichotomy that Being and Time postulates between Dasein and all other entities (for example, distinguishing between stones and animals), it is the ontological difference itself that in the end dictates the claims that are made. (A certain uneasiness can be felt in Heidegger’s constant insistence that his claims should not be understood as a ‘disparaging gradation’ of animals as inferior to human beings [see section 46]). In his lectures of 1927/28 Heidegger already makes explicit that animals and plants are different from Dasein in that they do not have a world (see PIK 20) but he does not discuss the issue as extensively as in the later lectures.

7 Heidegger had already argued for this position in section 59 of these lectures. Part of the title of this section reads ‘The exclusion of animals from the manifestation of beings’, and the focus of the section is to show this exclusion as the specific reason behind Heidegger’s general claim that animals do not have a world.

8 Heidegger derives further consequences beyond the two I am mentioning here (animals cannot die, but only perish, etc.), but they are not directly relevant for the present discussion.

9 At the risk of quoting the obvious, I will just give some references for each claim: ‘Dasein’s understanding of being pertains with equal primordiality both to an understanding of something like a “world” and to the understanding of the being of those entities which become accessible within the world’ (BT, pp. 32–33). ‘The world itself is not an entity within-the-world; and yet it is so determinative for such entities that only in so far as “there is” a world can they be encountered and show themselves in their being as entities which have been discovered’ (BT, p. 102). Thus, ‘the world is something with the character of Dasein [“daseinmässiges”]’ (BP, p. 166). And in his Letter to Husserl from 1927: ‘What is the kind of being in which “world” is constituted? That is the central problem of BT – i.e., a fundamental ontology of Dasein. It must be shown that the kind of being of human Dasein is totally different from that of all other entities, and that as what it is, it harbors precisely in itself the possibility of transcendental constitution’ (Letter, p. 601).

10 I cannot refer here to all passages in Heidegger’s work, but I will just mention some of those prior to Being and Time. In his lectures of the summer semester 1923, Heidegger remarks that ‘logos never means “reason”, but rather discourse [Rede], conversation’ (GA 63, p. 21), and thus that zoön lógon échon means ‘a living being which has discourse . . . a being that has its world in the mode of something addressed [ein Seiendes, das seine Welt hat in der Weise der Angesprochenen]’ (ibid.). In the lectures of the summer semester 1924, Heidegger explains that zoön lógon échon means that Dasein is ‘a being, which as living being has language’ and, consequently, ‘Being-in-the-world is in principle determined through speaking’. In the lectures of the winter semester 1925/6, in the context of explaining the meaning of the term logos. Heidegger claims that ‘Speaking-talking-thinking coincide as one, as the way of being of humans, in which they reveal or illuminate for themselves and for others both the world and their own Dasein’ (GA 21, p. 6).

11 It is hard to imagine that an author genuinely interested in a prelinguistic dimension would choose Rede, of all words, to designate it. Moreover, in the same way that Heidegger is keen to show that ‘reason’ is only a narrower signification of what the Greeks actually meant by ‘logos’, if he ever thought that the Greeks meant by ‘logos’ something prelinguistic, that is, something of a genuinely different kind from the linguistic capacity of talking, articulating one’s own understanding, expressing it explicitly, all the way up to doing logic, he would surely have mentioned and explained it at least once in the hundreds of places in which he discusses the term ‘logos’ throughout his writings.
12 Heidegger uses the term ‘unexpressed’ (unausdrücklich) often, but the inference from ‘unexpressed’ to ‘prelinguistic’ that pragmatists suggest is not granted by his use of the term, as I will try to show in what follows.

13 Whenever this sense of ‘language’ as a specific ‘vocabulary’ or ‘totality of words’ is not at issue, Heidegger uses the terms ‘language’ and ‘discourse’ interchangeably. Given Heidegger’s explicit assertion of identity, if Rede is prelinguistic, so is language.

14 I do not mean to imply that there is no plausibility in Carman’s objection to the idea that something could be the foundation of itself. All I am saying here is that, if the idea is indeed objectionable, it is equally so for all three existentiale. In the same way that affectivity is the ontological foundation of every specific, ontic mood, and understanding the ontological foundation of every specific, ontic language. Thus, the underlying idea is that an ability is not identical to any of its explicit realizations and yet not something of a different kind than those realizations either. If this idea is accepted as unproblematic in the case of affectivity and understanding, it can be so accepted in the case of our linguistic ability and its specific realizations in different languages.

15 That the inference from unexpressed to prelinguistic is not granted is especially clear in Heidegger’s discussion of talking and keeping silent, when he points out that he who never says anything cannot keep silent either (BT, p. 208) or even more clear in his History of the Concept of Time: ‘only an entity whose being is defined by the capacity to talk can also be silent (nur Seiendes dessen Sein dadurch bestimmt ist, daß es reden kann, kann auch schweigen)’ (HCT, p. 267).

17 Given my disagreement with Heidegger’s hermeneutic idealism, it should be clear that these views should not be taken as my own.

18 Here the originally anticipated audience for the book plays an unfortunate role. My argument in this section of the book is not primarily directed against the pragmatist understanding of the world as a totality of equipment but against a quite different view. Many German interpreters of Heidegger hold the view that one of the reasons for the Kehre was Heidegger’s discovery after Being and Time of world-disclosing entities (i.e. entities that make explicitness possible or reveal) different from Dasein, most notably, works of art. According to this view, it was this discovery (in the late 1930s) that first challenged Being and Time’s rigid dichotomy between Dasein and all other entities – a dichotomy that was methodologically necessary for the very project of a fundamental ontology. In opposition to that view, I try to show in the book that the sign is such a world-disclosing (ontic and ontological) entity that is already present in Being and Time, and that without it some of the features that the world in which Dasein lives is supposed to have according to Heidegger would not have been plausible. It is an unfortunate consequence of the change of audience (in fact, a quite ironical one) that in a pragmatist context the argument may be interpreted as an attempt to support the claim that ‘all meaning is linguistic’. The reason why I use the (non-Heideggerian) term ‘symbolic’ rather than ‘linguistic’ in my book is precisely because I am as aware as Heidegger was that there are many entities other than linguistic signs which are world-disclosing (works of art, all conventional systems of signs, etc.). The most it can be said that I am assuming in my argument is that tools are not that kind of entity, but this by no means commits me to the claim that all meaning is linguistic. I do not even see what the purpose of such a claim could be.

19 In this context, I would like to make a very short reference to two philological issues that Okrent and Carman bring up with regard to Heidegger’s use of the terms Verweisung (reference) and bedeuten (signifying), respectively. Okrent remarks that ‘“Verweisung” is quite distinct in Heidegger from any of the words that he uses to articulate the “showing” of a sign, or the way a sign can “indicate” or “refer to” or “signify” something’. This is incorrect, though. For purposes of clarity, I quote Being and Time here in German: ‘Dieses Zeichen ist innerweltlich zuhanden im Ganzen des Zeugszusammenhangs von Verkehrs- mitteln und Verkehrsregelungen. Als ein Zeug ist dieses Zeigzeuge durch Verweisung konstituiert. Es hat den Character des Um-zu, seine bestimmte Dienlichkeit, es ist zum Zeigen. Dieses Zeigen des Zeichens kann als ‘verweisen’, gefaßt werden’ (BT, pp. 109/78). Carman’s claim that I see a close link between Heidegger’s use of the term ‘signifying’ and ‘sign’ is right, but not for any of the reasons that he mentions in that context. As already
quoted in my book, in his lectures of 1925 known as the History of the Concept of Time, Heidegger explains: ‘The reference [Verweisung] which we have in mind as a part of the structure of encounter belonging to world, we shall now more accurately designate as “signifying” [be-deuten]. The structure of encounter thus specified in references as meaning we shall call “meaningfulness” [Bedeutsamkeit]. . . I frankly admit that this expression is not the best, but for years I have found nothing better, in particular nothing which gives voice to an essential connection of the phenomenon with what we designate as meaning in the sense of the meaning of words, inasmuch as the phenomenon possesses just such an intrinsic connection with verbal meaning, discourse. This connection between discourse and world will now perhaps still be totally obscure’ (HCT, pp. 201–2, my italics).

20 As Heidegger very sharply sees, there are unavoidably two sides to this feature of linguistic communication. It surely has the positive side that we can expand our knowledge beyond our individual experience. But for this very same reason it also has the negative side that we may indeed talk about what we do not know (we can end up gossiping or, as in Tyler Burge’s famous example, claiming that we have arthritis in our thighs).

21 Here it is important to keep in mind that Heidegger’s understanding of Husserl’s ‘categorial intuition’ is not just an incidental element of his analysis of Husserl’s phenomenology. In Heidegger’s opinion it is one of the three crucial discoveries of phenomenology (together with ‘intentionality’ and ‘the genuine sense of the a priori’). It is the equivalent of Heidegger’s understanding of being within Husserl’s approach. As is well known, according to Husserl our capacities for sensuous and categorial intuition contribute in two different ways to our experience; in virtue of the former, we are aware of the existence of something (i.e. that there is something here and now), and in virtue of the latter we are aware of what this something is.

22 Given that Heidegger defines Gerede as constituted by ‘gossiping and passing the word along [Nach- und Weiterreden]’ (BT, p. 168), I suppose that it is safe to assume that a prelinguistic Gerede is out of the question.

23 Needless to say, Heidegger uses different modal verbs in different contexts (must, can, etc.) in order to express the necessity involved in aprioricity. The issue, of course, is not the exact phrasing that Heidegger uses each time, but the modal claim of necessity that would have to be eliminated.

24 As part of his existential interpretation of science, this discussion is recurrent throughout Heidegger’s work before and after the Kehre. See references in note 1.

25 I do not have space left to address the complicated issue of Heidegger’s view of truth. But I would like to comment shortly on Wrathall’s remark that we should distinguish carefully between the reference of a term and the reference of a whole assertion, ‘for it is the assertion as a whole which is true or false’ and not just the entity referred to, I entirely agree with him. However, I must say that the lack of distinction should not be blamed on me but on Heidegger. Surely under the influence of Husserl, Heidegger tends to identify the truth of assertions with the relationship of satisfaction that holds between predicates and the objects that fall under them. This lack of distinction lies behind Heidegger’s claim that ‘truth’ means not only the ‘correctness’ of assertions, but also (and more originally) the ‘unconcealment’ of (the being of) entities. There are multiple places in which Heidegger speaks of the truth of entities (via his identification of truth and satisfaction). For example in his lectures of the winter semester 1928/29 he claims: ‘Unconcealment (Truth) pertains to the entity; it is primarily true; only secondarily is the sentence about it true’ (GA 27, p. 104). And in ‘The Essence of Truth’: ‘The true is the actual. Accordingly, we speak of true gold in distinction from false. . . . Genuine gold is that actual thing, whose actuality stands in agreement with what we ‘properly’ mean by Gold in advance and always. . . . Truth [means] here . . . the agreement of a thing with that which is thought about it in advance’ (WW, p. 7).

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