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Heidegger, The Given, and The Second Nature of Entities

<https://doi.org/10.1515/opphil-2018-0019>

Received June 13, 2018; accepted August 28, 2018

Abstract: In this paper I draw from Martin Heidegger’s phenomenology of the 1920s to outline some basic features of his theory of intentionality that I believe have not been fully appreciated or utilized, and that allow for both novel and fruitful interventions in questions about meaning, the relationship between mind and the world, and epistemic justification, principally as they appear in John McDowell’s synoptic project in *Mind and World*. I argue that while elements of McDowell’s picture are ultimately unsatisfying and problematic, much of his conceptual framework can and should be put into dialogue with Heidegger’s, and that in so doing we make available powerful resources for amending the McDowellian account. Moreover, these emendations have attractive implications for his distinctive desiderata. In particular, they provide original conceptions of normativity’s place in nature, of the boundaries of the space of reasons, and of the relationship between the answerability of thought both to the world and to human beings as a rational community.

Keywords: McDowell, Sellars, interpretation, conceptualism, realism, pragmatism, intentionality, disclosure, phenomenology, meaning

1 Introduction

In this paper I endeavor to sketch some general characteristics of a theory of intentionality drawn from underappreciated aspects of Martin Heidegger’s phenomenology in the 1920s, particularly from discussions in some of his lecture courses leading up to the publication of *Being and Time* as well as those within that text itself. I understand by “theory of intentionality” specifically a theory of reference, which also explains or at least has implications for the relationship between referent, or intentional object, and sense, or noematic content. A theory of intentionality, no matter its etiology, thus has application to questions about meaning, cognitive semantics, mind’s relation to the world, epistemic justification, and singular thought, among many others. In terms of its application to such questions, I do not believe Heidegger’s view of intentionality has been exhaustively excavated.

I introduce these sorts of questions and topics through the synoptic frame of John McDowell’s *Mind and World* (alongside other of his works that engage with or expand upon the same themes). In that text, McDowell is concerned not only with preserving a *sui generis* domain of normativity (what Sellars calls the “space of reasons,” which extends beyond just semantic considerations but certainly includes them), but also explaining how the *sui generis* character of that domain does not commit us to detaching inherently normative considerations of claims to justification, and knowledge more broadly, from our perceptual activities as “transactions in nature.” In doing so, he hopes to simultaneously avoid any appeal to a “Given” while nevertheless maintaining that the world exercises normative constraint or authority over thought.

However, I believe there are problems and inadequacies with McDowell’s particular way of addressing these concerns. Though McDowell does emphasize the concept of second nature, wherein human beings’ *Bildung*, or induction into a conceptual form of life, permeates and reworks our empirical first nature,

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allowing us to attain a status as sensitive and responsive to the normative authority of reasons, what his picture is missing, I argue, is a parallel notion of a *second nature of entities themselves*, where, as a function of their implication by humans in a practice and a form of life, entities take on a new life in their own right, achieve a normatively rich character, and attain to the status of playing a meaningful (or semantic) and therefore rational role in thought (as justificatory, etc.).

In what follows I will try to motivate and outline the basic contours of such a picture of intentionality. First, I will introduce McDowell's problematic, as the search for a conception of thought's answerability to the world that does not appeal to a Given, in order to highlight its salient points, make clear my criticisms, and thereby provide a conceptual entryway into the set of issues I will consider. Secondly, I will pause to allay some terminological as well as conceptual concerns about whether and how Heidegger's thinking could or should be put in dialogue with Sellars' and McDowell's. Next, I will argue that Heidegger, particularly in his discussions of the nature and importance of formal indication in 1921's *Phenomenological Interpretations of Aristotle*, and the borrowed Husserlian concepts of categorial intuition and appresentation in 1925's *History of the Concept of Time* lectures, speaks to a conception of a second nature of entities which plays an uncelebrated but central role in *Being and Time*. Finally, I conclude with some cursory remarks on how a Heideggerian second nature of entities licenses a realist, but not naïve, view of meaning and content.

2 The McDowellian problematic: Answerability without the Given

In his acclaimed "Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind" (hereafter called "EPM"), Wilfrid Sellars launches a powerful and influential attack on a central tenet of classical empiricism: the idea that the bases for our knowledge of the world are "Given," that there are deliverances to our senses that are prior to and independent of the interference of any discursive, conceptual, or otherwise acquired capacities, and which may at the same time play a justificatory role within the ambit of such capacities.¹ Perhaps the most succinct and powerful expression of his idea that such Givens are a "myth" comes as an analogy with the naturalistic fallacy in ethics: it would, according to Sellars, be an error to think that an account of perception which wishes to remain thoroughly naturalistic, in the sense of definitively characterizing perceptual states in terms of scientifically-describable causal impingements upon our sense-apparatuses, can be translated into an account of how such impacts could have any normative import—as they must,

¹ Carl Sachs draws a distinction between two conceptually distinct registers of the Given, the epistemic and the semantic (see Sachs, *Intentionality and the Myths of the Given*). The epistemic Given refers, in Willem deVries' terminology, to cognitive states that are both *epistemically independent*—that is, possessing of positive epistemic status (counting as justified or as knowledge) irrespective of their epistemic relations with other cognitive states (justifying or being justified by them)—and *epistemically efficacious*—capable of transmitting their positive epistemic status to other cognitive states (see deVries, *Wilfrid Sellars*, 98-9). In a parallel fashion, for Sachs the semantic Given refers to cognitive significances (such as Fregean senses) which would hold their semantic status independently of any other such significances, and yet, in their deployment in propositions and the like would contribute to the proposition's meaning. In both its epistemic and semantic registers, then, the Given would be something like an unmoved mover—either epistemically, as self-justifying or not in need of justification, but itself capable of justifying, or semantically, as content which is isolable from other content, but which also bears on the truth value of a proposition. The language in which both McDowell and I primarily couch his problematic lends itself to issues specific to the epistemic dimension of the Given, but both of our ultimate aims have to do with not only the epistemic question of belief's answerability to the world, *but also* the related question of whether and how the world determines representational content itself, that which has normative bearing in the first place. Sachs calls this latter concern the "demand for transcendental friction," which seeks to find assurances that in our ways of understanding the world we are in fact "in cognitive contact with a world we discover and do not create" (Sachs, *Intentionality and the Myths of the Given*, 13). The demand for transcendental friction is closely related to, but more general than, the narrow epistemic question of *belief's* answerability to the world.

if they can also be taken up into a process of justifying beliefs.²

McDowell takes up the Sellarsian point, and the resulting denial of anything like a Given, as a springboard for his own problematic. If we reject the notion that there is a Given, then, as McDowell explains, it seems like we are left without an understanding of how the world could normatively constrain our ways of making it intelligible, to act as an epistemic authority over our beliefs about it and to which are beliefs are answerable, even if it remains a causal factor in the origin of those beliefs.³ Instead, it begins to look as if the only sorts of things which may play the kind of role necessary for justifying, that can do the work of providing *reasons*, are not perceptual deliverances but rather prior beliefs. And this is where the danger of rejecting any kind of Given begins to make itself apparent: without a Given, a normative foundation for empirical thought, our beliefs about the world appear to be based only in other beliefs, which in turn are based in other beliefs, and so on—and we quickly realize that there is no place in which the world itself intervenes at all in our beliefs about it. We are instead stuck in a coherentism about empirical justification, a “frictionless spinning,” as McDowell evocatively calls it, where, paradoxically, thought about the world is not kept in check by the world itself.

McDowell’s resolution has many dimensions, but in broad strokes it relies on a handful of crucial conceptual moves. First and most essentially, he invites us to remove a “mental block,” a particularly influential conception of nature as accurately and exhaustively characterized as the space of causal law. For if that is how we conceive nature, then it seems hard to avoid the result that the space of nature and the space of reasons are separated by a wide gulf, and accordingly that a natural event (a sense impression, for instance) simply couldn’t play the role ascribed to it by the Myth of the Given, as a justifier for belief. If instead, though, we cultivate a richer understanding of nature, we may come to recognize that the true dichotomy exists between a space of *causal law* and a space of reasons, and that nature, more adequately conceived, may encompass *both*. Once we reorient our thinking in this way about what counts as “natural”—so McDowell contends at least—we will no longer be subject to the anxiety that interactions in nature cannot have any normative or rational weight, and that we commit something like a naturalistic fallacy when we speak of sensory episodes as justificatory.

We may motivate this understanding in particular by recalling Aristotle’s emphasis on *second nature*, or the ways in which humans’ acquired discursive capacities do not merely attach as distinct strata laid atop the physiological dimensions of our nature, but come to pervade those dimensions and integrate into them. As McDowell says, using Kantian jargon, there is no genuine distinction between sensibility and the understanding, for our passive senses constitutively draw upon the resources of our active conceptual

2 As Sellars puts it: “the idea that epistemic facts can be analyzed without remainder—even ‘in principle’—into non-epistemic facts, whether phenomenological or behavioral, public or private, with no matter how lavish a sprinkling of subjunctives and hypotheticals is, I believe, a radical mistake—a mistake of a piece with the so-called ‘naturalistic fallacy’ in ethics” (Sellars, *Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind*, 131). John McDowell encapsulates the force of this point well when he says that appeal to causal interactions in nature, mere physiological impacts, can only accommodate a view of how we cannot be *blamed* for our beliefs, which is of course crucially different from the matter of how they are to be *justified*. As he notably puts it many times in *Mind and World*, the Myth of the Given “offers at best exculpations where we wanted justifications” (McDowell, *Mind and World*, 13). It should be said that a far more in-depth explication of Sellars’ essay, his conception of the space of reasons, and the Myth of the Given, is in order here. However, obvious limitations require me to broach these important topics from the vantage points most salient for launching a discussion of McDowell’s problematic in *Mind and World*, and even then only in a much-abbreviated fashion. There are many other ways to frame or elucidate the essence of the Myth, but I have chosen to focus here only on the parallels with the naturalistic fallacy because I believe it highlights the central matter pertinent to my purposes here: the establishment of an unavoidable and irreducible distinction between causal relations and characteristically normative relations (both epistemic and semantic).

3 Such a coherentist epistemology, which maintains room for the causal import of the world in the formation of our empirical beliefs, while denying to it any role in epistemically constraining the resultant beliefs, is perhaps most succinctly laid out in Laurence Bonjour’s “The Coherence Theory of Empirical Knowledge.” Bonjour, once one of the fiercest critics of foundationalism, has, however, since rejected coherentism in favor of his previous *bête noire*.

capacities.⁴ This saturation and integration is attained as a matter of a *Bildung*, an induction into a form of life that is profoundly discursive, consisting in a cultivation of rational sensitivities that eventually become habitual and passive. There is for McDowell then no Given at all, in Sellars' sense, because something exhaustively intelligible in terms of causal description is not then held to be somehow capable of performing an epistemic role. A perception is not merely a causal interaction that is somehow *post facto* transposed into the space of reasons, in order to serve as a justifier (this would of course be nothing other than the Myth); on the contrary, perceptual episodes are already, constitutively, in the space of reasons. If we keep second nature in mind, McDowell says, we can open the door to understanding that the space of reasons is not opposed to nature, but instead that rationality is deeply intertwined—to the point, in fact, of inseparability—with the sorts of capabilities traditionally considered “natural.”⁵

However, there is a second component to McDowell's picture, not made wholly explicit in *Mind and World* but laid out in no uncertain terms elsewhere. For how are we to think of *the world itself*, in light of a reemphasis upon second nature? If our *Bildung* makes us attentive to and responsive to reasons, and this is supposed to solve the problem of how it is that the world exercises normative constraint over our beliefs about it, without any Given, then there must be something more to say about the constitution of the world itself—that in some way or other, it is structured in such a way as to *provide* reasons, the very ones to which our second nature makes us sensitive. Indeed, McDowell does affirm that the world is “made up of the sort of thing one can think,”⁶ with which he is invoking the early Wittgenstein, who says in Proposition 1.1 of his *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (and, in various forms, in many other propositions) that “the world is the totality of facts, not things.”⁷ McDowell, in responding to criticism, defiantly affirms this idea:

[T]here is no conflict with my conception of the world as true thinkables. [...] Frege shows, precisely, a way to see how something that does not break up into objects can be, to continue the echo of the *Tractatus*, everything that is the case—which seems a fine thing to mean by “the world.”⁸

4 In *Mind and World*, McDowell says that “receptivity does not make an even notionally separable contribution to the cooperation [of receptivity and activity in experience]” (McDowell, *Mind and World*, 9). Later, he denies that this was meant as a declaration of the notional inseparability of the *capacities* of sensibility and understanding themselves, but rather as one about the inseparability of their contributions to experience (see McDowell “Responses,” 225-6). It is not clear to me that this caveat actually accomplishes for McDowell what it seems to be intended to accomplish. Surely it remains an overstatement to say that we cannot so much as notionally separate the contributions to experience of the notionally separable capacities; this is exactly what Kant did, and which McDowell is at pains to warn us against doing. But understanding the cooperation differently would be a matter of shifting our conception of what is the case, of framing the matter in a different and elucidating way. That does not make the usurped mode of framing matters *unintelligible*, which it would have to be if there were not even a notional separability of their contributions. Additionally, McDowell provides scant details about exactly *how* or in what manner sensibility “draws on” conceptual capacities, or what it even truly means for a passive capacity to make use of the resources of an active capacity, beyond some evocative metaphors, which we are simply left to digest. In a later essay, “Avoiding the Myth of the Given,” the metaphors only seem to multiply, without elucidation: there is an “actualization” of conceptual capacities in intuition, and an “exercise” of them in discursivity. The implication seems to be that the former is passive, and the latter more active; in “Sellars on Perceptual Experience,” he says that the actualization of conceptual capacities in experience is “involuntary,” as distinct from their exercise in judgment (McDowell, “Sellars on Perceptual Experience,” 12). Beyond this, McDowell's phraseology remains somewhat obscure. See also my fn. 11.

5 The point McDowell is making—and this is really the crux of his picture as elaborated in *Mind and World*—is that talk of “cooperation” between the two capacities, as though they make separate contributions to a synthesized product, as Kant proposed, takes us down the wrong conceptual path. Indeed, it is one of the primary sources of the very “philosophical anxiety” which McDowell's picture is meant to assuage. Instead, as he maintains, “When experience makes conceptual content available to one, that is itself one's sensibility in operation, not understanding putting a construction on some pre-conceptual deliverances of sensibility” (McDowell, *Mind and World*, 67) and so “we must conceive this co-operation in a quite particular way: we must insist that the understanding is already inextricably implicated in the deliverances of sensibility themselves” (*Ibid.*, 46).

6 McDowell, *Mind and World*, 27-8.

7 Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, 5.

8 McDowell, “Comments,” 339.

McDowell thus not only encourages us to remember second nature, but also to conceive of the world as “all that is the case,” the totality of true thinkables; together these claims allow us to recognize how nature is pervaded by the space of reasons, rather than opposed to it. The world is already of the right form to exert normative force over our thoughts about it. What our *Bildung* does, then, is allow us to see the world not just as a heap of things, but rather in this specific way—as, in a sense, what it *always already was* even before we became attuned to it as such: a menagerie of reasons.

I will refer to this as McDowell’s “Tractarian ontology.”⁹ What this picture accomplishes for him is a view of the world as already coextensive with the space of reasons, for, as Wittgenstein says, “The facts in logical space *are* the world.”¹⁰ This commitment thus affords McDowell a response to the problem presented by a recognition of the Given as a myth: there is no outer boundary to the conceptual sphere, the space of reasons and justification, because, as he says, “when we trace justifications back, the last thing we come to is still a thinkable content; not something more ultimate than that, a bare pointing to a bit of the Given.”¹¹

I have deep sympathies with the overall features of McDowell’s project, and with his method of resolving these issues. Despite these sympathies, however, I believe embrace of this Tractarian ontology comes with some problematic implications. First and foremost, McDowell presumes in order to avoid the relevant skeptical problems the old canard of something like a “pre-established harmony,” which seems not only irreducibly *ad hoc*, implausible, and theologically-tinged, but also, as it ever was, a constructive solution to a problem rather than a therapeutic dissolution of it. It starts to look like McDowell’s strategy rests not so much on removing a “mental block” of conceiving nature as the same as the space of causal law, so much as substituting in another substantive and theoretical conception entirely, a task made necessary because of the recognition of a genuine problem.

There is, I contend, a deeper conceptual issue with the Tractarian ontology, though. McDowell says that it is a perfectly acceptable thing to mean by “the world” something which breaks up not into particulars but into true thinkables. I agree. The problem is not that it’s an unacceptable way of thinking about the world but that it is *also* perfectly acceptable and intuitive to think of the world as breaking up into *particulars*. However, this latter conception is foreclosed by McDowell’s; because the Tractarian ontology is necessary for McDowell’s picture to hang together, if we take his ontological leap, we don’t seem to be able to make intelligible at all how a world which breaks up into *particulars* may exercise normative constraint on our thoughts about it. If this too is a perfectly fine way of thinking about the world, though, then we are left wondering what to say about these intuitions, or what to say about particulars themselves in the first

⁹ It ought to be mentioned here that in fact when we take stock of the project and upshot of the *Tractatus* as a whole, particularly the final propositions, we recognize that statements like “The world is the totality of facts, not things,” is not truly “Tractarian.” After all, that is just the sort of metaphysical claim that is meant to be shown as nonsensical and cast aside after using it as a ladder. I don’t mean to claim, then, that McDowell’s ontological commitments make him an adherent to the spirit of the *Tractatus*. The phrase “Tractarian ontology” is merely proposed out of convenience, and out of recognition of its point of origin.

¹⁰ Wittgenstein, *Tractatus*, 5. Proposition 1.13. Emphasis added.

¹¹ McDowell, *Mind and World*, 28-9. In “Avoiding the Myth of the Given,” McDowell modifies this picture somewhat, but the principal thrust of his project remains essentially intact. There he concedes that there is a real distinction to be drawn between “intuitional” and “discursive” content: the former designates a field of discursively articulable content, as, for example, given (not *Given*) in a perception, which, when explicitly articulated, counts as discursive. Discursive articulation involves “putting significances together”—but before this can occur, these significances must be “carve[d] out” of the intuitional content, which intuition itself does not do, instead merely delivering the unarticulated mass of brimming content (McDowell, “Avoiding the Myth of the Given,” 263-4). Thus, “every aspect,” he says, “of the content of an intuition is present in a form in which it is already suitable to be the content associated with a discursive capacity, if is not—at least not yet—actually so associated” (Ibid., 264). McDowell maintains, then, his thoroughgoing conceptualism (which he must in order to continue to avoid the Myth), because intuitions no less than judgments or other discursive activities constitutively draw on conceptual capacities; intuitional content stems, as he says, from “actualizations” of conceptual capacities, while discursive content comes on the heels of their “exercise.” Under this modest corrective, the world remains for McDowell “of the right form,” populated with true thinkables, reasons awaiting reasoners—that is, Tractarian.

place.¹² In short, McDowell's picture can only accommodate one set of intuitions, and does not merely ask us to look at the world differently, but to throw out entirely another set.¹³

I believe, however, that there is a way to accommodate the normative force of particulars, and that McDowell cannot do justice to that image of the world only because he does not avail himself of a conceptual resource from the philosophical tradition that bears on these issues—specifically from the phenomenology of Martin Heidegger.¹⁴ In short, that resource is a notion of a *second nature of entities*. Not only are we cultivated by and inducted into the space of reasons, but so too are the entities that populate the world. In other words, the world is not inhabited by the sort of thing that is immediately conceptual, or conceptual merely in itself. But it is populated by the sort of thing that can be brought to explicit conceptuality by drawing out their capacities to be as such. Just as we do, entities can be said to have a second nature; with us they can be said to take on a new life.

3 Heidegger and the Given: Some remarks on conceptual translatability

Before defending the idea that anything like a second nature of entities can be found in Heidegger, I wish to first all-too-briefly address some pressing issues of translation between the jargon and idioms deployed by Sellars and McDowell on one hand and Heidegger on the other. Any claim to the relevance of McDowell's problematic to Heidegger—much less entertaining the idea that Heidegger could make interesting and pertinent contributions to these issues—depends on some amount of translatability between their projects.¹⁵

Firstly, what is the relevance of anything like a “space of reasons” to Heidegger's philosophy? To say that Heidegger is indifferent at best to philosophical appeals to reason or views which put rationality center stage is an understatement. Nevertheless, to dismiss on that vague of a basis the relevance of anything like a “space of reasons” to Heidegger's phenomenology is much too quick.

Let us first look at what Sellars actually says about the space of reasons in EPM: “The essential point is that in characterizing an episode or a state as that of *knowing*, we are not giving an empirical description of that episode or state; we are placing it in the logical space of reasons, of justifying and being able to justify what one says.”¹⁶ Because location in the space of reasons has to do with justifying what one says, this analysis applies not just to claims to knowledge, but claims to justification or in general of having evidence, etc. One may certainly claim that Jones feels justified in believing that *p*, and such a claim would involve nothing more than merely a description about Jones or his state. But to claim that Jones *is* justified in believing that *p*, for example, is to endorse or evaluate. It is not merely descriptive but normative in character. And this is why there is a Myth of the Given at all; no matter how sophisticated or fine-grained a description of a physiological event such as a sense-impression upon one's sense organs, there is no place in such an analysis where a justifying force may enter, in order to explain how that physiological event may

¹² I should point out that Heidegger does not speak of the world in this way. He speaks of entities, by which he often means particulars, though it really means anything to which we can refer (including states of affairs). Most of his examples feature particulars: hammers, the south wind, the picture hanging askew, etc. And so a McDowellian account should leave a Heideggerian asking: what about (many of) the entities?

¹³ McDowell actually anticipates this criticism, deflecting it by appeal to Gareth Evans' account of demonstrative thought (see McDowell, *Mind and World*, 179-80). I do not think the deflection works, but I hardly have the space here to contend with the intricacies of McDowell's mobilization of Evans' views.

¹⁴ In the larger project of which this paper is a part, I triangulate parallels between Heideggerian and Hegelian theorizations of a second nature of entities through their shared and profound conceptual debts to Aristotle. In particular, I trace the influence of the Aristotelian concepts of *dynamis*, *energeia*, and *kinesis* in Heidegger's development of the ready-to-hand and the worldhood of the world in his 1920s lecture courses leading up to *Being and Time*. For the purposes of space and overall concision within the context of a short article, however, I have omitted discussion of these considerations.

¹⁵ It is worth noting that in broad strokes translation between these idioms has already been either presumed or put to work, quite productively, by many others—including but not limited to Robert Brandom, Taylor Carman, Steven Crowell, John Haugeland, Paul Livingston, Jeff Malpas, Mark Okrent, Joseph Rouse, and Mark Wrathall.

¹⁶ Sellars, *Empiricism and the Philosophy of Mind*, 169.

carry normative weight, as it must if it is to serve as the basis for a claim to perceptual *knowledge*, or even just *justified belief*, final or preliminary, of any degree.

Now, if the phenomenologist is tasked with attending carefully to the engagement with some phenomenon in order to elucidate its features, and then faithfully articulate those features in an account of the phenomenology, then already baked into the very notion of phenomenological investigation is a deep commitment to the idea that there is at least in theory such a thing as “faithfulness” to the phenomenon, of the phenomenon playing a role that is *evidentiary* with regard to a description of it. Further, that description is supposed to then be subject to refinement on the basis of further engagement or the input of other phenomenological investigators (at least for Husserl). The point, in any case, is that intrinsic to all of this at the most fundamental level is an implicit presupposition of the idea that the phenomenon plays a rational role in thought, in the broadest sense of both “rational” and “thinking”—that there is such thing as the normative or epistemic authority of the phenomenon with regard to the goals of phenomenological investigation itself: description, indication, illumination, etc.

After all, if we reject the idea of any such commitment, to what are we appealing when we take it to be the case that the phenomenon shows itself in such a way that this or that description is *appropriate*, or that this description *ought to be* modified in light of such and such further investigation? These are all ineluctably normative notions, which treat the phenomenon broadly as a reason, as justificatory. If there is any notion of *fidelity* to the things themselves, there is the idea of a space of reasons in its most basic features and implications.¹⁷

Phenomenology is, in its very nature, then, committed to the idea that phenomena play a rational role in thought in the particular way in which Sellars and Sellarsians like McDowell mean by such a thing.¹⁸ This is true whether that is the preferred terminology or not, or whether the “rational” in general terms is a theme for a given thinker or not. Even a cursory reading of *Being and Time* (hereafter referred to as “BT”) reveals a plethora of appeals to normative considerations in the characterizations of phenomena: their fidelity, their appropriateness, etc. For Heidegger, no less than for Husserl, there is a reliance upon the idea that a phenomenon *has something to say*, to which the phenomenologist ought to be attentive, and for which there are at least general criteria, however poorly defined, for counting as *failing* to be attentive. Consider the following passage, most pointedly aimed at a critique of classical representationalism:

Let us suppose that someone with his back turned to the wall makes the true assertion that ‘the picture on the wall is hanging askew.’ [...] If he who makes the assertion judges without perceiving the picture, but merely ‘represents’ it to himself, to what is he related? To ‘representations,’ shall we say? Certainly not, if “representation” is here supposed to signify representing, as a psychical process. Nor is he related to “representations” in the sense of what is thus “represented,” if what we have in mind here is a ‘picture’ of that Real Thing which is on the wall. The asserting which ‘merely represents’ is related rather, in that sense which is most its own, to the Real picture on the wall. What one has in mind is the Real picture, and nothing else. Any interpretation in which something else is here slipped in as what one supposedly has in mind in an assertion that merely represents, belies the phenomenal facts of the case as to that about which the assertion gets made.¹⁹

Why would one speak about what the phenomenal facts of the case “say,” what they attest to, and therefore what the *proper* interpretation of the case is, if there is no sense in which there is an enterprise of justifying and being able to justify what one says about the phenomenon in question (which is just the same thing as asking why should anyone care, as Heidegger clearly does, if there is nothing like an already operative space of reasons)? One can’t make sense of Heidegger’s repudiation of one way of “reading” the phenomenological “facts of the matter” without something like what Sellars means by a space of reasons.

¹⁷ Even if one thinks there can be multiple (or even infinite) appropriate characterizations or descriptions of a phenomenological experience, that is importantly different from saying that “anything goes,” that any and all characterizations one could give would be appropriate. *That* would be to vitiate in one stroke both any notion of “appropriateness” in characterization, as well as the phenomenological project.

¹⁸ In this way phenomenology shares a general methodological commitment with what McDowell calls a “minimal empiricism,” and so questions about the Given are relevant to phenomenology in its very nature.

¹⁹ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 260.

What about, then, the relevance of anything like “the Given” to Heidegger’s phenomenology? Though Heidegger was likely never familiar with Sellars’ critique of the Given—and in any case the material I will consider is from the 1920s, well before EPM—I would nevertheless contend that it is appropriate to say the notion of a Given is relevant to Heidegger’s project. Specifically, I would claim that due to the hermeneutic dimensions of his phenomenology, Heidegger strongly cleaves to the idea that there is no such thing as a showing which is not interpreted, or discursively mediated.²⁰

What, however, is the nature of interpretation and the hermeneutical in Heidegger’s phenomenology? For the case is sometimes made that in circumspective concern Heidegger calls attention to a form of understanding engagement with the world which is nonconceptual or preconceptual, assuredly normative in texture and not just causal, but nevertheless embodied in structures other than those shared with linguistic utterances and the like (instead: skillful comportments, practices, know-how). The *locus classicus* for this sort of reading of Heidegger on the understanding is Hubert Dreyfus’ seminal *Being-in-the-World*, but Mark Wrathall categorizes William Blattner, Taylor Carman, and himself as offering variants under the heading of the “pragmatist interpretation.”²¹ Over and against this pragmatist view stands what Wrathall calls the “hermeneuticist reading,” attributed primarily to Gadamer, and according to which, interpretation (*Auslegung*), bound up with language and conceptuality, pervades all understanding and intelligibility.²²

Though the debate and its interlocutors deserve far more attention than I can give them here, I will wade into the waters of Wrathall’s account specifically. For his own part, Wrathall subscribes to what he calls the “structural-functional” account, a somewhat heterodox variant on the Dreyfusian, pragmatist reading. It is distinguished from both the hermeneutic interpretation and more orthodox pragmatist accounts by viewing interpretation as pervasive and always operative (unlike the pragmatist view), but nevertheless derivative of a more primordial understanding (unlike the hermeneutic view). As Wrathall summarizes: “Although pervasive, however, interpretation does not completely permeate the world, as there are possibilities projected in the understanding that are left standing while we divert ourselves into a particular interpretation.”²³ Although I do think that this is a plausible and nuanced view, and one defended resourcefully from the texts, I ultimately side with a view more akin to the hermeneuticist reading, in which interpretation is thoroughly primordial for Heidegger.

One of the key passages Wrathall cites (he is clearly right, I think, to turn to the 1925 *History of the Concept of Time* lectures, which I will refer to as “HCT”) runs as follows:

interpretation as such does not actually disclose, for that is what understanding or Dasein itself takes care of. Interpretation always only takes care of *bringing out what is disclosed* as a cultivation of the possibilities inherent in an understanding. The most proximate everyday mode of interpretation has the functional form of appresentation, specifically the presentation of meaningfulness in the sense of bringing out the referential correlations accessible at any given time.²⁴

²⁰ Another way to put this is that Heidegger denies the possibility of a “perspective from nowhere.” Excellent discussions of Heidegger’s perspectivism, and its distinction from relativism, can be found in Guignon, “Being as Appearing: Retrieving the Greek Experience of *Phusis*” and Carman, *Heidegger’s Analytic*, 167.

²¹ See Blattner, *Heidegger’s Temporal Idealism* and Carman, *Heidegger’s Analytic*. These views are far from homogenous, however, and Wrathall’s exquisitely clarifying “Heidegger on Human Understanding,” which serves as an excellent cipher for this rich, fraught, and complex area of Heidegger scholarship, carefully distinguishes them. Additionally, to this list we should also probably add Mark Okrent, who criticizes Brandom’s reading of Heidegger and suggests, like these other interpreters, the primordially of a nonconceptual, nonlinguistic stratum of normativity (see Okrent, “On Layer Cakes”).

²² I think it fair to also include among the more hermeneuticist interpreters Charles Guignon (see Guignon, *Heidegger and the Problem of Knowledge*), especially since Carman attributes something like this view, which he calls the “linguistic model,” to him (see Carman, *Heidegger’s Analytic*, 220-7). Additionally, Sacha Golob has recently argued for a reading of the early Heidegger’s views of intentionality as giving pride of place to conceptuality (see Golob, *Heidegger on Concepts, Freedom, and Normativity*). My view is ultimately quite similar to Golob’s.

²³ Wrathall, “Heidegger on Human Understanding,” 197.

²⁴ Heidegger, *History of the Concept of Time*, 260.

This passage is an assuredly important one, for it sheds light on some of Heidegger's important conceptual relations regarding understanding and interpretation.²⁵ What Wrathall primarily gets from this passage, crucial for expounding his own view, is that interpretation is a cultivation or development of the possibilities given in understanding.²⁶ In other words, then, understanding always already discloses a world, and then interpretation takes over in specific territories to further the determinateness of this disclosure, making more concrete a precise allotment of the disclosed, understood world. Interpretation makes explicit or "salient" that which is implicitly available through disclosure in understanding, though this explicitness is not necessarily linguistic or conceptual for Wrathall.²⁷ Though *always* interpretive, Dasein is thus never interpretive of *everything* within the pre-disclosed field of its implicitly understood world. Therefore, for Wrathall, interpretation is ubiquitous but still less primordial than understanding.

However, I think the above passage, alongside similar ones in HCT and BT, where Heidegger distinguishes understanding from interpretation, can lead us down the wrong path if we are not careful. For a quite natural reading of that passage—and this is what forms the crux of Wrathall's argument—is to take understanding-disclosure and interpretation as something like separate "performances" or "operations." This distinguishes understanding-disclosure and interpretation in a problematic way, however, because, while Wrathall's account is based on recognizing understanding as 1) an *existentiale* of Dasein, 2) disclosive "in advance" of "concrete activities," (or of, I would add, I think fairly and in the same spirit, specific compartments) and 3) not necessarily cognitive—all of which he quite rightly emphasizes—it nevertheless does not coordinate these first two features in the way in which, I think, they must be coordinated.

In HCT, Heidegger gives us one of his clearest presentations of his own idiosyncratic view of the *a priori*. Alongside intentionality and categorial intuition, he highlights "the original sense of the *a priori*" as one of the greatest insights of Husserl's phenomenology. Etymologically, he says, the *a priori* simply means "that which already always is the earlier."²⁸ Heidegger thus goes on in HCT to speak of the *a priori* structures of Dasein—of care, of discourse, etc. That is, the *existentia*, such as understanding, are *a priori*. It is true, then, as Wrathall correctly stresses, that understanding is "in advance" or always earlier than "concrete activities," for it names the disclosive givenness of a world to Dasein *in its worldhood*, as structured in terms of a totality of significance, of possibilities-for-being for this being-in-the-world (thus neither possibilities of just Dasein nor of just entities it may encounter, but both), "earlier" than any compartment that interprets this fore-having of the world. Thus, Heidegger often says of the world that it is "always already" *there, discovered, present, etc.*, and in the *Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, a lecture course given in the summer of 1927, very shortly after the publication of BT, Heidegger speaks of the projection of the understanding as "always already" having uncovered entities, as having "projected outward" a world.²⁹

The problem is that this "always already" or "earlier" cannot be understood literally diachronically. That which is *a priori* cannot be understood, Heidegger says, as something prior in ontic, sequential time. Rather, it has to do with the structure of the being of entities itself:

The 'earlier' is not a feature in the ordered sequence of knowing, but it is also not a feature in the sequential order of entities, more precisely in the sequential order of the emergence of an entity from an entity. Instead, the *a priori* is a *feature of the structural sequence in the being of entities, in the ontological structure of being*.³⁰

²⁵ I will discuss appresentation and its relation to sign-institution and signification more in the following section. As I signal later, note its close association with interpretation here.

²⁶ This notion of interpretation as cultivation of the understanding will also receive more attention in the following section.

²⁷ Wrathall, "Heidegger on Human Understanding," 196.

²⁸ Heidegger, *History*, 73. In Modern philosophy in particular, this "earlier" becomes construed with ever-increasing focus on *a priori* knowledge, bottoming out in Kant as "a feature of the subjective sphere" (Ibid., 73). What phenomenology makes available for us, however, is the true, more primordial sense of the *a priori* as (what the later Heidegger might call) a name for being.

²⁹ Heidegger, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, 168: "To exist means, among other things, to cast-forth a world, and in fact in such a way that with the thrownness of this projection, with the factual existence of Dasein, extant entities are always already uncovered." The translator, Alfred Hofstadter, notes that "The phrase Heidegger uses, 'sich Welt vorher-werfen', also suggests that the world is thrown beforehand, in advance, and not merely 'forth'; it is pre-thrown, pre-cast; it is an *a priori* of the Dasein" (Ibid., 168, fn.).

³⁰ Heidegger, *History*, 74. Emphasis original.

When Heidegger speaks of understanding as disclosing “in advance” of specific comportments, and in particular in advance of interpretation, this must be understood ontologically, not as temporal antecedence between two entities. That the *existentiale* are *a priori* does not mean that they are features of Dasein’s being before its having any *existentiell* features. This should be recognized as a rather straightforward and uncontroversial gloss on Heidegger when we think of other *existentialia*. For instance, interpretation is spoken of by Heidegger in relation to understanding in similar terms as mood or attunement (*Stimmung*) is spoken of in relation to disposition (*Befindlichkeit*). Just as mood or attunement is the ontic or *existentiell* manifestation of the *existentiale* of disposition, so too does interpretation refer to the *existentiell* manifestation of the *existentiale* of understanding in specific comportments, the understanding as concretely enacted. Understanding-disclosure is not an occurrence “before” interpretation, any more than having a disposition is something that happens “before” having a mood; it is, rather, the existential-ontological ground of mood. For Heidegger the apriority of the *existentialia* means that—to paraphrase Kant—although all *existentialia* manifest *with* the *existentiells*, it does not follow that they arise *from* the *existentiells*.

“Interpretation as such,” then, does not itself disclose, only because disclosure does not happen piecemeal in specific comportmental “events,” but is rather part and parcel to Dasein’s existence itself, bound up in its very ontological structure. This is the sense in which, as Heidegger says, interpretation is the enactment or fulfillment of this *a priori* disclosed field. Interpretation is just the ontic way this enactment gets expressed, as language is “the way in which discourse gets expressed.”³¹ Thus Heidegger says in HCT that understanding is the “enactment of the being of discoveredness” and interpretation is “the *mode* of this enactment.”³² And it is why, in BT, he remarks that “In interpretation, understanding does not become something different. It becomes itself.”³³ We do not have here two distinct entities, one emerging from another, or following the other as two events might, but the becoming-itself of one and the same thing, through its realization in concrete comportments.

Thus, interpretation is just the realization of Dasein’s “tendency”—to use a very bad expression—of disclosing; it is understanding “in action”—to use an even worse one. It is not an act of making explicit that which was implicitly disclosed in a *previous* act. It is disclosure itself, as it actually occurs in the course of facticity, akin to an “empirical” instance of the “transcendental” condition in operation. Thus, to separate the two, to treat understanding-disclosure and interpretation as two different “operations” is misleading. Interpretation is just understanding-disclosure as it is concretely lived in expression, not a further, separate treatment of an implicit material provided by understanding-disclosure.

The upshot is this: interpretation is primordial. There is no form of comportment more fundamental than the hermeneutic-as, or on which the hermeneutic is founded. All understanding is hermeneutical-interpretational. Heidegger says as much in BT:

The fact that when we look at something, the explicitness of assertion can be absent, does not justify our denying that there is any Articulative interpretation in such mere seeing, and hence that there is any as-structure in it. When we have to do with anything, the mere seeing of the Things which are closest to us bears in itself the structure of interpretation, and in so primordial a manner that just to grasp something free, as it were, of the ‘as’, requires a certain readjustment. When we merely stare at something, our just-having-it-before-us lies before us as a failure to understand it any more. This grasping which is free of the ‘as’, is a privation of the kind of seeing in which one *merely* understands. It is not more primordial than that kind of seeing, but is derived from it. If the ‘as’ is ontically unexpressed, this must not seduce us into overlooking it as a constitutive state for understanding, existential and a priori.³⁴

In this passage he is simply repeating a point already forcefully made in HCT:

³¹ Ibid., 204.

³² Ibid., 260. Emphasis added.

³³ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 188.

³⁴ Ibid., 190. Emphasis original.

It is also a matter of fact that our simplest perceptions and constitutive states are already *expressed*, even more, are *interpreted* in a certain way. [...] It is not so much that we see objects and things but rather than 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 the matter.³⁵

There is for Heidegger no showing which is not interpreted, and, even more to the point, no manner of intelligibility or understanding which is not articulate in the form that overt linguistic expressions—not only assertions but interrogatives, imperatives, etc.—which may express these comportments are themselves (conceptually) articulate.³⁶

I described McDowell's project above as the search for a conception of thought's answerability to the world—that is, the objectivity of thought—which avoids the Myth of the Given. I hope that with the previous discussions in mind I can now say with some plausibility that these McDowellian concerns can be translated into Heideggerian language roughly as follows: what we are searching for is a picture of how it is that intentionality—and so all our comportments to entities—while ineluctably hermeneutical, nevertheless “let[s] that which shows itself be seen from itself in the very way in which it shows itself from itself.”³⁷ I believe Heidegger's commitment to both of these claims necessitates an examination of exactly how his phenomenology threads this needle.³⁸ And I suggest the answer lies in a conception of entities as having a second nature.

In the next section I will lay out some evidence in support of the idea that Heidegger in fact presents a conception of a second nature of entities, and that this conception plays an important, if subterranean, role in BT.

4 Heidegger on the second nature of entities

While in some respects Heidegger is very close to McDowell, as I have already indicated, where they part ways makes all the difference with regard to how the desiderata of McDowell's project are addressed. In short, Heidegger makes available resources for an understanding of the space of reasons' place in nature, distinct

³⁵ Heidegger, *History*, 56. It may be suggested, owing to the invocation of “what *one [man]* says,” in its proximity to BT's *das Man*, that this passage is highlighting not the expressional character of all comportments, but rather the expressional character of, for instance, idle talk, or “fallen” modes of discourse. Heidegger did thematize what would ultimately become the *Verfallenheit* (fallenness) that figures in BT as early as PIA. I think, though, that the wider context of the passage simply invalidates this objection on its face. Additionally, Heidegger gives strikingly similar examples of this “seeing what one says,” rather than the other way around, in both BT and the later “Origin of the Work of Art,” the contexts of which clearly suggest he means the point to apply to intentionality generally. Compare: “What we ‘first’ hear is never noises or complexes of sounds, but the creaking wagon, the motor-cycle. We hear the column on the march, the north wind, the woodpecker tapping, the dire crackling. It requires a very artificial and complicated frame of mind to ‘hear’ a ‘pure noise’. The fact that motor-cycles and wagons are what we proximally hear is the phenomenal evidence that in every case Dasein, as Being-in-the-world, already dwells alongside what is ready-to-hand within the world; it certainly does not dwell proximally alongside ‘sensations’; nor would it first have to give shape to the swirl of sensations to provide the springboard from which the subject leaps off and finally arrives at a ‘world!’” (Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 207). “In immediate perception, we never really perceive a throng of sensations, e.g. tones and noises. Rather, we hear the storm whistling in the chimney, the three-motored plane, the Mercedes which is immediately different from the Adler. Much closer to us than any sensation are the things themselves. In the house we hear the door slam—never acoustic sensations or mere noises. To hear a bare sound we must listen away from the things, direct our ears from them, listen abstractly” (Heidegger, “The Origin of the Work of Art,” 8).

³⁶ For this is the distinction between *hermeneia* and *apophansis*: while the latter has to do strictly with assertions, one form of linguistic expression that is *logos* or making manifest, the former is simply the manifesting that linguistic expression *generally*, not just *asserting*, makes.

³⁷ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 58. This is nothing other than what Heidegger calls phenomenology. He continues that “here we are expressing nothing else than the maxim formulated above: ‘To the things themselves!’” (Ibid., 58).

³⁸ That is, I do not think what I have said about the nature of interpretation and intelligibility, of its being inextricably tied up with linguistic-conceptual structure (even if not language as *speech*), necessarily suggests that Heidegger is committed to anything like a “linguistic idealism”—or really, anti-realism—of the sort Cristina Lafont has attributed to him in her *Heidegger, Language, and World-Disclosure*. And though I agree with a realist reading of Heidegger, I do not take the path of some critics of Lafont, such as Carman (see Carman, “Was Heidegger a Linguistic Idealist?”), because I do not think one needs to have a “pragmatist” reading of Heidegger to make sense of him as a realist.

from McDowell's, by offering a picture of entities themselves as having a second nature, their deliverance into their potential for exerting normative force. To shed light on these resources requires delving into key parts of lecture courses from Heidegger's oeuvre in the 1920s, in the lead-up to BT: the *Phenomenological Interpretations of Aristotle* (which I will refer to as "PIA"), and the ever-important HCT. In both texts, crucial gestures are made in indicating the way interpretation is related to the disclosure of entities for Heidegger, and that sit in the background of BT.

In his 1921-2 lecture course PIA, Heidegger refers to the task of phenomenology as one of "definition" [*Definition*], and says that this task consists in "claiming the object [*Gegenstand*] in speech in such a way and of bringing it into a possession determined by discourse [*Anbesprechen*] [...]"³⁹ In other words, as discussed in the previous section, phenomenology's charge has to do with bringing to felicitous expression the "matters" of phenomenological experience.

This does not involve, though, simply cataloguing properties of objects that happen to figure in intentional acts, but in capturing the textured and lived intonations of how entities show up in experience. As Theodore Kisiel has excavated for us, beginning in the 1919 lecture course *The Idea of Philosophy and the Problem of Worldview*, Heidegger begins to emphasize the importance of the acknowledgment that the "things themselves" of Husserl's famous exhortation, are the structures of the lived experience itself in which entities show up—that is, (a "categorially charged") facticity.⁴⁰ "Bringing [an object] into a possession determined by discourse," then, means that phenomenology, as a descriptive enterprise, must be dedicated to description of things encountered in the ways in which they appear in the midst of this rich, factual lived experience, and not in abstraction from it.

Heidegger continues by saying that this sort of phenomenological definition is a "specifically existentiell maturation [*Zeitigung*]," an "actualization of the understanding [*Verstehenvollzug*]" (note the similarities to interpretation from the previous section).⁴¹ However, this "actualization of the understanding" must be understood in terms of a maturation of the object of phenomenological inquiry itself, for Heidegger says that the object, in this access and "possession in discourse," thereby attains the status of a "principle," wherein it "has something to say":

Just as every object has its own way of being possessed, its mode of being accessed and preserved, and its mode of becoming lost, so at the same time, in this possession and for it, it is always in some sense a principle, something which is at issue and which, with respect to and for something, 'has something to say' [*etwas zu sagen hat*]. How it is that the object attains [*dazu kommt*] this level, i.e. whence springs [*entspringt*] its character as a principle, is different with each object.⁴²

Even though this "way," as Heidegger calls it, of claiming objects in discourse differs according to the object, it nevertheless does have some general features that can be identified. What Heidegger goes on to make clear is that he is in fact getting at his storied "formal indication" (*formale Anzeige*), the "formal" of which he again and again reiterates does not have to do with the eidetic, or something that stands in contrast to the "material," but instead "refers to a way of 'approach' towards actualizing the maturation [*Zeitigung*] of

³⁹ Heidegger, *Phenomenological Interpretations of Aristotle*, 16. Heidegger clarifies that by "definition" he does not mean the formal logical notion of definition but one upon which that is founded. He refers to it as a "philosophical definition," saying that it is grounded in the mode in which the object is originally accessible. As I proceed to elaborate upon, this means the definition is formally indicative, indicating the "way" or "approach" in which the object is encountered.

⁴⁰ "The importance of this groundbreaking course, in all its vital rawness and freshness pointing the way to all of Heidegger, in my view cannot be overestimated. For here he first clearly identifies and names his subject matter, his lifelong topic which, even in those early years, rapidly assumed a series of names: the primal something, life in and for itself, factic life, the historical I, the situated I, factic life experience, facticity, Dasein, being. Even though the phrase 'hermeneutics of facticity' does not surface until 1922, it can well serve to characterize what is already assuming clear contour in [this lecture course], namely, Heidegger's lifelong topic of thought and how it is to be approached" (Kisiel, *The Genesis of Heidegger's Being and Time*, 16-7).

⁴¹ Heidegger, *Phenomenological Interpretations*, 17. As I will discuss below, however, this "actualization of the understanding" cannot be understood as something like the *Bildung* of a faculty. What it does indicate is an early expression of the co-disclosure of the worldhood of the world and Dasein in its existential-ontological character.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 19.

an original fulfillment [*Erfüllung*] of what was indicated.”⁴³ This “approach-character,” as he calls it, shares some features with Husserl’s “act-character,” the mode of encounter with the phenomenon which in fact informs its describable complexion: a perceptual experience, for instance, in comparison to an imaginative one, will show its intentional object in a way that is peculiar to the type of intentional act in which it is presented.⁴⁴ This “approach-character” is determinative of the phenomenon itself, and so, remarkably, in these passages Heidegger says that what “formal” designates in the expression “formal indication” is the *forming* of the phenomenon, though in the specific register of fulfillment, fullness, or actualization:

The definitory content is such that it refers to the ‘how’ of a genuine encounter, determination [*Bestimmung*], constitution [*Formung*], formation [*Bildung*]. These lie in the actualized in-forming [*Ein-bildung*] of the full phenomenon. The content delimits itself ‘extensively,’ however, above all else because, tending ‘intensively’ and genuinely toward actualization [*Vollzug*], the genuine phenomena are determined [*bestimmt*] in a decisive way.⁴⁵

In other words, the “approach-character” of a mode of encounter forms the phenomenon encountered, but the phenomenon “delimits itself,” or sets the tone for the encounter, which the character of the encounter only picks up on and fulfills. All this is just to say, as Heidegger does, that the encounter occasions the *actualization* of the phenomenon. Further, as we have seen, the actualization at issue here is of a very specific type: the “approach-character” determines the object as a *principle*, and thus delivers it into its ability to “say something,” to speak to the phenomenological investigator and have normative weight in its characterization—the capacity of the object to act as *evidentiary*. In short, what Heidegger is describing is the way in which, through and by means of an intentional act, which imparts its own character upon the presentation, that which is presented itself attains an evidentiary character in its being. Through the object’s presence it takes on the character of the sort of thing which might exercise normative force over an account of it.⁴⁶

Secondly, though—and this is the key move—Heidegger insists that these forms or ways of “possessing” objects are not merely subjective, “extrinsic accompaniments”; “on the contrary,” he says, “it is in these

⁴³ Ibid., 27: “The opposite [of formal, as in ‘formal indication’] is not the ‘material,’ the accidental content. Nor is formal the same as the eidetic, and the use of that term, in the sense of ‘universal generality,’ is altogether problematic in phenomenology.” Also: “The formal is not the ‘form,’ and the indication its content; on the contrary, ‘formal’ means ‘approach toward the determination,’ approach-character” (Ibid., 27). Such comments might help explain Heidegger’s aversion to the Husserlian category of “eidetic intuition”; though he frequently makes use of the notion of categorial intuition in the 1920s (especially HCT), he sometimes means by it something like what Husserl would have meant by “eidetic intuition.”

⁴⁴ In this way, formal indication is *lived*, rather than theoretical, informed by the particular character of the intentional act. Yet it is still universally intelligible, so long as the essentially indexical character and context is grasped. It thus is closely associated with Husserl’s essentially occasional expressions (expressions utilizing indexicals). For an illuminating look at these features of formal indication, I recommend Brian Gregor’s “Formal Indication, Philosophy, and Theology: Bonhoeffer’s Critique of Heidegger.”

⁴⁵ Heidegger, *Phenomenological Interpretations*, 27. Nearly every interpreter of Heidegger presents their own idiosyncratic gloss on *formale Anzeige*, but this dimension of it, as explicitly noted in this passage, seems to be underappreciated in the secondary literature. This is not to say, however, that excellent explications of formal indication do not abound. In addition to Brian Gregor’s aforementioned article, see Dahlstrom, “Heidegger’s Method: Philosophical Concepts as Formal Indications”; Kisiel, *Genesis*, esp. 50-6 and 164-70; Livingston, *The Logic of Being*, 40-8; and van Buren, *The Young Heidegger*, esp. 324-341. Though common themes of the reflexive, non-generalizing, and facticity-laden nature of formal indication emerge in these accounts, their illuminations of the variety of subtly different purposes for which Heidegger employs it evince its methodological richness.

⁴⁶ It should also be made clear that this, of course, does not exhaustively capture the import of formal indication, nor the breadth of its implications in Heidegger’s thought in the 1920s; its role in the maturation of the object of inquiry is only a sliver of its salience for him. Thought it accomplishes the transformation of an object into a sense, Heidegger also says in the 1929-30 lecture course *Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics* that it cannot transform *Dasein*—it may indicate possible senses for *Dasein* but cannot deliver them, and therefore constitutes a *challenge*: “These concepts [death, resolute disclosedness, history, existence, etc.] are indicative because, insofar 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. [...] 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” (Heidegger, *Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, 296). Emphasis original.

forms that we possess the object itself as such.”⁴⁷ This is secured precisely from what has been said already about the structure of the formal indication itself, of “forming” specifically as actualization.

It remains unclear in this early lecture course whether Heidegger means this “actualization” to occur as anything other than a result of phenomenological “definition,” that is, characterization or description. Put otherwise, it is left something of an open question whether the described *comportment itself* is formally indicating, and therefore accomplishes anything like this actualization of the phenomenon (or of understanding, like interpretation), or whether this is a function only of a derivative act of description. By 1925’s HCT, though, Heidegger provides a clear answer to this question. There, in his resume of basic phenomenological concepts, Heidegger understands the import of Husserl’s categorial intuition (*kategorial Anschauung*) as constituting something very similar to this actualization, though now understood as residing in the originary comportment itself and not in a subsequent, derivative act.⁴⁸

Heidegger describes categorial intuition in terms of acts of synthesis which generate a “new objectivity,” in the bringing into relief of the object’s “moments” or specific determinations: “In other words, the being-yellow of the chair, the previously unarticulated subject matter, now becomes visible through the articulation, through the arrangement which we call the state of affairs.”⁴⁹ By “articulation” here, Heidegger does not mean a separate comportment which articulates, but rather that what is presented in intuition is already presented in a manner which is articulate. Though categorial intuitions, as Heidegger says, are “founded” upon sensuous intuitions, he stresses that this does not mean the former are therefore given in separate, higher-order acts above and beyond the initial comportment (again, like a description). For, as he says, “even simple perception, which is usually called sense perception, is already intrinsically pervaded by categorial intuition.”⁵⁰ Perception is “multi-layered” in this way. That an act is “founded” means only that all categorial acts are of or about a sensuously given content and must accompany sensuous intuition as intuited “surplus”; there is no “free-floating” categorial intuition, or intuition of categorial forms without an empirically given object.⁵¹

Heidegger continues this characterization of categorial intuition as “synthetic” by clarifying that the state of affairs, the categorial “form” grasped in the intuition, is not a “real” but an “ideal” moment of the chair.⁵² This has three major implications for Heidegger. First, it means the “accentuation” [*Hebung*] which draws out the state of affairs “transforms [*formt*] nothing in the given matter; nothing happens to the chair in its simply given reality.”⁵³ That is, as should be obvious, no ontic transformation occurs. But, secondly,

47 Heidegger, *Phenomenological Interpretations*, 16: “These forms are not subsequently pasted on; they are not mere extrinsic accompaniments of the mode of possession. On the contrary, it is in these forms that we possess the object itself as such; it is in them that we *claim* the object.” Emphasis original.

48 Though HCT does contain one of Heidegger’s most straightforward articulations of his criticisms of Husserl, these early sections on Husserlian phenomenology are not merely an explication of Husserl’s theory in preparation for Heidegger’s own criticisms. Categorial intuition plays a major, if somewhat clandestine, role in Heidegger’s thought, as evidenced not only by his effusive emphasis on its importance in 1925, alongside intentionality itself and the “original sense of the *a priori*,” but even more so by his return to it in his very last lecture course, nearly half a century late, in 1973’s Seminar in Zähringen, where he declares that it is the “focal point” of Husserl’s thought, with which Husserl dealt directly with the question of being itself (Heidegger, “Seminar in Zähringen,” 65), and that this “contribution” was an “essential impetus” (Ibid., 67) for his youthful investigations.

49 Heidegger, *History*, 63.

50 Ibid., 60.

51 Ibid., 69: “Categorial acts are founded acts; in other words, everything categorial ultimately rests upon sense intuition. This thesis must be correctly understood. It does not say that the categories ultimately can be interpreted as sensory. Rather, ‘resting’ here means that they are founded. We can formulate the import of the sentence in this way: Everything categorial ultimately rests upon sense intuition, no objective explication floats freely but is always an explication of something already given. The thesis that everything categorial ultimately rests upon sense intuition is but a restatement of the Aristotelian proposition: [...] ‘The soul can presume nothing, apprehend nothing objective in its objectivity, if nothing at all has been shown to it beforehand.’”

52 Ibid., 63: “However, even though this accentuation of the state of affairs is grounded in the perceived subject matter, it cannot be said that the state of affairs itself, the composition brought out in the subject matter, is a real part or portion of this matter. The being-yellow of this chair, the state of affairs as such, is not a realm moment in the chair like the arm or the upholstery. The state of affairs is rather of an ideal nature. [...] What is real is the yellow, and in the state of affairs only the quality is accentuated as something real, objective.”

53 Ibid., 63. ‘*Hebung*’, the root from which ‘*Aufhebung*’ is constructed, literally translates as ‘elevation’ or ‘raising.’

a transformation *does* occur on the level of the ideality that is the state of affairs; a “new objectivity” arises which actually presents the mode of being of the entity “more authentically”:

Yet through this new objectivity of the accentuated [*gehobenen*] state of affairs, the chair becomes [*wird*] expressly visible [*ausdrücklich sichtbar*] precisely in what it is. Its presence, its being present, becomes more authentic through this assertion [...]. In this accentuation [*Hebung*], we have a form of more authentic objectification of the given matter.⁵⁴

The *being* of the chair is what is elevated through the comportment. Its potential for fulfilling this objectivity, its presence in the relationality of a state of affairs, is realized through the categorial act.

Thirdly, note, then, that when Heidegger refers to “synthesis,” he does not mean by it anything like a synthesis of transcendental idealism, just as we saw “forming” does not mean anything like construction on the part of the subject out of parts. Synthesis, he says, “is not so much a matter of connecting two parts which are at first separated, as we glue two things together and fuse them. Instead [*synthesis*] and [*diareisis*] give objects.”⁵⁵ Elsewhere in HCT, he goes to greater lengths to make clear just how adamant he is that intuition of categorial states of affairs is “synthetic” in this very specific way:

One sees in the antithesis of the two kinds of intuition [sensuous and categorial] a recurrence of the old contrast of sense and understanding. If one adds to this the conceptual pair of *form* and *matter*, the issue may be laid out in the following fashion: Sensuousness is characterized as receptivity and understanding as spontaneity (Kant), the sensory as matter and the categorial as form. Accordingly, the spontaneity of understanding becomes the formative [*formenden*] principle of a receptive matter, and in one stroke we have the old mythology of an intellect which glues and rigs [*zusammenbastelt und verleimt*] together the world’s matter with its own forms. Whether it is metaphysical or epistemological as in Rickert, the mythology is the same. Categorial intuition is subject to this misunderstanding only as long as the basic structure of intuiting and of all comportments—intentionality—is not seen or is suppressed. The categorial ‘forms’ are not constructs [*Gemächte*] of acts but objects [*Gegenstände*] which manifest [*sichtbar werden*] themselves in these acts.⁵⁶

The categorial forms are not constructs of acts because they are not fashioned by the acts or by the enacting subject but merely made manifest through them. The act is necessary for the emergence of this “new objectivity,” but not because it imposes anything upon a mere sensuous content, or because it deigns to endow such content with a schematic shape or framework extrinsic to the thing itself. This is in fact precisely why this “accentuation,” this “synthesis” and “forming” cannot be seen as a modification of the real object by some externality, but instead a development of its *being* in a more authentic register:

[The categorial ‘forms’] are not something made [*Gemachtes*] by the subject and even less something added [*Herangebrachtes*] to the real objects, such that the real entity is itself modified [*modifiziert*] by the forming [*Formung*]. Rather, they actually present the entity more truly in its ‘being-in-itself.’⁵⁷

All of this adheres to what Heidegger said in PIA, that the “formal” in “formal indication” does not refer to the eidetic, but rather the way of approaching the phenomenon, the “approach-character” that carries out a formative or determinative function of the phenomenon into a “principle,” though one of actualization rather than extrinsic imposition foisted upon it.

Thus “synthesis” means the bringing of the thing—its elevation—to a discursively rich and accessible

⁵⁴ Ibid., 63.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 64. Also: “Categorial acts constitute [*konstituieren*] a new objectivity. This is always to be understood intentionally and does not mean that they let the things spring up [*entstehen*] just anywhere. ‘Constituting’ does not mean producing in the sense of making [*Machen*] and fabricating [*Verfertigen*]; it means *letting the entity be seen in its objectivity*. This objectivity, which presents itself in the categorial acts or in perceptions pervaded by categorial acts, is not a result of the activity of intellectual understanding upon the external world. It is not a result of an activity upon an already given mix of sensations or throng of affections, which are ordered to form a picture of the world” (Ibid., 71). Note the similarities with the Heidegger passages cited in fn. 26.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 70. He reiterates this main thrust of this point in BT: “Thus the significance-relationships which determine the structure of the world are not a network of forms which a wordless subject has laid over some kind of material” (Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 417).

⁵⁷ Heidegger, *History*, 70. Therefore, again, this maturation is of an *ontological*, rather than *ontic*, sort.

mode of its being, indeed, its status as a sign or site of meaningfulness.⁵⁸ In later sections of HCT he takes up the topic of “sign-institution”:

Thus the south wind can be a sign of rain. It is more accurately an omen, and first and strictly an omen which is addressed to everyday concern, where it is encountered and as such discovered by everyday concern in the course of directing itself toward the weather (cultivation, harvest, or a military venture). Neither the south wind nor the rain, nor their conjunction and being on hand in the world as natural processes, none of these entities is instituted in the sense of being produced [*im Sinne der Herstellung gestiftet*]; in each instance, it is a matter of something always already on hand of itself. The south wind's being a sign [*Zeichensein*] is instituted [*gestiftet*] by taking it as a sign [*als Zeich-nehmen*]. This sign-taking institution [*zeichnennehmende Stiftung*] comes about by taking the weather into account, which in turn is grounded in a particular concernedness, in everyday affairs, the everyday work of the farmer himself; more accurately, this is the primary discovery as an entity before any explicit elaboration. The sign-taking is grounded in this concernedness.⁵⁹

So far what we see in this passage is a familiar (and important) emphasis on the importance of Dasein as care (*Sorge*) for the disclosure of entities within the world, and the fact that this occurs as a matter of circumspective concern rather than explicit thematization (such as overt linguistic utterances) on Dasein's part. However, the passage continues:

The sense of this sign-taking would be mistaken if one were to say that the south wind ‘in itself,’ ‘objectively,’ is not a sign, it is so construed [*aufgefaßt*] merely ‘subjectively.’ It is thus overlooked that this sign-taking, taking the south wind as a sign, is not a subjective construal [*Auffassung*], any more than this apparent mere construal has the sole sense of divulging [*freizugeben*] the objective, which means the enviroing world, equipment in its character of handiness and in its nature, of letting us encounter [*begegnen zu lassen*] this world and making it accessible [*zugänglich zu machen*]. The interpretation of the sign as a subjective construction [*Auffassung*] parts with the authentic sense of sign-taking, which consists precisely in appresenting [*appräsentieren*] the world more authentically in a certain direction, in bringing it out more emphatically [*eindringlicher freizulegen*] and not in subjectively construing [*aufzufassen*] it in some way.⁶⁰

It is important to note both dimensions of the view of “interpretation” or “sign-institution” on offer here. The thing is always given under an interpretation, always presented in the context of one's projects; the south wind shows up as a sign of rain to the farmer in light of and in the midst of the farmer's daily business. In showing up in this way, and being instituted as a sign, it is allowed to function as a sign, to have a sense, and thereby to play a meaningful role for the farmer. Heidegger refers to this “showing up” as the “appresentation” (*Appraäsentieren*) of the south wind.⁶¹ An appresentation is thus not a bald

⁵⁸ It thus provides the resources for understanding an objectivity that goes beyond the merely “real,” yet not by importing a constructive subjectivity: “Today we are in a position to move against idealism precisely on this front only because phenomenology has demonstrated that the non-sensory [*Unsinnliches*] and ideal [*Ideales*] cannot without further ado be identified with the immanent, conscious, subjective. This is not only negatively stated but positively shown; and this constitutes the true sense of the discovery of the categorial intuition [...]” (Heidegger, *History*, 58). Additionally: “[...] by way of understanding what is present in categorial intuition we can come to see that the objectivity of an entity is really not exhausted by this narrow definition of reality, that objectivity in its broadest sense is much richer than the reality of a thing, and what is more, that the reality of a thing is comprehensible in its structure only on the basis of the full objectivity of the simply experienced entity” (Ibid., 66).

⁵⁹ Heidegger, *History*, 206. A corresponding passage occurs in *Being and Time* (Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 111-2), but the question of what we might call the “transcendental” issues of sign-institution are elided in favor of the points about circumspective concern.

⁶⁰ Heidegger, *History*, 206-7.

⁶¹ Heidegger takes this term from Husserl, who most notably uses it in connection with the mode in which other subjectivities are presented. The other is appresented to me in the sense that it is not presented exhaustively but rather in such a way that there is an indication there is something outstanding and *not* presented. For Husserl, just as the other as such comes into view so too does their subjectivity as such recede. As Alfred Denker notes, HCT is the only lecture course where Heidegger uses the term (Denker, “Martin Heidegger's *Being and Time*: A Carefully Planned Accident?,” 72). But the structure of appresentation perfectly captures features of Heidegger's theory of truth as disclosure, so it is no wonder that he expands its applicability beyond just encounter with other subjectivities, using it essentially as a replacement both for the notion of a simply *given* presentation and a representational *proxy* which “stands in” for the thing itself. Kisiel I think correctly surmises that the term ‘disclosure’ in fact replaces ‘appresentation’ (Kisiel, *Heidegger's Way of Thought*, 98). Though, as Kisiel notes, Heidegger uses the specific Husserlian term only in 1925, the basic features of the concept of appresentation are central to his most fundamental insights.

presentation, something like the bare givenness of the thing, but is reliant upon a dispositional background of circumspective concern, together with a general domain of interconnected meaning-relations (farming practices, the weather and its relevance for the farmer's projects, etc.) through which the concerned disposition (*Befindlichkeit*) itself is refracted, but which does not in any way come to the fore as an explicit vocalization or the like.⁶²

Appresentation is thus thoroughly interpretive. Indeed, as we saw in the previous section, Heidegger closely associates "appresentation" and "interpretation": "interpretation has the functional form of appresentation, specifically the appresentation of meaningfulness in the sense of bringing out the referential correlations accessible at any given time."⁶³ The south wind is disclosed, but not as a simple, immediate divulging, free from the interventions of a discursive background etc. The south wind is not merely delivered in a nice, neat package at the doorstep of perception; it is not *Given* in an essentially Sellarsian sense. Nevertheless, the second dimension to notice here is that this does not entail the appresentation is anything like a representation in the classic sense of a subjective item that stands in as a proxy for the thing itself. To appresent something is not to put something in place of the thing itself, nor to wrap it in subjective clothing; on this Heidegger could not be any clearer than he in fact is in the foregoing passage. The ineliminable hermeneutic nature of encounter with the phenomenon cannot be taken as indicating that the thing itself remains hidden. On the contrary, it is precisely the south wind itself that is disclosed, when it shows itself as a sign of rain.

Heidegger thus says that appresentation is the "making-present" of the thing, in fact using them interchangeably: "The environmental sign-thing [...] stands in an environmental correlation of references, and it *appresents, makes present* [*macht gegenwärtig*], *the environing world...*"⁶⁴ When Heidegger speaks of "making present," he means the cultivation of a thing into its capacity for sense, for showing up as meaningful and playing a role of meaning in the life of, for example, the farmer. Presenting is the deliverance of a "natural thing" into a more emphatic mode of its being, a decidedly *normative* mode as a meaningful thing in a pervasive network of servability. To appresent or interpret something is to deliver it into the promise of its normative potentiality. This is why Heidegger says that sign-institution involves "bringing [the being] out more emphatically." Dasein brings things into their own by bringing them into the space of reasons. Thus, Heidegger speaks in BT of the "freeing" of entities in their discovery within a totality of involvements (i.e. *Bedeutsamkeit*).⁶⁵

There is in fact a term deployed in BT—indeed *central* to that text—which replaces the Husserlian "appresentation" and has connotations in ordinary use precisely of "cultivation," "elevation," even "freeing," and all the senses we have so far convened: *Erschlossenheit*. Often translated in its use by Heidegger as "disclosure" or sometimes "world-disclosure," I submit that *Erschlossenheit* as a Heideggerian term of art must be understood precisely so as not to lose its characteristic signification along the lines specified in the discussion of formal indication, categorial intuition, and sign-institution in these earlier 1920s lecture courses. It must be understood in terms of second nature.

Erschlossenheit is not to be confused with *Entschlossenheit*, resoluteness, though Theodore Kisiel notes that the etymological connection is capitalized on deliberately by Heidegger.⁶⁶ Their common root is *schliessen*, which means something like to close, to conclude, bring to a close, resolve, or decisively

⁶² What this general domain of interconnected meaning-relations consists in, how it—together with *Befindlichkeit*—forms a hermeneutic background or horizon—and how this bears upon the issue of acquired capacities, is an interesting and important one. For reasons of space these considerations must here remain unexplored.

⁶³ Heidegger, *History*, 260.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 206.

⁶⁵ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 117-8.

⁶⁶ As Kisiel notes, throughout the 1920s Heidegger by and large used '*Erschlossenheit*' (disclosedness or disclosure) with regard to Dasein and '*Entdecktheit/Entdeckung*' (discoveredness) with regard to entities, only "reversing" this practice in *Being and Time* (Kisiel, *Genesis*, 275), in order to "bring [*Erschlossenheit*] into terminological proximity" with *Entschlossenheit* (resoluteness) (*Ibid.*, 422). Additionally, it seems clear, especially given the nature of Understanding as Heidegger describes it in HCT, BT, 1927's *Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, and elsewhere, that Dasein and its world are always co-disclosed. For these reasons, I speak here of the disclosure of entities, or their being, and by and large treat '*Erschlossenheit*' and '*Entdecktheit/Entdeckung*' interchangeably. Likewise, I will not delve into the intricacies of the distinctions between these concepts and *Unverborgenheit* (unconcealment). These intricacies have, in my view, been decisively elucidated in Mark Wrathall's *Heidegger and Unconcealment*.

determine. *Entschliessen* thus means to decide, to commit, to resolve oneself, and thus to determine in the sense of determination or steadfastness, (the latter being precisely what *Entschlossenheit* means). *Erschliessen*, like *schliessen*, means to conclude, but in the more specific register of a *natural* or even *favorable* conclusion. It thus has a subtle teleological or even evaluative connotation. *Erschliessen* means specifically to bring to *completion*. It also has shades of unlocking or opening (thus the understandable translation of “*dis-closure*”). Taking these valences together, we get a verb which means to harness or access something, thereby opening it up, causing it to blossom, and thus bringing it to completion or its end—not *an* end in the bare temporal sense (as would perhaps be an appropriate use of *schliessen*), but *its* end, its *telos*, the completion and resolution natural and proper to it.⁶⁷

Note as well, then, the sense of kairological temporality that Heidegger was developing in the 1920s (and which Theodore Kisiel has so lucidly excavated) present in the meaning of *Erschlossenheit*.⁶⁸ *Kairos* means time not in the straightforward, quantitative sense of a sequence of linear moments, but in a qualitatively loaded sense, the auspicious or decisive moment, as when we say “the time is right,” “this is our time,” or “her arrival was timely.”

For all these reasons, a felicitous translation of *Erschlossenheit* is development or cultivation, as we might speak of a farm as a “development,” or a primeval forest as “undeveloped.” Again, I do not mean to suggest that *Erschlossenheit* should not be translated as “disclosure,” so much as to exhort us to understand it in terms of its connotations, and to keep these connotations in mind. When Heidegger speaks of disclosure, we should understand him to mean not the mere shining of a spotlight on something, but its elevation into meaningfulness. *Erschlossenheit* is not the rendering visible of an entity previously present in the exact same manner yet unseen, but the literal *dis-closure*, the opening up, of the *being* of the entity.

This discovery is the charge of understanding. We have already seen that in PIA Heidegger speaks of the “actualization of the understanding,” and in HCT and BT of its “cultivation.” This way of putting things, however, is subject to misconception, because Heidegger does not mean by it something akin to the *Bildung* of a faculty, like what McDowell might mean. Understanding, as an *existentiale* of Dasein, is not a faculty of some kind at all, but rather, as said before, the “enactment of the being of discoveredness.”⁶⁹ We are in a position now to fully appreciate what this means. Since interpretation is just the “working-out [*Ausarbeitung*] of possibilities projected in understanding,” by “cultivation” or “actualization” of understanding, then, Heidegger means the fulfillment of disclosure, the development of the possibilities for intelligibility that understanding makes available.⁷⁰ It is just the cultivation of the intelligibility of *things*—their second nature. Thus,

In the projecting of the understanding, entities are disclosed in their possibility. The character of possibility corresponds, on each occasion, with the kind of Being of the entity which is understood. [...] When entities within-the-world are discovered along with the Being of Dasein—that is, when they have come to be understood—we say that they have *meaning* [*Sinn*]. But that which is understood, taken strictly is not the meaning but the entity, or alternatively, Being. Meaning is that wherein the intelligibility of something maintains itself.⁷¹

As a final aside, note that entities are discovered alongside the being of Dasein; understanding is therefore also an understanding of potentialities-for-Being of Dasein itself.⁷² Disclosure is co-disclosure; there can be no separation of the disclosure of entities in their being and the disclosure of Dasein in its being.

⁶⁷ ‘*Erschliessen*,’ it should be noted, has further connotations: to exploit or manipulate, to harness in the sense of using as a means to an end. Thus, Heidegger will eventually come to see in *Erschlossenheit* remnants of an impositional or subjectivistic model of significance and signification which he intended to move beyond. I believe, in fact, that this sort of consideration is one of the crucial dimensions of his *Kehre* (certainly not the only), though discussion of this would take matters far afield.

⁶⁸ As Kisiel says, “Kairology and formal indication will together constitute the *most* essential, but largely unspoken, core of BT itself” (Kisiel, *Genesis*, 152), a sentiment with which I wholeheartedly agree.

⁶⁹ Heidegger, *History*, 260.

⁷⁰ Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 189.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 192-3.

⁷² See also *ibid.*, 184. As Dahlstrom puts it beautifully, “In understanding being-here [Dasein] discloses the manner of being of entities within-the-world. In the process, it also discloses itself and, indeed, precisely by finding itself disposed in the world; being so disposed, being-here understands what is at stake in being-in-the-world” (Dahlstrom, *Heidegger’s Concept of Truth*, 306).

5 Conclusion

Like our own second nature, that of entities is written into their first nature as potentialities-for-being, which in an ontological sense lie latent, requiring realization by Dasein. Accordingly, a second nature of entities allows for a picture of normativity broadly, and meaning more narrowly, that avoids naïve realism, for it does not claim that natural items are as such reasons lying in wait, that the natural world is a broad expanse of reasons. Our *Bildung*, our induction into cultural normative practices, doesn't merely make us sensitive to reasons already lying in wait for us, but in fact inducts, alongside us, entities themselves into the space of reasons, by actualizing their potentialities-for-being as reasons. Our second nature does not just make reasons visible to us but *cultivates* them as such in the first place.

At the same time, though, it also evades not only a pernicious relativism but even somewhat more moderate pragmatist claims that the shape and contours of the space of reasons are determinations of social practices, dictates of a community, or even a universal form of life.⁷³ While McDowell's picture would say that we merely discover in the world (even if contingent upon our induction into cultural practices), the latter would say we artificially impose them on it, since the space of reasons *itself* is but an artifact of culture or, at most, intersubjectivity, the contrivance of a form of life.⁷⁴ The Heideggerian account suggested here would entail neither.⁷⁵ In fact, the very dichotomy between discovery and creation instead falls away; though cultural practices in some sense “discover” the space of reasons, they do not find it as a pre-existing reality but rather as potentialities-for-being of the things themselves, and, likewise, though they in some sense “produce” the space of reasons, they only do so in terms of stimulation or incitement.

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⁷³ This form of pragmatism should be distinguished from the kind invoked by Wrathall in his “pragmatist interpretation” of Heidegger discussed in Sec. III. To argue that there is a stratum of normativity more primordial than that of conceptuality and linguistic meaning does not entail any kind of conventionalism about that stratum. Indeed, some of the appeal for Dreyfusians lies in grounding normativity not in the logical forms of language (which some would argue seems to positively invite conventionalism) but in those of a potentially more robustly realist embodiment or “skillful coping.” There are, nevertheless, broad points of theoretical contact between both forms of pragmatism, the illumination of which would require intricate and careful exposition.

⁷⁴ A paradigmatic example of this sort of view would be provided by Richard Rorty's “epistemological behaviorism.” As Rorty suggests, the McDowellian concern can be dissolved if we simply let go of the idea of our answerability to the world and instead take the track of a pragmatist conception of norms (a position he attributes to the likes of Sellars, Davidson, and Brandom, with decisive argumentation contributed by Wittgenstein and Quine), which says normative constraint on our beliefs (all beliefs, but most pointedly our beliefs about the way the world is) comes only from other people i.e. from, most prominently, social conventions, or, perhaps somewhat more robustly, some self-standing ideal of rationality constructed from the instrumentality of concrete social practices (see Rorty, “The Very Idea of Human Answerability to the World”). The world, according to this view, exercises only *causal* influence on our beliefs about it; what delimits the set of acceptable reasons in favor of some belief or another are merely the rational obligations placed upon us, either implicitly or explicitly, by a community (whose boundaries may be conceived as broadly as the community of rational agents, or as narrowly as a specific culture with its own idiosyncratic practices). Knowledge thus becomes, as he puts it, “a matter of conversation and of social practice [...]” (Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature*, 171). Rorty reads a similar view into Heidegger. Needless to say, I think his reading is incorrect.

⁷⁵ A well-crafted deployment of Heideggerian themes against this sort of anti-realist strand of pragmatism is provided by John Haugeland in his essays “Letting Be” (where he is explicit about his indebtedness to Heidegger) and “Truth and Rule-Following” (where he strongly features Heideggerian language but hardly invokes Heidegger by name at all). Though in “Intentionality All Stars,” Haugeland lumps Heidegger in with the conventionalism or “neo-pragmatism” of “left-wing phenomenology,” he later comes to see this—rightly I think—as mistaken (see Haugeland, “Truth and Rule-Following,” 31 and the introduction to Haugeland, *Having Thought*, 4). Indeed, my account owes much to the spirit of Haugeland's reading of Heidegger. Additionally, Joseph Rouse follows the Haugeland of “Truth and Rule-Following,” situating Heidegger closer to McDowell (and Haugeland himself) regarding intentionality, and distinguishing him from Sellars, Davidson, and Brandom in this regard (see Rouse, *Articulating the World*, 51-61).