CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE

CHANGING THE AS-STRUCTURE OF RHETORIC:
A HEIDEGGERIAN VIEW OF RHETORIC AS SILENCE, CARE, AND UNDERSTANDING

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
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Communication Studies

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California State University, Northridge
Dedication

To Peter Marston, who taught me to read, write, think, and live par excellence.
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ABSTRACT

CHANGING THE AS-STRUCTURES OF RHETORIC:
A HEIDEGGERIAN VIEW OF RHETORIC AS SILENCE, CARE, AND UNDERSTANDING

By
Sakina Jangbar
Master of Arts in Communication Studies

Extant scholarship on Heidegger’s contribution to rhetorical theory has focused mostly on how rhetoric can be more than idle talk and how Heidegger’s ontology mends the rift between philosophy and rhetoric. Sufficient attention has not been given to how the substance of Dasein corresponds to the substance of rhetoric. Heidegger’s contributions to the paradigm of rhetoric as a mode of human understanding need to be systematized so that our understanding of how rhetoric is part of our humanity grows richer and deeper. Towards this end, this study finds a correspondence between the substance of Dasein: discourse, moods, and understanding and the substance of rhetoric: logos, pathos, and ethos. Specifically, the findings of this study are three-fold: 1] Rhetoric is not merely speech acts, and for rhetoric to be genuine discourse, it must incorporate the three-part structure of all genuine discourse: the saying, what is said, and what remains to be said; 2] Heidegger finds the rightful place of pathos in rhetorical theory so that the pathos

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are not something lofty that puts one in touch with the divine or a matter of individual personality but, rather they provide a primary orientation to the world which is ontologically prior to rational contemplation; 3] The call of conscience which leads to self-understanding is rhetorical in nature and function because the call is discourse, it moves the fallen Dasein towards authenticity, and it emphasizes temporal understandings. Thus understanding acts as a check on Dasein’s power and clarifies the ethical sanction of rhetoric. This study concludes that: 1] The notion of power parity between the speaker and the audience must be extended to include the subject matter so that the matter and the audience both have roughly the same chance of influencing the speaker and 2] the primary proof of rhetoric is not logos but pathos because logos is founded upon pathos.
Chapter 1: Introduction

Statement of the Problem

A review of extant literature reveals that so far, the substance of rhetoric has not been studied in accordance with the substance of Dasein\(^1\). However, such a project is necessary so that Heidegger’s contribution to the paradigm of rhetoric as a mode of human understanding can be systematized. Aristotle (2007) views rhetoric as a mode of practical reasoning in which the form of rhetoric is an argument and its function is to persuade. Burke (1950) adds to our understanding so that rhetoric is viewed not as a tool but as a mode of symbolic action in which the function of rhetoric is not persuasion but identification and the form is not limited to arguments but includes all symbolic activities. Richards (1965) further adds to our conception of rhetoric by noting that rhetoric is a mode of human understanding in which persuasion occurs when understanding takes place.\(^2\) Thus our conception of rhetoric has grown through the centuries so that rhetoric is now seen as part of our humanity. If rhetoric is unique to human beings and something that cannot be subtracted from us, then it is useful to examine how the substance of Dasein sheds light on the substance of rhetoric. Therefore, the aim of this study is to systematically study those features that comprise Dasein and see how it deepens our understanding of those features that comprise rhetoric. In other

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\(^1\) Literally, Dasein means “Being There”. Dasein is a situated being for whom its own being is an issue. In other words, Dasein refers to the Being of human beings while we are in this world. Even though the literal translation of “Da” is “There” but it is more useful to think of Dasein as “Being Here”. The “here” stands for “being-in-the-world” so that the discussion is confined to what we know or can know of this world phenomenologically. By using the term “Dasein,” Heidegger deliberately places the discussion of “Being” after death outside the scope of his study of Being.

\(^2\) There is also a fourth paradigm, Rhetoric as a Mode of Social Critique and Emancipation, which is not relevant to the arguments being made in this project and as such we shall set it aside for now.
words, this study seeks to demonstrate Heidegger’s contributions to the paradigm of rhetoric as a mode of human understanding.

There is a gap in extant literature regarding the three artistic proofs of rhetoric. Though the three artistic proofs of rhetoric (logos, pathos, and ethos) were first outlined by Aristotle, enough is still not known about the canon of invention. Aristotle differentiates between inartistic and artistic appeals. Inartistic appeals are testimonies, witnesses, contracts, laws, and oaths; artistic proofs are logos, pathos, and ethos. But what exactly are the three proofs and what is their role in rhetorical discourse is not always clear. Logos is commonly translated as reason or logical appeals but Heidegger (2009) notes that the original meaning of logos is discourse and the conventional interpretation of the term “logos” is incorrect. Textbooks on speech communication have further confused the issue by including statistics, laws, testimonies etc under logos. Thus our conception of logos has become murky over the years. Secondly, the role of pathos in rhetorical transactions is also not clear: do pathetic appeals distort the matter under discussion or is there a non-pejorative place for pathos in rhetorical theory? Since Aristotle, who was the first to systematically study the emotions of an audience, the study of emotions has been ignored in philosophy and relegated to fields such as psychology which studies the emotions of an individual. Thus the role of pathetic appeals in rhetoric is also not clear. Finally, the ethical sanction which makes rhetoric worth doing is difficult to conceptualize. How can people be moved towards the good (the goal of teleological ethics) if the good is unknown? All our truths are contingent and open to revision. In such destitution, how can a speaker be sure that the movement he/she is
advocating is indeed a good movement? It is the aim of this study to explore these questions and attempt to answer them using Heidegger’s insights on Dasein.

**Literature Review**

A review of extant literature on Heidegger and rhetoric reveals two major themes and two minor themes. The major themes are: the ways in which rhetoric can be more than idle talk and the ways in which Heidegger’s ontology mends or fails to mend the hard division between philosophy and rhetoric. The minor themes are: the ways in which poetic discourse establishes primacy over rational discourse and the ways in which mood or affect makes social life possible.

A. **Idle talk**

Heidegger uses the term idle talk to refer to average understandings and readymade perspectives that block authentic understanding. He explains, “Idle talk is the possibility of understanding everything without previously making the thing one’s own” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 213). This raises an important question about the nature of rhetoric: is rhetoric idle talk or genuine discourse? Zickmund (2007) states:

> Given that Heidegger associates speech or *Rede* with the gossip and idle talk used by the “they”, one must question whether rhetoric can play any positive role in fostering what Heidegger defines as an authentic existence: a life conducted in accordance with one’s own possibilities (p. 406).

If rhetoric is addressed to das Man (any man), can it ever be more than idle talk? Many scholars have endeavored to explain how rhetoric can be more than idle talk and their findings are grouped below:

1. **Call of conscience**

Hyde (1994) believes that rhetoric can be more than idle talk because it has the potential to sound the call of conscience for Self and Others. Rhetoric can modify
Dasein’s publicness and make it possible for Dasein to be authentic. In other words, rhetoric has the potential to produce a call of conscience and call us out of fallenness and towards authenticity. Hyde states, “…rhetoric can sound a call that interprets the complacency of our everyday world of common sense and common praxis and thereby summons us to choose, to act, and perhaps to change our lives for the better” (p. 382). Further, rhetoric also calls Others towards greater authenticity. Since Dasein is essentially Dasein-with, then Dasein also calls upon others to hear the call of conscience. An authentic Dasein can modify the publicness of Others. Hyde thinks rhetoric is a way of dwelling with Others and therefore, rhetoric becomes the voice of conscience for Others and as such it is an important aspect of our communities and not mere idle talk.

Although Black (1994) also believes that rhetoric is more than idle talk because it sounds the call of conscience but his conception of conscience is different from Hyde’s (1994). For Black (1994) conscience is the archaic form of rhetoric and as such it creates the places where people are to be moved. He notes that, traditionally, rhetoric has been connected to motivation (instrumental form), and if the function of rhetoric is reduced to motivation, then indeed, rhetoric is idle talk. However, rhetoric is also a creative art. He states, “…one must ultimately look at conscience as if it were archaic rhetoric, as if it were a form of motivational narration that not only moves us from one moral place to the next, but also creates the moral places we move among” (p. 361). In other words, rhetoric is genuine discourse when it moves beyond persuasion and creates new and genuine understanding, new places where people can be moved by the call of conscience.
2. Speaking-With-Others

Scult (1998) also thinks that rhetoric is more than idle talk, but unlike Hyde (1994) and Scult (1994) who focus on listening only, Scult (1998) focuses on listening and speaking. Scult (1998) thinks that rhetoric is more than idle talk because it listens to traditions and then speaks of new understandings. He states, “…the new hearing is also a new speaking as hermeneutics becomes rhetorical, and we, as readers, become the audience” (p. 163). Scult (1998) thinks that Heidegger himself demonstrates this in his treatment of the question of Being. Heidegger awaits the call and in the meantime, he “talks in and among the words of the riddle – with the riddle as it were – as he interrogates the tradition, listening for some hint of how to interpret the riddle” (p. 169). Then the new hearing is articulated to Others and so the call becomes rhetorical. Scult further points out that “the phenomenon of the thinker’s language struggling to awaken the thinker himself is decidedly rhetorical in that it takes place in public. How could it be otherwise? Dasein’s being simultaneously is a being-with-others and a being-with-language. And so ‘Language as the House of Being,’ necessarily brings hermeneutics and rhetoric together” (p. 165). In other words, awakening Dasein is a rhetorical action that is always public because Dasein is essentially Dasein-with-others. Concernful speaking with Others turns idle talk into genuine discourse.

Like Scult (1998), Zickmund (1997) also focuses on speaking with others, but unlike Scult (1998), Zickmund (1997) elevates speaking so that speaking becomes a way to guide the souls of others. She believes that rhetoric is more than idle talk because souls of Others are guided by speaking to them. She refers to Heidegger’s analysis of Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* and notes that rhetoric is grounded in knowing the nature of souls,
knowing the possible modes of guiding the souls, and analyzing which means to use for persuasion. Ultimately, Zickmund states, “these possibilities demonstrate that the positive grounding of rhetoric comes from directing and guiding the souls of others by speaking to them” (p. 50). Zickmund further notes that “the idea of leading the souls is similar in nature to the notion developed in Being and Time of Dasein functioning as the conscience of Others” (p. 50). Thus a rhetor can guide Others to authenticity and away from the “they” perspectives by speaking to them. Zickmund concludes that rhetoric is more than idle talk because “rhetoric is a ‘know how’ designed to guide the existence of others by means of speaking with them” (p. 50).

3. Open Space

In a later paper, Zickmund (2007) draws our attention not to speech that guides the souls of others as she did earlier, but to the open space that the call of conscience creates. She notes that though Heidegger’s call of conscience is silent, it is rhetorical because it clears the idle talk away and creates a space where the call can potentially be heard through speech. She states:

The rhetor would not produce the actual call of conscience, but rather would place a particular Dasein in the space or the ‘clearing’ needed in order to be receptive to the call. This could be accomplished by knowing how a Dasein can be led or touched through speech…Thus, rhetoric, while not actually providing the call, would have the chance to guide the souls of others, allowing them to listen resolutely to the call of their own conscience (p. 414).

Thus rhetoric can be more than idle talk when it clears away the chatter and produces an open space in which it becomes possible for Dasein to be authentic.

Like Zickmund (2007), Scult (1994) also believes that rhetoric can avoid the trap of idle talk by creating an open space but for Scult the open space is not a space in which
the call of conscience is heard but a space in which an authentic experience of language takes place. Scult believes that rhetoric can be more than idle talk when it quiets the traditional rhetorical impulse and provides stillness or a quiet, open space in which people can experience language as originally intended by God. Scult connects biblical theology to Heidegger’s hermeneutic philosophy through elusive rhetoric; he states:

Understanding for Heidegger is granted in a place of stillness. In this place of stillness, the conventional rhetorical impulse to speak the language of the audience must be quieted in order to make way for a more elusive rhetoric, a rhetoric that places the audience at some remove from a language that it considers its own (p. 407).

In other words, by distancing oneself from the “they” perspectives, one can find authentic understandings. For Scult (1994), the stillness in which authentic Dasein can be found is the same stillness in which God’s words can be understood without the noise of religious instruction. Just like excessive religious instruction can detract from the experience of God, excessive chatter can detract from authentic experience of language. Thus rhetoric is genuine when it sweeps away the idle chatter surrounding a topic and creates an open or quiet space in which language can be experienced to arrive at authentic understandings.

4. Contingent Situations

Kisiel (2000) takes a very different approach in which rhetoric, to be more than idle talk, does not have to add a new office to its extant duties but must simply continue to do what it has always already done. To be specific, Kisiel clarifies the function of the three proofs of rhetoric. He believes that rhetoric is more than idle talk because the three proofs of rhetoric, logos, ethos, and pathos, promote the revealing function of rhetoric. Kisiel notes that there are two functions of rhetoric, to reveal and to conceal and there are
two types of concealment: “the matter of course concealment and forgetfulness in everyday routinized speech of folk wisdom” and “the more malicious concealment of insight by sophistic rhetoric” (p. 197-198). Kisiel believes that it is often difficult to tell the difference between civil rhetoric/folk wisdom and propaganda/sophistic rhetoric. Therefore, the three proofs of rhetoric, logos, pathos and ethos, are supposed to guide us in contingent situations. Kisiel states, “Heidegger’s move is simply a further reminder that rhetoric’s three modes of persuasion (logos, ethos, and pathos) are first of all highly intercalated contexts that subtly move and guide us in our situational decisions…” (p. 204). Thus rhetoric can be more than idle talk because the three proofs of rhetoric out the truth in contingent situations.

Like Kisiel (2000), Sipiora (1991) also focuses on the contingent realm of rhetoric but in a different way. Instead of drawing our attention to the role of the three proofs of rhetoric in outing contingent truth, Sipiora zeroes in on our technology dominated societies. Sipiora (1991) believes that rhetoric is more than idle chatter when it is guided by meditative thinking which provides a meaningful way to live in a world which is dominated by readymade perspectives generated by technology such as television. He notes that Heidegger calls such a world an unworld of technology and believes that it leads to Dasein’s homelessness or alienation. Sipiora states:

As an activity, the rhetorical performance of meditative thinking is persuasive or not according to its appropriateness to the situational context. For it to succeed, it must discover fitting human responses to the unworld of technology. It must exercise decorum in crafting an oratorical display which has the power to illuminate those relationships within the alienated everydayness of being-in-the-world. It must rouse and guide our moods so that we are disposed to cherish the meaning of dwelling aright (p. 251).
In other words, our thinking about Being should be contingent upon the situation and we must respond in humanistic ways in a world that is dominated by technology. Only when rhetoric is guided by appropriate thinking that responds to the context in which it must think, will it be genuine rhetoric and not idle chatter.

5. **Response of Others**

   Ramsey (1993) provides yet another way to respond to the charge of rhetoric being idle talk: he focuses not on the speaker but on the response of the listener. Ramsey believes that rhetoric can be more than idle talk because it leaves open the possibility of unintended responses. Ramsey compares rhetoric to care and notes that just like care can leap in and dominate or it can leap ahead and liberate, similarly, rhetoric can leap in and close off responses or leap ahead and leave open the possibility of a response. There are many responses possible when hearing, such as: following, going along with, not hearing, resisting, defying, and turning away. Not all possibilities are foreseen by the rhetor and therefore there are unintended responses. Ramsey states:

   At the extremes of rhetoric as personal care, the rhetorical message may be articulated as one that either leaps-in and does not listen or leaps-ahead and hears. The former would be ‘telling-at-the-other’ while the latter would be an ‘asking-of-the-other’. Most important, the latter recognizes the need to await response and attempts to make response possible (p. 272).

In other words, when rhetoric awaits response and makes response possible, then it is grounded in care and is genuine discourse, not idle talk.

6. **Objective World**

   Cassirer (1982) provides another fresh perspective on the problem of rhetoric being idle talk. He posits that just because rhetoric is general and addressed to das Man, it does not necessarily follow that rhetoric is idle talk. Cassirer believes that Heidegger
creates a false dichotomy of personal meanings and the “they” meanings. For Heidegger, objectivity is inaccessible to the mind and the world exists only in Dasein, but for Cassirer, there is an objective world that exists outside of Dasein and is experienced by Dasein. Cassirer states:

The objective mind is not exhausted by, nor degenerates into, the structure of everydayness. The ‘unpersonal’ does not consist merely in the pale, diluted social form of the average, the everydayness of the ‘they,’ but in the form of transpersonal meaning. For this transpersonal, Heidegger’s philosophy has no access (p. 161).

In other words, there are personal meanings, transpersonal meanings, and the “they” meanings. So, just because rhetoric is general, it does not mean that it is necessarily idle talk consisting of “they” meanings (or conventional meanings). There is another alternative that Heidegger does not consider: rhetoric could consist of transpersonal meanings.

B. Rhetoric as Ontology

The second theme that emerges from the extant literature is that Heidegger mends or fails to mend the hard division between philosophy and rhetoric by viewing rhetoric as a mode of ontology. Most of the work in this area hinges upon Heidegger’s (1962) one statement in Being and Time: Aristotle’s Rhetoric “must be taken as the first systematic hermeneutic of everydayness of being with one another” (p. 178). Different scholars have used this statement as a springboard for exploring the ways in which rhetoric can facilitate the question of Being.

1. Heidegger’s Ontology Dissolves Distinctions between Philosophy and Rhetoric

Smith (2003) believes that Heidegger mends the rift between philosophy and rhetoric because, for Smith, rhetoric is a mode of practical philosophy or phronesis. He
notes that instead of withdrawing from society in contemplation of Being, Heidegger shows us how Dasein is understood in its everyday interactions with Others. Smith states:

Removing oneself from the idle talk of the ‘they’ need not be understood as a literal withdraw from the ontic-ness of communal life and discourse into a private meditation on the meaning of Being. Rather, it may be thought of as an attending to the being of the ontic-ness of everyday life…withdrawal then may be understood as striving to get a sense of the movements of disclosure that weave the very fabric of every day being-in-the-world (p. 100-101).

In other words, Heidegger’s ontology is practical because Being is understood in its everyday interactions with Others. Removing oneself from idle talk does not mean that we withdraw from society and contemplate the meaning of Being in isolation. Instead, withdrawing from idle talk means that we orient ourselves in such a way that the possibility of disclosure in everyday life is left open. Smith further notes that rhetorical cultures like ours cannot be sustained through norms only. We need phronesis to maintain the vitality and integrity of the democratic culture. Thus Heidegger’s emphasis on the unfolding of Dasein in everyday activities mends the rift between theory and practice.

Marassi (1986) also believes that Heidegger mends the rift between philosophy and rhetoric, not by viewing rhetoric as phronesis as Smith (2003) does, but by questioning the obsession that philosophy has always had with rationality. Marassi notes that rhetoric leaves room for meanings to emerge whereas rationality tries to fix meaning and therefore philosophy is best served by rhetoric not logic. Marassi’s position is that originary rhetoric overcomes the ineffable nature of things. He states:

In the history of philosophy, logic has acquired the function of founding the internal laws and the method of developing thought. …Logic claims also to set up the practical norms of human life, to define what is good and what is bad. Claiming that he is going beyond traditional metaphysics, Heidegger seems to undermine every law, to do away with every norm, to deprive us of any comfort. In this impoverished time, is it perhaps possible
to overcome the ineffable essence of thing by using an originary rhetoric (p. 80)?

In other words, since the essence of things is difficult to capture in logic, then rhetoric serves philosophy better than logic. How does rhetoric capture the essence of things better than logic? Marassi explains:

The locus of rhetoric does not provide an exact correspondence between word and meaning in such a way that one can establish a necessity and a first meaning, a direct intentionality. Rather, an ulterior meaning is revealed and echoes in the originary rhetorical locus. This meaning is different from the usual one but does not depend on a charge of over determination from the experience of the subject but on its origin passing over the thing designated, the word evoking the thing and the sense conventionally attributed to it (p. 94).

Thus, Marassi’s (1986) position is that philosophy is better served by rhetoric than logic because rhetoric leaves room for new meanings to emerge. Therefore, by questioning rationality as the basis of philosophy, Heidegger’s ontology attempts to mend the rift between rhetoric and philosophy.

Heim (1981) takes a fresh approach and believes that a certain type of rhetoric can blur the distinction between rhetoric and philosophy. He states:

Heidegger claims that Western philosophy has come to conceive its task in overly theoretical terms...By attributing a pervasive importance to goal-directed techne in most aspects of life, Western thinkers over reacted when they sought to delineate a realm apart for thinking (p. 186).

In other words, Western thinkers have created a dichotomy of theory and praxis which, Heim believes, can be healed through Heidegger’s ontology. Heim further states:

...Heidegger’s philosophy is an expressive rhetoric of Being, concerned more with evoking the sense for a question than in judgmentally producing or refuting answers to the question. Heidegger seeks to restore an expressive content to what have generally become purely technical questions...make a place or clearing for pre-judgmental awareness of meaning at the basis of philosophical language (p. 193).
Thus Heim thinks that ultimate rhetoric, that is, the rhetoric of questioning the meaning of Being, heals the rift between theory and praxis. The question of Being is rhetorical because there are no positive answers, only questions or contingent meanings.

Arthos (2007) believes that Heidegger transcends the ancient quarrel between rhetoric and philosophy not by promoting a certain type of rhetoric but by changing how we view all rhetoric. He notes that Heidegger views rhetoric not as an art of persuasion but as ontoepistemic, a way of knowing and a way of being. Arthos explains that, for Heidegger, rhetoric is ontoepistemic because all human matters are contingent and therefore rhetoric is “excellence attuned to the imperfection of the moment” (p. 75). Thus rhetoric provides a different orientation which is necessary for persuasion to take place. He states:

Heidegger pushes the ontoepistemic function of rhetoric by emphasizing its power to provide an orientation, a view, a disposition of the case…Disputants will never move beyond the positions in which they are entrenched unless and until they can allow themselves the distance from their own perspective that makes movement in a discussion possible (p. 75).

Thus, Arthos notes, Heidegger promotes disciplinary cooperation between hermeneutics and rhetoric by “his transformation of canonic rhetorical principles into an ontoepistemology” (p. 77).

Elden (2005) argues that Heidegger dissolves the distinction between rhetoric and hermeneutics by drawing our attention to what occurs in rhetorical discourse: the self interpretation of Dasein takes place in the realm of rhetoric. He states, “Heidegger suggests, ‘rhetoric is nothing other than the interpretation of concrete Dasein, the hermeneutic of Dasein itself,’ indeed, the discipline where this self interpretation explicitly takes place” (p. 289). Dasein is essentially Dasein-with and it is through talking
with others that a meaningful understanding of Dasein emerges. Elden further states, “The Greek notion of logos was understood as discourse about being...In this respect, logic was hermeneutics... Hermeneutics means in connections with the original meaning...” (p. 285). Thus, Heidegger blurs the distinction between rhetoric and hermeneutics by noting that it is through rhetoric that Dasein is uncovered, articulated, and understood.

Walsh (1991) finds the common root of philosophy and rhetoric: language. He believes that Heidegger dissolves the distinction between philosophy and rhetoric by noting that ontology is prior to any distinction between theory and praxis. Walsh states:

In a passage from the ‘Letter on Humanism’ where Heidegger is commenting on the nature of the thinking he proposes, he says, that ‘the thinking that inquires into the truth of Being and so defines man’s essential abode from Being toward Being is neither ethics nor ontology... neither theoretical nor practical but comes to pass before this distinction.’ It is thinking in the fullest, living sense. And the manner in which it comes to pass is as saying (p. 236).

In other words, Dasein dwells in language and therefore thinking about being or ontology is always prior to philosophy or rhetoric. Philosophy and rhetoric are both founded upon language and since language is the house of Being, then philosophy and rhetoric both have common roots that unites them.

Hyde and Smith (1979) also find a common root for philosophy and rhetoric, not in the very broad concept of language as Walsh (1991) does, but in visualizing a symbiotic relationship between philosophy and rhetoric. They believe that Heidegger mends the distinction between hermeneutics (a philosophy) and rhetoric by noting that rhetoric is necessary for understanding to occur. They state:

An important relationship exists between hermeneutics and rhetoric that has been overlooked by communication scholars... The primordial
function of rhetoric is to ‘make known’ meaning both to oneself and to others. Meaning is derived by a human being in and through the interpretive understanding of reality. Rhetoric is the process of making-known that meaning (p. 347-348).

Hyde and Smith visualize a hermeneutical situation as a reservoir of meaning and rhetoric as the tool that makes that meaning known. They state:

If the hermeneutical situation is the reservoir of meaning, then rhetoric is the selecting tool for making-known this meaning. Hence, the making-known of meaning is dependent on the selective function of rhetoric. The ontological relationship between hermeneutics and rhetoric operates therefore in a dialectical manner: Without the hermeneutical situation there would be a meaningless void; without rhetoric the latent meaning housed in the hermeneutical situation could never be actualized…rhetoric is what situates and moves the hermeneutical situation in and through time (p. 354).

Thus rhetoric makes the meaning of a hermeneutical situation accessible and intelligible to Self and to Others and therefore rhetoric is essential to understanding.

Like Hyde and Smith (1979), Rickman (1981) also visualizes a symbiotic relationship between philosophy and rhetoric, however, the relationship that Rickman sees is temporary in nature, necessary only until mastery is gained over one of the two disciplines. Rickman locates both disciplines in the larger field of communication. Rickman posits that common ground between rhetoric, the art of persuasion, and hermeneutics, the art of interpretation, is meaningful because it solves the larger problem of communication. He finds that there is a two-way relationship between rhetoric and hermeneutics. When trying to understand a work, knowledge of rhetorical principles will be helpful for a student. Similarly, when composing a work, a lecturer must consider the principles involved in understanding. However, the more attention one pays to any one set of principles, the less need there is to refer to the other. If a person masters one field, the other becomes superfluous. Rickman states, “Vico’s principle that the mind can
understand what the human mind can create is the link which connects hermeneutics and rhetoric” (p. 111). In other words, the rhetoric of the speaker can be understood by the listener and this Rickman feels is the connection between hermeneutics and rhetoric, even if the connection is ultimately not necessary.

Scult (1999) gives us a fresh approach in which care turns rhetoric into ontology. Care demands that we involve ourselves with other people by talking to them. In that case, care and rhetoric would lead us to inauthenticity, idle talk. But, according to Scult, “the first hermeneutic of everydayness of being with one another” means that “our construction of everyday life with one another is grounded in our emotional reactions to what befalls us – our moods…It is our moods that give us the understanding that situates us…” (p. 155). So, if rhetoric is the ability to see the available means of persuasion in any given situation, then

rhetoric becomes the ability to “see” the emotionally defined situations in which we find ourselves on at least two interconnected levels: We are able to see a situation as worthy of our care through the urgency of the mood it arouses; and we are further able to see the linguistic resources available to us in the situation to cope appropriately with that mood (p. 156).

However, Scult believes that the possibilities of rhetoric go even deeper. He thinks that rhetoric helps transform our thrownness and actualize our possibilities. He notes:

Rhetorical seeing can reflect on itself and observe what is persuasive about the given – how words move us through a given mood to a particular action. That is, rhetoric carries with it the capacity to see how we are led almost imperceptibly from life’s possibilities as they befall us to the life we make with others through speech (p. 156).

Thus people move towards their possibilities through rhetorical discourse that utilizes the mood that it arouses.
2. **Heidegger’s Ontology Creates Distinctions between Rhetoric and Philosophy**

   In an interview conducted by Arneson (2007), Hyde expresses that Heidegger overemphasizes theory and neglects praxis. Hyde believes that philosophy and rhetoric must work together for the good of the community. To withdraw from active life and engage only in philosophy is a violation of moral duty and Hyde thinks that Heidegger is guilty of this violation. Hyde states, “As Heidegger developed his philosophy, a sincere concern for the authenticity of rhetoric disappeared from view” (p. 109). Additionally, Hyde wonders if we can allow our Dasein to unfold when there are exigencies that demand action immediately. Hyde thinks that there are times when we cannot tarry and attune to the call of Being. He states, “If you’re doing work in communication and rhetoric, it seems to me that sooner or later you have to come back to earth, take your theory and apply it to see if it has any real purchase” (p. 110). Hyde thinks that Heidegger is oblivious to the fact that he is creating a hard division between theory and practice. He states, “The later Heidegger seems oblivious to Cicero’s warning about the danger of allowing a severance to occur between the tongue and the brain. This danger must always be a central concern of communication ethics” (p. 110). Thus Hyde thinks that Heidegger values philosophy over rhetoric.

   Salazaar (2008), after reviewing the book *Heidegger and Rhetoric*, also concludes that Heidegger values philosophy over rhetoric and Heidegger abandons the study of rhetoric after his lecture on Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* in favor of philosophy. He states, “…the book makes an argument for Heidegger’s early and restricted reading of Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*, not rhetoric, and forms part of a building process towards a philosophical instauration” (p. 309).
C. Primacy of Poetic Discourse over Rational Discourse

The third theme that emerges in a review of the extant literature is that Heidegger valued poetical discourse over rational discourse. For Heidegger, poetical discourse is not necessarily verse poems but any discourse that reveals hitherto unknown meanings. Grassi’s (1987) position is not so much about the division between rhetoric and philosophy but between poetry and philosophy. He believes that Heidegger’s emphasis on the efficacy of poetical discourse over rational discourse in uncovering reality renders traditional philosophy obsolete. He states, “Heidegger’s thesis, in contrast to traditional philosophy, states that reality cannot originally be unveiled in its meaning through a rational process” (p. 249). Grassi further explains that according to traditional philosophy, reason offers us a security against uncertainty but the meaning of Being is always changing and is particular to a situation and so philosophy cannot respond to the ever changing nature of calls. Therefore, it is poetry that unveils reality not philosophy.

Nelson (1997) also thinks that Heidegger believed in the power of rhetorical tropes in uncovering reality. Nelson believes that, inspired by Nietzsche, Heidegger turned away from the analytical thinking of the Western world which emphasizes logic in the uncovering of reality and instead he sided with the Ancient Greeks in believing that “truth was the absence or removal of coverings that hide the beings beneath” (p. 40).

Nelson states:

Truth was a-letheia, dispelling forgetfulness of reality. For Western civilization, truth-seeking and truth-telling penetrate veils of illusion to display the realities behind. Truth uncovers. Truth dis-covers what appearances cloak. As Nietzsche knew, but Westerners forget, to re-veal realities is to re-veil them. Truths are always already rhetorical and

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3 A detailed description of what Heidegger means by poetical discourse is given in Chapter Two – Rhetoric as Silence.
symbolical. Truth telling cannot prevent, diminish, or undo myths. Instead truth-telling re-tropalizes and re-mystifies (p. 40).

Thus, Nelson and Grassi both think that Heidegger, like Nietzsche, believes that rationality and logic could never uncover reality and that it is through rhetorical tropes that reality could be discovered.

Hyland (1997) also thinks that Heidegger is very sensitive to the poetic character of language and its function in providing the non-theoretical distance necessary to understand reality. Hyland refers to the myth of Care in Being and Time: The myth supports Heidegger’s analysis that Care is the source of Dasein’s Being in explicit contrast to the ontic characterizations of body and spirit. Hyland believes that Heidegger’s style is reminiscent of Plato’s poetic style, that is, both thinkers rely on mythos to support their analysis.

D. The Role of Mood in Social Life

The third and final theme that emerges from a review of the extant literature is the role of mood in social life. Heidegger (1962) states, “What we indicate ontologically by the term ‘state-of-mind’ is ontically the most familiar and everyday sort of thing; our mood, our Being-attuned…In having a mood, Dasein is always disclosed moodwise as that entity to which it has been delivered over in its Being” (p. 172-173). In other words, Dasein always has some mood. Even when we master a mood, we do so by replacing it with another mood. Dasein is disclosed in its mood and Dasein’s mood is its response to its thrownness. Different scholars have applied Heidegger’s idea of moods in different ways.

Crosswhite (1989) establishes the importance of emotions in argumentation, not as an ancillary proof, but as an indispensable element. Crosswhite uses Heidegger’s
interpretation of mood as the way Dasein comports itself in the world and that mood is equiprimordial with understanding. In other words, our ability to understand things is dependent upon our mood. Crosswhite states:

…mood is an indispensible element in argumentation, that those who make a strict distinction between appeals to emotions and appeals to reasons misconceive both reason and emotion, and that those who found differences between kinds of discourse on such a distinction multiply errors. I reason instead that the exordium is an indispensible element in argumentation… (p. 29).

In other words, moods create an open region in which argumentation and understanding can take place. Crosswhite further believes that though reason and emotion can exist independently in theory, they are not ontologically independent. He states:

There’s no logical contradiction in thinking of emotion and reason as two independent sorts of things. However, this conceptual independence of reason and emotion, strengthened by their separation and abstraction into theoretical language can be misleading. For there is a natural tendency to transfer this conceptual independence into an ontological independence. One then imagines that reason and emotion pick out two discrete psychological events or functions which have no essential relation to one another. This is the mistake which underlies the misinterpretation of emotion (p. 30).

Thus, Crosswhite concludes, exordium-initiated rhetoric is as pure as argumentation can be and it is futile to separate reason and emotion in argumentation.

Agosta (2010) also argues that affects or mood are not unclear propositions that influence judgment but instead moods clear the way for authenticity. He states:

The mood is a ‘clearing’ for care, in the strict Heideggerian sense, in which care includes the other in a being-with that is receptive to the other as a whole and existing in what’s possible for Dasein in the full sense of an authentic interrelation of committed speakers and listeners in community (p. 343).

Thus, like Crosswhite (1989), Agosta also emphasizes the role of moods in philosophy and he concludes that after Heidegger’s reading of Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*, Book II, the
dominant view of affects in philosophy is cleared away. No longer can moods be thought of as an ancillary and unclear aspect of argumentation and philosophy but as the essential element which makes authenticity possible.

Gross (2005) argues that, for Heidegger, logos is founded upon pathos. He states:

…Heidegger characterizes pathos (variously passion, affect, mood or emotion) as the very condition for the possibility of rational discourse or logos. …What Heidegger emphasizes in the tradition like none before is the fact that without others, pathos would remain unarticulated (as it does in non-human life) and rational discourse would never get off the ground…the passions are actually phenomenon constitutive of social life (p. 4).

In other words, Heidegger uses Aristotle to overturn the negative connotations of pathos that have come down to us through tradition. Heidegger finds that pathos provides the very condition for the possibility of judgment, or krisis. It is pathos that gives life and movement to logos, and without pathos, logos would remain abstract and fail to move us. Additionally, pathos is how we belong to each other. What is unique about human pathos is that we can be moved by things that are not physically there. He states, “…only human being is moved to discourse” (p. 13). Rhetoric is not about tropes and about eloquence, nor is it about inventing proofs like a genius or about passions being a matter of individual psychology. Instead, according to Gross, Heidegger believes that, “We are human in so far as we can generate shared contexts, articulate our fears and desires, deliberate and judge in the appropriate terms of our day, and act meaningfully in a world of common concern” (p. 4). Therefore, rhetoric is at the heart of ontology.

Thus a review of the extant literature on Heidegger and rhetoric uncovers two major themes and two minor themes. The major themes are: the ways in which rhetoric can be more than idle talk and the ways in which Heidegger’s ontology mends or fails to
mend the hard division between philosophy and rhetoric. The minor themes are: the ways in which poetical discourse claims primacy over rational discourse and the ways in which mood or affect makes social life possible.
Chapter 2: Rhetoric as Silence

Way and Weighing
Stile and saying
On a single walk are found
Go bear without halt
Question and default
On your single pathway bound
(Heidegger, 1971b, p. 3).

Rhetoric can be defined in many ways but the term “rhetoric” has three referents: art, artifact, and function. Rhetoric as art focuses on the application of rules to the creation of discourse. Rhetoric as an artifact focuses on the discourse created by the application of the art of rhetoric. Rhetoric as function focuses on what the discourse accomplishes. What is clear in all three cases is that rhetoric entails discourse. However, the question that begs to be asked is what constitutes discourse? We begin our discussion with the question of discourse because Heidegger (1962) believes that Dasein can be understood by referring to its three extrinsic features: discourse, moods (or state of mind), and understanding; he states, “Discourse is existentially equiprimordial with state-of-mind and understanding…Discourse is the articulation of intelligibility” (p. 203-204). In other words, discourse is basic to human beings because it is through discourse that all meaning is created and articulated.

Definition of a Definition

Before we define discourse, we must first understand Heidegger’s concept of definitions. In Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy, Heidegger (2009) draws our attention to the problem of definition and regrets that the concept of definition has declined since Aristotle. He asks, “How does it really come about that a definitio, which is genuine knowledge of the matter, becomes a matter of logical perfection” (p. 11)?
Heidegger blames traditional logic for this decline and notes that for the Ancient Greeks, arriving at a definition was a possibility of discourse, but in traditional logic, “definition has become a symptom of decline, a mere thought technique that was once the basic possibility of human speech” (p. 11). He further notes that for Kant, “definition was a methodological issue designed to give precision to knowledge” (p. 9) but Heidegger believes that to know a concept one has to go beyond logically precise definitions. He sarcastically observes that in Kantian logic, “…the genuine definition is the so called real definition which thus determines what the res in itself is” (p. 10). But, for Heidegger, a genuine definition is not one that allows an object to stand on its own but one that allows a phenomenon to be understood beyond its average intelligibility. Towards this end, Heidegger proposes that phenomena can be understood through genuine definitions and through as-structures:

To understand what Heidegger means by genuine definitions, we draw from his recently published lecture, Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy, and his philosophical masterpiece, Being and Time. In Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy, Heidegger (2009) briefly outlines three aspects of a genuine definition: basic experience, guiding claim, and tendency towards intelligibility. By basic experience, Heidegger means a non-theoretical, concrete experience of a phenomenon. Most likely, this aspect originates from Husserl’s phenomenology which emphasizes that experience is the source of all knowledge; Husserl was Heidegger’s teacher and as such had an enormous influence on Heidegger’s thinking. About the first aspect of a genuine definition, Heidegger (2009) states, “This basic experience is primarily not theoretical but instead lies in the commerce of life with its world” (p. 12). In other words, a genuine
definition includes how a phenomenon is experienced by people in their everyday life. For example, walking is not adequately defined as the coordinated movement of lower limbs but experienced concretely and non-theoretically as a sensation and as a uniquely human activity. So, in an effort to grasp a concept, the first question we need to ask is: how is the matter experienced?

However, experience alone is not sufficient for arriving at a definition since all experiences have to be put into language, therefore, the second aspect of a genuine definition is the guiding claim. Heidegger (2009) gives the example of movement in Aristotle’s work to explain this aspect; he states, “In what way is a phenomenon like movement addressed so as to accord with the guiding claim of the matter seen” (p. 12). In other words, a genuine definition includes not only the experience of the phenomenon but also what is being said about the matter. So in our example of walking, a person bound to a wheelchair may express that walking is freedom, a neurologist might explain the interactions between the brain and the limbs that permit walking, a physical therapist might prescribe walking for its health benefits, a parent might say that walking is a sign of growth in a child and so on. Therefore, a genuine definition incorporates experience as well as guiding claims.

The final aspect of a genuine definition is tendency towards intelligibility. About this aspect, Heidegger (2009) notes that we should ask:

How is the phenomenon thus seen unfolded more precisely; into what sort of conceptuality is it, as it were, spoken? What claim of intelligibility is demanded of that which is thus seen (p. 12)?

By intelligibility, Heidegger (1966) means the horizons of disclosure. In other words, a definition should unfold something new that is capable of being brought to language.
Two phrases in the above statement need to be examined: “unfold something new” and “capable of being brought to language”. First, let’s examine the idea of how a definition should unfold something new: Young (2006) explains that our most general horizon of disclosure comes from us being essentially workers; everything comes to us in terms of “work-suitable ways” (p. 376). Young (2006) goes on to explain that there is nothing wrong with a general horizon, but we have to recognize that the general is one horizon, one disclosure among many others. Discourse that is genuine helps us see the other horizons, in other words, it helps us see richer meanings in things. The general horizon conceals other horizons and genuine discourse unconceals these rich meanings for us.

Now, let’s examine the second idea that a disclosure should be capable of being brought to language. It is important that experiences should be capable of being brought to language because only through language can they be shared. In Being and Time, Heidegger (1962) states:

Any assertion as a communication must be expressed. ... As something communicated, that which has been put forward in the assertion is something that Others can share with the person making the assertion, even though the entity which he has pointed out and to which he has given a definite character is not close enough for them to grasp and see it. That which is put forward in the assertion is something which can be passed along in further retelling (p. 197).

A definition has to be such that it can disclose new horizons which can be expressed in language. If one has to encounter a phenomenon to grasp the concept of it, then such phenomena are outside the scope of language and therefore cannot be defined. Take the example of death: there is no communication possible about the experience of death and hence it remains untold and unshared. As Heidegger (2009) explains, when one no longer speaks, we speak of death. Gadamer (1975) too notes, in Truth and Method, that “Being
that can be understood is language” (p. xxxii). Thus intelligibility is an essential component of a genuine definition.

Another way of understanding concepts is through as-structures, also known as the “hermeneutical as”. All experiencing is an experience of something, as something. A door is not experienced vacuously as a rectangular piece of wood but as something to go through; a chair is experienced as something to sit on; a hammer is experienced as a tool, and so on. Heidegger explains:

…Things never show themselves proximally as they are for themselves, so as to add up to a sum of realia and fill up a room. What we encounter as closest to us (though not as something taken as a theme) is the room; and we encounter it not as something between four walls in a geometrical spatial sense, but as equipment for residing. Out of this the arrangement emerges, and it is in this that any individual item of equipment shows itself (Heidegger, 1962, p. 98).

In other words, we know things in the manner that we use them. When we see a hammer, we do not just stare at it to understand the concept of hammer; we seize it and use it, and in doing so, we have genuine knowledge of a hammer. Though this is a general horizon of disclosure, but is not to be dismissed as unimportant. The most primordial way for us to know something is to use it as equipment, indeed, we “could not survive as practical agents without the horizon of equipmentality” (Young, 2006, p. 376). The as-structures are not limited to understanding equipment, for example, a morning can be understood as a beautiful new beginning or as another day to trudge through; rain can be understood as water for the crops or as flood-water. The as-structures orient us in the world in a particular way and they influence how we approach a concept or a phenomenon.

Thus Heidegger teaches that a definition is not a matter of logical precision but a matter of knowledge. Definitions that artificially bind concepts into categories that are
nominal and reductive do not provide a true understanding. Genuine definitions include concrete experiences, guiding claims, and have a tendency to be intelligible. These three aspects “point to conceptuality without exhausting it” (Heidegger, 2009, p.12). In other words, these aspects will always leave open the possibility of saying something new about a phenomenon that gives us genuine knowledge about a matter, not logical perfection or reduction. Additionally, experiencing a phenomenon through its as-structures is another primordial way of knowing something. Thus, Heidegger (2009) boldly inverts the task of research by postulating that research reaches fulfillment in arriving at definitions rather than beginning with definitions.

**Definition of Discourse**

Now that the matter of a definition and what it entails has been elucidated, we can begin to define discourse. In defining discourse, Heidegger, naturally does not give a logically precise definition but instead follows the path of a genuine definition; he takes us back to the Ancient Greek experience of discourse, provides a guiding claim about discourse, and then opens the possibility of a deeper intelligibility. First, Heidegger takes us back to the Ancient Greek experience of discourse and invites us to experience discourse as something that makes us human. The human being is seen by the Greeks as “a living thing that (as living) has language…The fundamental mode of being in which the human being is in its world is in speaking with, about it, of it” (Heidegger, 2009, p. 14). Heidegger further posits that to live is to speak and “where speaking stops, where the living being no longer speaks, we speak of death” (p. 16). He even translates the term logos, not as rationality, but as discourse, and he notes that conventional interpretations of Aristotle have lost sight of what Aristotle meant and have reduced the meaning of
logos to reason. Heidegger translates logos as discourse and he interprets Aristotle’s
definition of a human being, not as a rational animal but as “a being that speaks” (p. 73),
a discoursing animal. He states:

When the Greeks say the human being is a living being that speaks, they
do not mean, in a physiological sense, that he utters definite sounds.
Rather the human being is a living thing that has its genuine Dasein in
conversation and in discourse. The Greeks existed in discourse (p. 74).

To assert that a human being is a living being that speaks does not mean that, along with
other faculties, people also possess the faculty of speaking; it means that it is speech that
enables a person to be a person; it is a *dynamis* that we all possess. Indeed, if a person
loses the ability to speak, as in the case of a stroke, their personhood is significantly
diminished, and when animals are given speech in a movie, they are personified.

Heidegger (2009) further explains that this definition is not an invention, nor is it
arbitrary, instead it reproduces the way the Greeks primarily saw their Dasein. Even
before Aristotle, the Greeks saw themselves as beings that speak. Additionally, Dasein
does not exist alone in discourse. In *Being and Time*, Heidegger notes that Dasein is
essentially Dasein-with. In other words, the most basic way to be in this world is to be in
conversation with each other. Heidegger (1962) states, “By reason of this with-like
Being-in-the-world, the world is always the one I share with Others. The world of Dasein
is a with-world. Being-in is Being-with-Others” (p. 155). Even when there is no Other
present, the Other is missing and “Being-alone is a deficient mode of Being-with” (p.
157). Thus Heidegger draws our attention to the concrete experience of discourse as a
fundamental way of being human in this world and a fundamental way of being with
others in this world.
Next, let’s examine the guiding claim made by Heidegger about discourse. Heidegger (1962) notes:

Discourse lets something be seen, that is, it lets us see something from the very thing which the discourse is about. In discourse, so far as it is genuine, what is said is drawn from what the talk is about (p. 56).

In other words, genuine discourse goes beyond the discussion about the thing, and through discourse, it allows us to see the thing beyond its average intelligibility and not as it is commonly talked about. The possibility of seeing a deeper meaning exists only if the discourse is genuine. This of course begets the question: what is genuine discourse?

For Heidegger, genuine discourse has a three part structure: the act of speaking, what is said, and what remains to be said. He states that saying is not merely speaking:

It means: saying, and what is said in it and what is to be said…the same as ‘show’ in the sense of let appear and let shine, but in the manner of hinting (Heidegger, 1971a, p. 47).

In other words, discourse needs all three elements to be genuine: the act of speaking, the words that are said, and all that remains to be said. What remains to be said is not arbitrary but hinted in what is said and it keeps alive the possibility of seeing deeper meanings rather than binding the thing in reductive categories. What remains to be said is shrouded in silence and therefore, silence is an integral part of genuine discourse.

**Silence as a Mode of Discourse**

Heidegger’s definition of discourse provides a deeper intelligibility by revealing that discourse incorporates both speaking and keeping silent. Much attention has been given to speaking, but Heidegger draws our attention to “keeping silent”. Silence as a mode of discourse has not received much attention. Beatty (1999) points out that, with the exception of Heraclitus and Heidegger, most Western philosophers have ignored
silence and focused on speech acts. There is a tendency in the West to think that nothing
is happening in silence (Palmer, 1983). Heidegger (1971a), in his A Dialogue on
Language, has a Japanese express bafflement on the Western interpretation of emptiness,
stillness, nothingness, and silence as nihilistic:

We marvel to this day how the Europeans could lapse into interpreting as
nihilistic the nothingness of which you speak in your lecture. To us,
emptiness is the loftiest name …

In the essay, Principles of Thinking, Heidegger (1976) asks us to be vigilant against
thinking that things or thoughts can only be one way, the Western way:

…no one kind of thinking has a hegemony. Thought becomes a product of
sheer fantasy when we represent it as a universally human faculty. But if
we recall that in our time an equiform manner of thinking is
commandeering world history all over the globe, then we must be equally
determined to keep in mind that this equiform thinking is only the
standardized and utilitarian form of that historical mold which we call
Western (p. 57).

Thus, according to Heidegger, discourse cannot be just speech acts even though it has
been conceived of as such in Western thought. Viewing discourse as speaking only,
limits our understanding of what constitutes discourse. From the poem quoted in the
beginning, it is clear that Heidegger believes that stile, which is a series of steps that
allow people to pass a fence or a boundary, is found on the path of speaking and one has
to ultimately leave the path of speaking to cross into the higher ground of genuine
discourse.

How can silence be an integral part of discourse? Logically speaking, such an idea
seems contradictory. The law of contradiction⁴, on which all rational thinking depends,
states that two antithetical propositions cannot be true at the same time and in the same

⁴ In his essay, Principles of Thinking, Heidegger refers to the Law of Non-Contradiction as the Law of
Contradiction. I have used Heidegger's terminology here to stay close to the original text.
sense. Therefore, to propose that silence is a mode of discourse when discourse is conceived of as speech acts appears contradictory, and logic demands that such invalid propositions be dismissed. A close analysis of Heidegger’s concept of silence reveals that the idea of silence as a mode of discourse is indeed contradictory and therefore foundational. Heidegger (1976) explains, in Principles of Thinking, that “usual thinking does not follow the laws of thought – rather it continually contradicts them – exactly where it passes off as correct thinking” (p. 51). Here, Heidegger’s preference for phenomenology over philosophy is evident as he sarcastically notes that usual or common thinking does not abide by the law of contradiction and therefore it is closer to correct thinking than analytic philosophy. Heidegger challenges the laws of logic and notes that, “…everything that is has contradiction for its foundation” (Heidegger, 1976, p. 51). In other words, when we attempt to remove contradictions, we do violence to things by forcing them into artificial categories rather than allowing things to exist in their glorious contradictions. Here Heidegger closely aligns himself with Husserl’s philosophy:

   It (contradiction) is the root of all movement and vitality; something moves, has drive and is active only to the extent that it contains a contradiction in itself (as quoted in Heidegger, 1976, p. 51).

Laws of logic or thought dismiss contradictory ideas or statements as invalid but it is contradictions that keep things moving between dichotomies, and it is within such movement or play that the foundation of things is unveiled. Heidegger gives a complex example of life and death to illustrate this point, but taking a page from Heidegger’s phenomenology, we can take an everyday example to grasp this concept: things we eat and things we drink. There are solid things that we eat yet almost all food, unless it is
artificially dehydrated, has water content. Therefore, when we eat, we are also drinking. Such contradictions unveil the foundations of food, that is, how it exists in nature; and it keeps the concept of food moving and alive, rather than fixing it into one or the other state of matter. Heidegger (1976) notes that the supreme task of logic has been to annihilate contradictions, but “contradiction is the primary trait of all that is real” and we need to “annihilate the principle of contradiction, and salvage contradiction as the law of the reality of the real” (p. 51). Thus if a definition seems contradictory to the laws of thought, it should not be automatically dismissed because contradictions unveil the starting point of correct thinking. Silence as a mode of discourse appears to contradict the law of non-contradiction but this contradiction needs to be embraced and celebrated as it will unveil the foundations of discourse and rhetoric and keep the concept of discourse and rhetoric alive with possibilities.

Heidegger attempts to destroy\(^5\) the tradition of emphasizing speech and neglecting silence by noting that silence is a mode of discourse. He states, “… (We) must be careful not to regard utterance, let alone expression, as the decisive element of human speech” (Heidegger, 1971b, p. 206). However, Heidegger was well aware of the difficulty of discussing silence and a remark in his Language essay expresses this dilemma; he states, “…to talk about language is presumably even worse than to write about silence” (Heidegger, 1971b, p. 189) and in his A Dialogue on Language (1971a), he states, “Above all, silence about silence…because to talk and write about silence is what produces the most obnoxious chatter…” (p. 53). Since Heidegger was vehemently

\(^5\) Heidegger uses the word “destroy” in a positive sense. Taylor Carman who wrote the foreword in Being and Time (1962) explains that to destroy tradition does not mean “to smash or obliterate, but to take it apart, undo it, correct its fixation on entities at the expense of being, to wake it from its slumbers, and to remind it of its forgetfulness of being” (p. xvi).
opposed to writing about silence, he only briefly mentions silence in his various texts. In this chapter, at the risk of producing “the most obnoxious chatter”, I attempt to gather and unify the various places in which Heidegger discusses silence as a mode of discourse. This elucidation of silence as a mode of discourse will, in turn, clarify the role of silence in rhetorical theory. Once we bring to light how silence is an integral part of discourse, it will be a small step to incorporate silence in the received view of rhetoric as speech acts.

Heidegger’s Definition of Silence

Is silence the mere absence of speech or even noise? Heidegger does not believe so. In *Being and Time*, Heidegger (1962) states,

> Keeping silent is another essential possibility of discourse and it has the same existential foundation. In talking with one another, the person who keeps silent can ‘make one understand’ (that is, he can develop an understanding), and he can do so more authentically than the person who is never short of words (p. 208).

There are three points that Heidegger makes above in describing silence. First, he notes that keeping silent is an essential possibility of discourse. Heidegger means that keeping silent is a way of engaging in discourse. Once again, it seems strange that one could engage in discourse while keeping silent but indeed discourse cannot be genuine without silence. Heidegger (1971b) states, “What is spoken, and in no language, what is said” (p. 11). As discussed in the previous section, silence is an essential component of three-part structure of genuine discourse; genuine discourse is composed of the act of saying, what is said, and what is not yet said. Silence leaves room for something more to be said.

The second point that Heidegger makes in describing silence is that it has an existential foundation. What he means is that silence is a choice in the same way that speaking is a choice because both speaking and silence can say something. He notes, “To
keep silent does not mean to be dumb … To be able to keep silent, Dasein must have something to say …” (p. 208). In other words, silence is chosen as an act of language that can realize the possibilities of discourse. When someone is silent because they have nothing to say or they do not have the ability to make speech sounds, such silence is not a mode of discourse. In the poem quoted at the beginning of the chapter, Heidegger notes that stile and saying are found on the same path. The stile, as explained before, is a series of steps that allows a person to leave one terrain behind and reach higher ground. This metaphor helps us envision language as a path that has lower and higher levels; one path must be abandoned to reach another higher path. The lower ground of discourse does not fulfill the possibilities of discourse and only one who is aware of the role of silence in unveiling possibilities can climb the stile to reach the higher ground of genuine discourse.

Heidegger notes:

To Say and to speak are not identical. A man may speak, speak endlessly, and all the time say nothing. Another man may remain silent, not speak at all and yet, without speaking, say a great deal (Heidegger, 1971a, p. 122).

Remember that to “say means to show, to let appear, to let be seen and heard” (Heidegger, 1971a, p. 122). One who talks endlessly without saying/showing remains on the lower ground of discourse as does one who has nothing to say/show. Only the person who chooses to hold back and stays reticent, climbs the stile to reach a higher level of discourse which makes room for saying/showing. As Heidegger (1971a) states, “What is unspoken is not merely something that lacks voice, it is what remains unsaid, what is not yet shown, what has not yet reached its appearance” (p. 122). Thus, silence is a mode of discourse only when silence is chosen for its ability to say something.
The final idea in Heidegger’s (1962) definition of silence that needs explication is that “the person who keeps silent can make one understand (that is, he can develop an understanding), and he can do so more authentically than the person who is never short of words” (p. 208). What Heidegger means to say is that excessive chatter does not advance understanding, indeed it closes off possibilities by attempting to fix the concept or phenomenon in assertions, whereas silence allows the possibility of understanding. Heidegger’s point is that silence is valuable because it leads somewhere. The idea of language as a path is a key concept in Heidegger’s study of language. In his essay, *The Way to Language*, he states:

> …within language as Saying there is present something like a way or a path. What is a way? A way allows us to reach something. Saying, if we listen to it, is what allows us to reach the speaking of language (Heidegger, 1971a, p. 126)

For Heidegger, language is a path and like all paths, it leads somewhere. Saying, in its three part structure: speaking, what is said, and what remains to be said leads to genuine discourse. When one removes the essential component of what remains to be said, then the chance of genuine discourse is lost. As Heidegger (1962) explains,

> Speaking at length about something does not offer the slightest guarantee that thereby understanding is advanced. On the contrary, talking excessively about something, covers it up and brings what is understood to a sham clarity – the unintelligibility of the trivial (p. 208).

In other words, too much chatter procures a surface-deep understanding which is trivial and even misleading. But Saying leads to a different path, the path of genuine discourse. Thus Heidegger does not define silence as absence of speech or noise but as a mode of discourse and an essential component of speaking which creates an open space where genuine discourse (a Saying, a showing) can take place. Speaking alone is a deficient
mode of discourse which can never lead to genuine discourse but the three part structure of discourse when recognized and chosen can lead to the higher ground of genuine discourse. Silence acts as a stile through which the boundaries of speaking, an incomplete mode of discourse, are knowingly crossed to reach the complete and genuine mode of discourse.

When in the winter nights, snowstorms tear at the cabin and one morning the landscape is hushed in its blanket of snow ….

Thinking’s saying would be stilled in its being only by becoming unable to say that which must remain unspoken.

Such inability would bring thinking face to face with its matter.

What is spoken is never, and in no language, what is said.

That a thinking is, ever and suddenly – whose amazement could fathom it?

(Heidegger, 1971b, p. 11)

**Embodiment of Silence in Poetic Discourse**

Now that we have an inkling of how important silence is in Heidegger’s conception of discourse, the question we need to attend to is what kind of discourse embodies silence? Heidegger’s answer is unequivocal: virtues of silence are embodied in poetic discourse. Heidegger’s conception of poetic discourse is not limited to verse poems. Though translators, Hart and Maraldo (Heidegger, 1976), in their commentary, note that “such an extraordinary work may take a variety of forms: political deeds, works of art, philosophical questioning, heroic and sacrificial acts, and the approach of the god” (p. 132) but Heidegger (1971b) gives primacy to linguistic work in the domain of arts because “language alone brings what is, as something that is, into the Open for the first time” (p. 71).
In his essay, *Language*, Heidegger (1971b) points out that the opposite of a poem is not prose. He states:

The opposite of what is purely spoken, the opposite of the poem, is not prose. Pure prose is never prosaic. It is as poetic and hence as rare as poetry (p. 205).

For Heidegger, the opposite of poetic discourse is propositional discourse. Heidegger believes that propositional discourse fixes thinking into assertions that are held to be true independent of context and time and therefore is not genuine discourse. Fixing here refers not to repairing but to making something immobile. Grondin (1994) also notes that propositions seek to be atemporal and therefore deny the temporal nature of our humanity. In his essay, *The Thinker as a Poet*, Heidegger (1971a) comments on the dangers of propositional thinking:

Three dangers threaten thinking.

The good and thus wholesome danger is the nighness of the singing poet.

The evil and thus keenest danger is thinking itself. It must think against itself, which it can only seldom do.

The bad and thus muddled danger is philosophizing (p. 8).

In the above poem, and in his essay, *Principles of Thinking*, Heidegger (1976) expresses his concern about the limits of propositional discourse. Heidegger explains that principles of thought, which are the principles of identity, of contradiction, and of the excluded middle, are not as secure as commonly believed. He notes that the origin of the laws of thought will always remain in the dark for us and he invites us to embrace the darkness:

This darkness is perhaps always in play, in all thinking. Human beings cannot avoid it. Rather, they must learn to recognize the dark as the ineluctable and to keep at a distance those prejudices which destroy the lofty sway of the dark. The dark has nothing to do with pitch blackness as
the complete, sheer absence of light. The dark is rather the secret mystery of what is light. The dark keeps what is light in its presence; what is light belongs to it (p. 56).

In other words, propositional discourse claims to bring everything to light by attempting to say all that can be said about a matter in assertions or propositions. But everything can never be said, and therefore, darkness is not only inevitable but an essential component of knowledge, of light. By denying this darkness and by trying to fix knowledge in propositions, we artificially box knowledge into known and reductive categories. To surpass the barriers to knowledge that are inherent in propositions and assertions, we need to leave the path of speech acts and climb the stile of silence and darkness to reach the path of genuine discourse which will allow matters to not only speak for themselves but also allow matters to grow and change, that is, allow possibilities to unfold.

**Nature of Poetic Discourse**

In all the ways that propositional discourse is deficient, poetic discourse triumphs. According to Heidegger, the speech of genuine thinking is by nature poetic and the potency of language lies in poiesis (1971b). The poet uses the word “in such a way that the word only now becomes and remains truly a word” (p. 46). But if poetry is not poems, then what is it? Heidegger (1971b) explains:

Poetry, however, is not an aimless imagining of whimsicalities and not a flight of mere notions and fancies into the realm of the unreal. What poetry, as illuminating projection, unfolds of unconcealedness and projects ahead into the design of the figure, is the Open which poetry lets happen, and indeed in such a way that only now, in the midst of beings, the Open brings beings to shine and ring out (p. 70).

In other words, poetry is not merely a flight into fantasy that bears no relation to reality. Instead, when language is authentic and retains its magic and its potency, then it is known as poetry. Poetry opens up possibilities for things to come into their own; such
possibilities are cut off in propositional thinking and saying. In his essay, *Non-Objectifying Thinking and Speaking*, Heidegger (1976) notes that not all thinking and saying is representational and objectifying, only the thinking and speaking of the natural sciences is so. If all thinking and saying were objectifying, then there would be no point in any artwork because it would immediately be objectified into known categories and the possibility of discovering unknowns would be lost.

In this section, we will briefly discuss a three-step process through which discourse becomes poetic and therefore genuine: the first step is to bring something near; the second step is to see how the fourfold are gathered in the nearness; and the third step is to unconceal the true nature of things. Though Heidegger occasionally mentions that the first step in genuine discourse is to bring things near (1971b), nowhere does he talk about a three-step process, but since he often mentions gathering and unconcealing after nearness, I have, for the purpose of clarity, proposed a three step process. My intention is not to turn philosophical hermeneutics into a methodology, so the steps are not to be conceived of as a research method but are to be seen as forming a hermeneutic circle in which the parts and the whole work together to shed light on each other.

Poetic discourse is genuine discourse because it brings things near. In his essay, *The Thing*, Heidegger (1971b) draws our attention to the “distanceless” nature of our world. Modern technology has brought everything close in terms of distance; everything is equally near and equally remote and it is difficult to belong to what is near. Heidegger (1971b) states:

> All distances in time and space are shrinking. Man now reaches overnight, by plane, places which formerly took weeks and months of travel. He now receives instant information, by radio, of events which he formerly learned about only years later, if at all…Yet the frantic abolition of all distances
brings no nearness; for nearness does not consist in shortness of distance…Short distance is not in itself nearness. Nor is great distance remoteness (p. 164).

If nearness is not defined by distance or lack of distance, then what is nearness?

Heidegger believes that nearness cannot be encountered directly; we can encounter nearness only by attending to what is near. Scientific investigation of objects supposedly makes things come closer by demystifying their properties but Heidegger notes that the true nature of things does not get a hearing in scientific (or propositional) discourse. It is the poet who draws our attention to the true nature of things by shifting our angle. When we cannot see something clearly, we move our head forward, backward, and sideways to get a better look, therefore, this shift in angle is not to be confused with an attitude change, “as all attitudes, including the ways in which they shift, remain committed to the precincts of representational thinking” (Heidegger, 1971b, p. 179). Instead this shift in angle is a step back from representational (or propositional) thinking. The step back is a step back into tradition. Heidegger constantly felt that Kantian logic led thinking, and therefore, saying, astray and he wanted to raise anew the questions that science and logic told us to forget as irrelevant. Heidegger believed that by returning to the Ancient Greek way of thinking, we would be able to put the pursuit of knowledge back on the right track. Heidegger (1971b, p. 10) muses:

The oldest of the old follows behind us in our thinking and yet it comes to meet us.

That is why thinking holds to the coming of what has been, and is remembrance.

Elsewhere, Heidegger posits, “It is worth nothing to say something new; it is only worth saying that which the Ancients already knew” (as quoted in Gross & Kemmann, 2005, p.
23). Thus, poetic discourse takes a step back from propositional thinking and brings things near by stepping back into tradition, specifically, the tradition of the Ancient Greeks.

Once we take a step back from representational thinking and into tradition, poetic discourse shows us how the fourfold come together in all things. The fourfold are earth, sky, mortals, and divinities. In a thing, there is a gathering or a staying of the fourfold. Heidegger (1971b) gives an extended example of a jug: The jug carries water, and in “the water of the spring dwells the marriage of sky and earth” (p. 170). The drink in the jug is for the mortals, but sometimes the jug is given for consecration, in which case “the outpouring is the libation poured out for the immortal gods” (p. 170). So, in the jug, the fourfold of earth, sky, mortals, and divinities come together, as they do in all things. To elucidate this rather difficult theme, we turn to two Heidegger scholars who both give competent explanations of the fourfold. Young (2006) in his essay, *The Fourfold*, explains that the earth and the sky together make up nature, and gods and mortals make up culture:

So the fourfold of the earth, sky, gods, and mortals is really the twofold of nature and culture or history…Heidegger uses poetic language to describe how the world is experienced when it shows up as a dwelling place because he wants to show that – as one of his best loved lines from Holderlin puts it – ‘poetically man dwells’ (p. 376).

So, poetic discourse discloses how nature and culture come together and stay in things. When a poet brings such things to our awareness, we develop richer meanings and deeper appreciation of thing that are near to us. No wonder, Heidegger (1976) thinks aloud, that things meant gathering in old usage.
Albert Hofstadter also provides a competent explanation of the fourfold. He writes in the introduction to Heidegger’s (1971b) *Poetry, Language and Thought* that:

> Heidegger’s thinking is a rethinking, *Andenken*, recalling, remembering, memorializing, and responding to an original call … it calls for the complete opening of the human spirit – what otherwise gets fragmented into intellect, will, heart, and senses…” (p. xvii).

In other words, poetic discourse invites us to tarry for a while and take true measure of things. It asks us to step off the path of representational thinking and scientific theorizing and use the stile of silence to travel on a higher path of poetic discourse where the many fragmented things gather to make a whole; where our heart, our intellect, our will, and our senses come together so that we may understand the meaning of things beyond their subservience to human will or the will to explain. Thus poetic discourse brings things near and changes our angle so that we can see the fourfold that is gathered in things.

Heidegger (1976) further explains that each fold is mirrored in the other; he explains mirroring like this:

> Earth, sky, divinities, and mortals – being at one with one another of their own accord – belong together by way of the simpleness of the united fourfold. Each of the four mirrors in its own way the presence of the others…This appropriating mirror-play of the simple onefold of earth and sky, divinities and mortals, we call the world…The human will to explain just does not reach to the simpleness of the simple onefold of worlding (Heidegger, 1971b, p. 177).

To elucidate this rather difficult theme, we will turn once again to Young (2006) who notes that the relationship between the fourfold is functional in the sense that, given any one fold, the others can be surmised from the given. The relationship between sky and earth is easy enough to understand; earth includes all flora and fauna and sky includes climate and there is a symbiotic relationship between the two. In other words, climate influences animal and plant species and land formation influences climate; one could
surmise the climate from land formation and surmise the animal and plant species from the climate. After all, Young (2006) explains, “under an arctic sky, one finds only arctic wastes, over rain forests, sky must be full of rain” (p. 381). The relationship between gods and mortals is also easy to understand. Gods, Heidegger believed, were embodiments of heritage or culture or history of a people and people’s values are influenced by their heritage, “so from the gods of a community, one can ascertain the fundamental character of mortals, both as a people and as individuals. And conversely” (p. 381). However, the relationship between nature and culture is harder to understand. Young (2006) explains that once we know the natural needs of the people as determined by their land and sky, then we can make inferences about their heritage; nature determines virtues. For example, for people who live in cold climates, where food needs to be stored for winter, we can infer that their virtues will be foresight, prudence, thrift and so on whereas people who live in warm climates where food is in abundance all year long, their virtues will be different and shaped by their natural circumstances. Such matters are disclosed in poetic discourse and they provide deeper, richer meanings of things that are near.

The final step that makes discourse poetic is that it allows the advent of truth. Heidegger notes that agreement has long been taken to be the essence of truth but truth is not agreement. For the Ancient Greeks, truth was unconcealment or *aletheia* and *aletheia* happens when we take poetic measure of things. Heidegger (1971b) states, “Poetry is the saying of the unconcealedness of what is” (p. 71) Translators, Hart and Maraldo (Heidegger, 1976), explain poetic measure: the poetic measure allows us to see things not as they are manifest but as they can be. When we dwell only in unpoetic and
propositional discourse, we “seek the measure in what is present and manifest” (p. 131) but we also have the ability to dwell in the poetic measure so that we can see things in terms of their possibilities. Poetic measure allows things to come into their own and flourish; they state, “this poetic measure is always an opening up of and measure for things as they always, already have been for us” (p. 133). The problem with measures is not that we do not have enough measures; the problem is that perhaps there are too many measures. Only beings who have sight can be blinded and only beings who are essentially poetic can be unpoetic. Poiesis clears away the obfuscations under which the world is buried and unconceals things in such a way that the world appears new, as if we are looking at it for the first time. Poetry creates the open space in which things are seen outside of their average intelligibility; poetry orients us towards the possibilities of the matter at hand and unveils and unconceals the buried unknowns. The power of poetic discourse lies in the fact that it does not attempt to fix thought into assertions and, instead of theorizing and applying laws of thought, poesis opens up a space where “advent of truth” (Heidegger, 1971, p. 70) can happen. Thus when discourse forms a hermeneutic circle of nearness, gathering, and unconcealedness, discourse becomes genuine.

**Rhetoric as Silence**

The above discussion elucidates how genuine discourse incorporates both speaking and keeping silent. In rhetorical theory, much attention has been given to speaking. The Sophists delineated the field of rhetoric as speeches, and traditionally, rhetoric has chiefly been conceived of as oratory. Gorgias (1982) defined rhetoric as the power of speech over the constitution of the soul; Quintilian (1987) observed that rhetoric is the good man speaking well; Cicero (1948) noted that rhetoric is speech designed to
persuade. But if rhetoric entails discourse, and silence is an integral part of all genuine discourse, then for rhetoric to be genuine, we must incorporate silence in its conception. If oratory is to be genuine, it must discourse in silence as well as in speech acts.

Heidegger (2009) defines rhetoric as “the possibility of seeing what at each moment speaks for a matter” (p. 78). Heidegger’s thought about rhetoric is taken from the lecture he gave on Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* in 1924 (as translated from students’ notes and published as *Basic Concepts of Aristotelian Philosophy*). This lecture predates *Being and Time* (1927) in which Heidegger’s thoughts on silence first emerge and which do not crystallize until his later essays on language, therefore, Heidegger does not say much about the role of silence in rhetoric. Besides, the Aristotle lecture was not about Heidegger’s view of rhetoric but about liberating Aristotle’s view of rhetoric from the notion of scientific rhetoric that had developed in the Modern age. Therefore, Heidegger corrects the standard translation of Aristotle’s definition of rhetoric so that rhetoric is not a faculty but a possibility of seeing the available means of persuasion in any given situation. Heidegger’s own definition of rhetoric also has the word “possibility” not “faculty” in it. This distinction is important to Heidegger because he believes that faculty is an ungenuine (improper) designation and possibility is genuine (proper). Genuine or proper designations do not violate the prescribed range of meanings or legal space within which something exists. In *Piety of Thinking*, translators, Hart and Maraldo, explain Husserl’s and Heidegger’s concept of legal space:

The phenomenological technique of free imaginative variation involves imaginatively conceiving which elements are indispensable and which are incompatible in the constitution of this being-such or whatness. This is always performed by appealing to the authoritative given-with horizon. We can entertain a multitude of possible properties for a centaur (as such), but there is prescribed range of meanings outside of which we are not
permitted to roam. Thus though I may ascertain that femininity is not
specified by any particular color of eyes or bodily silhouette, I am not free
to ascribe to it the virtues of a bulldozer or a locomotive. There is a legal
space (Husserl) to which we are bound, and essence-analysis brings the
particular eidos to the space where it properly belongs (Heidegger, 1976,
p. 78).

Heidegger believes that “faculty of seeing the available means of persuasion” violates the
legal space of rhetoric whereas “possibility of seeing the available means of persuasion”
or “possibility of seeing what at each moment speaks for a matter” properly or
authentically designates rhetoric. Heidegger explains the difference between the two by
noting that rhetoric “does not have to cultivate a definite conviction about a matter, to set
it to work with others. Rather, it only sets forth a possibility of discourse for those that
speak, insofar as they are resolved to speak…” (Heidegger, 2009, p. 79). In other words,
rhetoric does not have to provide, as the Modernists wanted, a definite (or certain) answer
for any matter nor does it have to persuade about a matter unconditionally (or certainly).
Rhetoric’s task is only to open the possibility of persuasion to occur through discourse.
Heidegger believes that the concept of the “faculty to persuade” over-reaches the abilities
of discourse whereas the “possibility of persuasion” is a much more cautious and proper
definition. Just as a doctor cannot bring about health by practicing medicine, a rhetor
cannot effect persuasion through rhetoric. Health and persuasion remain the possibilities
of medicine and rhetoric respectively. Therefore, like Aristotle, Heidegger too maintains
that rhetoric is a possibility not a faculty/ability.

Now, let’s examine the phrase “to see what speaks for a matter” in Heidegger’s
definition of rhetoric. “To see what speaks for a matter” points to genuine discourse.
Remember that Heidegger (1962) believes that discourse is genuine when:
Discourse lets something be seen, that is, it lets us see something from the very thing which the discourse is about. In discourse, so far as it is genuine, what is said is drawn from what the talk is about (p. 56).

So, “to see what speaks for a matter”, rhetoric goes “beyond what is simply given” (Heidegger, 2009, p. 80) and extracts something from the speaking itself, only then is it genuine. In other words, genuine rhetoric has the three-part structure of genuine discourse: the saying, what is said, and what is not yet said. What is not yet said is extracted from the said because it is hinted in the said and it leaves open the possibility of seeing what the matter has to say for itself without boxing it into our preconceived categories or popular opinions. Heidegger (2009) further notes:

Rhetoric has no subject area that can be demarcated in any way…it gives an orientation in regard to something...Thus it deals not with matter itself but with the circumstances regarding a definite conduciveness in so far as it can speak for something (p. 80).

In other words, rhetoric is not expertise about a subject matter, instead it is a particular knowing-the-way-around; it cultivates, in whom one is speaking with, a concern for whatever is up for debate at the time (Heidegger, 2009). Here Heidegger breaks away from the traditional view of rhetoric: Rhetorical tradition and Heidegger both agree that rhetoric does not have its own subject area but tradition and Heidegger diverge when it comes to the notion of cultivating concern for what is up for debate. We will return to this theme of concern and care in subsequent chapters, for now, it is enough to say that rhetoric is a way of being in the world with others in such a way that through speaking, we can go beyond things that are already there such as witnesses or documents, and “exhibit what is unconcealed in the very way the matter is, free of all determinations” (Heidegger, 2009, p. 83). Only then can rhetoric be genuine discourse and not idle chatter for Das man (any man).
The final phrase in Heidegger’s definition of rhetoric that needs examination is “in each moment”. This phrase highlights the temporal nature of rhetoric, negates the Modern emphasis on certainty, and is once again closely aligned with Aristotle’s view of rhetoric. Aristotle outlined three realms of knowledge: the realm of certainty where natural science belongs; the realm of probability where philosophy belongs; and the realm of the contingent where rhetoric belongs. Remember that for Heidegger, to belong is to be at home, to be a part of the fourfold. Rhetoric belongs most authentically in the realm of the contingent; it is where the earth, sky, gods, and mortals of rhetoric come together for rhetoric. Rhetoric has the job of outing the truth, not for all times, but in each moment; the possibilities are not fixed but always unfolding, that is why rhetoric dwells in the realm of the contingent. Since Dasein is temporal, Dasein’s truth is always temporal. Temporality allows possibilities to unfold whereas atemporal truth denies our Dasein, fixes us, makes us immobile, and cuts off our possibilities.

When the early morning light quietly grows above the mountains…

The world’s darkening never reaches to the light of Being.

We are too late for the gods and too early for Being. Being’s poem, just begun, is man.

To head towards a star – this only.

To think is to confine yourself to a single thought that one day stands like a star in the world’s sky. (Heidegger, 1971b, p. 4).

What Heidegger means to say is that we cannot have eternal or atemporal knowledge of the gods but we have the gift of temporal knowledge. Gift, because our knowledge can always grow, it is always becoming something; we are always headed towards a star.
To reiterate, Heidegger defines rhetoric as the possibility of seeing what, in each moment, speaks for a matter. Thus to be genuine discourse, rhetoric cannot only be the art of speaking; it must also necessarily be the art of silence. By acknowledging that many things remain to be said, a rhetor becomes, at the same time, a listener, and allows for the possibility of authenticity and of growth. Saying everything is not only impossible but also unproductive. Where speech fails, silence triumphs.

Poetic Rhetoric

Historically, rhetoric has been conceived of as a separate discipline from poetics but Heidegger breaks down these hard divisions by noting that all genuine discourse is poetic. Walker’s (2000) research backs up Heidegger’s refutation of the traditional separation of rhetoric and poetic; he notes that in Hesiod’s *Theogony*, we first see a relationship between rhetoric and poetry and Hesiod’s account invites us to challenge the assumption that the primary rhetoric of Ancient Greeks was practical oratory in assemblies and courts and poetic rhetoric was secondary rhetoric that evolved later and reduced the great art of rhetoric to ornamental eloquence. Walker (2000) notes that this story is not true and that there is another, more persuasive story: Hesiod gives us an account of rhetoric that was so eloquent that it was considered a gift from the gods. Let us review a passage from Hesiod’s *Theogony* to see how genuine rhetoric has always been poetic:

Whomsoever the daughter’s of great Zeus honor and mark at his birth as a god-nurtured prince, on his tongue they pour sweet distillation, and words from his mouth flow honeyed; the people all look toward him discerning precedents with straight justice, and with unfaltering address he quickly and skillfully settles even a great dispute; thus there are sagacious princes, for when the people
are misguided in assembly these end the wheeling recriminations
easily, persuading with gentle words.
He goes through the gathering, like a god admired
with honeyed reverence, conspicuous amid the throng;
such is the Muses’ sacred gift to humankind
(as quoted in Walker, 2000, p. 3)

Thus, Hesiod’s account shows that rhetorical abilities were considered to be a gift of the
Muses. Even Plato (2005) talks of the divine madness of the poets which enables them to
be persuasive. Therefore, rhetoric and poetics are not separate disciplines; genuine
rhetoric is poetic and poetry is genuine rhetoric.

We will end this chapter by briefly examining a relatively modern rhetorical
artifact, a great American speech, in which poetics and rhetoric come together, to create
genuine discourse: The *I Have a Dream* Speech. King addresses the matter of freedom
and equality by speaking of only the ideals on which our country was founded. At the
same time, he discourses in silence about laws that need to be changed to correspond
more closely to our values. He does not fix the idea of freedom and equality in any one
law but leaves open the possibility that if we stay fast to the promises made by our
forefathers then we will continue to travel the road of absolute freedom and absolute
equality. King chooses to stay silent about which precise actions or which carefully
worded policies will guarantee freedom because he knows that in silence something more
can be said and that silence will allow possibilities to unfold. After all, there is no law
that can ensure freedom and equality; it is only the belief in the hearts and minds of all
people that everyone has the same right to life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness that can
ensure freedom for generations to come. King’s rhetoric is genuine discourse because of
its three part structure: he speaks; he speaks of values and promises, of right and wrong,
of justice and equality; and he discourses in silence about which actions and which laws
will make good on the promise of freedom and equality as each generation is going to have to work that out for themselves. Only in silence can the possibilities of freedom unfold.

Heidegger (1971) eloquently expresses that once we have mastered the art of discourse and when our thought has gotten accustomed to staying attuned to what speaks for a matter, can we then return to capturing our knowledge in assertions. He states, “We may venture the step back out of philosophy into the thinking of Being as soon as we have grown familiar with the provenance of thinking” (p. 10). He poeticizes:

We never come to thoughts. They come to us.

That is the proper hour of discourse.

Discourse cheers us to companionable reflection. Such reflection neither parades polemical opinions nor does it tolerate complaisant agreement. The sail of thinking keeps trimmed hard to the wind of the matter.

From such companionship a few perhaps may rise to be journeymen in the craft of thinking. So that one of them, unforeseen, may become a master (Heidegger, 1971b, p. 6).
Chapter 3: Rhetoric as Care

Once when care was crossing a river, she saw some clay; she thoughtfully took up a piece and began to shape it. While she was meditating on what she had made, Jupiter came by. Care asked him to give it spirit, and this he gladly granted. But when she wanted her name to be bestowed upon it, he forbade this, and demanded that it be given his name instead. While Care and Jupiter were thus disputing, Earth arose and desired that her own name be conferred on the creature, since she had furnished it with part of her body. They asked Saturn to be their arbiter, and he made the following decision, which seemed a just one: Since you, Jupiter, have given its spirit, you shall receive that spirit at its death; and since you, Earth, have given its body, you shall receive its body. But since Care first shaped this creature, she shall possess it as long as it lives. And because there is now a dispute among you as to its name, let it be called homo for it is made out of humus (earth) (as retold in Heidegger, 1962, p. 242).

What is the role of pathos in rhetoric? Is it merely a type of proof or an ancillary argument or is it something more? In the previous chapter, we saw how rhetoric is not just speech acts, and using Heidegger to understand discourse and silence as a mode of discourse, we realized that poetic rhetoric is genuine rhetoric and we arrived at a different view of rhetoric, rhetoric as silence. In this chapter, we will once again reconsider the way in which we view rhetoric, specifically the pathetic appeal of rhetoric. Remember that Heidegger (1962) believes that the substance of Dasein is understood through its extrinsic features: discourse, moods (or state of mind), and understanding; he states, “Discourse is existentially equiprimordial with state-of-mind and understanding” (p. 203). In the previous chapter, we elucidated the first extrinsic feature of Dasein, namely discourse, which helped us to view rhetoric as silence. In this chapter, we will elucidate the second fundamental constituent of Dasein, namely moods or state-of-mind, and see how it changes our conception of pathos and provides a view of rhetoric as care.
Definition of Care

If mood is the fundamental structure of Dasein then why begin the inquiry with Care? We begin with Care because Care is the overarching concept under which the moods of Dasein are revealed. Also keep in mind that, for Heidegger, concepts are not understood through logically precise definitions but through experience, guiding claims, intelligibility, and as-structures. Keeping these ideas in mind, let us see what Heidegger says about Care.

To understand Heidegger’s concept of care, we must first understand what Care is not and then turn towards the tripartite definition of Care. In colloquial usage, care has several meanings: Care can indicate worry, such as, “she is never free from care”; care can mean the object of worry, such as, “he has always been a great care to his parents”; care can mean devoting serious attention, such as, “she devotes great care to her work”; care can mean to be under the protection or charge of someone, such as, “the child is under the doctor’s care”; care can indicate temporary keeping, such as, “they will care for my pet while I am gone”; and care can indicate preference, such as, “I do not care for that restaurant very much”. Heidegger (1962) thinks that “these are all deficient modes, in which the possibilities of concern are kept to a bare minimum” (p. 83). In other words, these are all activities that we perform or things that we procure; they do not reveal how our Being is made of Care and how it is a fundamental mode of being in the world. About Care, Heidegger (1962) further states:

It has nothing to do with tribulation, melancholy, or cares of life, though ontically one can come across these in every Dasein. These – like their

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6 Although Heidegger does not explicitly define the term “ontic”, its meaning is quite clear. As translators of Being and Time explain: “ontological inquiry is concerned primarily with Being; ontical inquiry is concerned primarily with entities and the facts about them” (p. 31).
opposites, gaiety, and freedom from care are ontically possible only because Dasein, when understood ontologically, is care (p. 84).

In other words, Care is not a property that we sometimes have and we sometimes do not, and without which we could get along just as fine as we could with it; Care is a fundamental aspect of human beings in which the whole of our being comes together; Care is a fundamental way of being in the world (Heidegger, 1962).

**The Tripartite Definition of Care**

Heidegger (1962) defines Care as “Ahead-of-itself-being-already-in-a-world-as Being-alongside entities encountered within the world” (p. 237). Essentially, Heidegger’s definition of care is made up of three parts: (1) ahead of itself, (2) already in a world, and (3) alongside. Heidegger often refers to these three aspects as existence, facticity, and fallenness. These three aspects correspond to future, past, and present (temporal) orientation of people in the world and each aspect is associated with one or two moods. Our inquiry into Care shall begin with the past and end with the future. To be specific, we will begin with facticity and then examine the mood associated with facticity. The other two aspects of care, fallenness and existence, will be treated similarly.

![Fig. 2: Substance of Care](image-url)
**Facticity or Thrownness**

Dasein is in the world and it is “there in an everyday manner” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 171). In other words, we are born into certain conditions that we did not choose or that preceded our existence and these conditions make us who we are and influence how we orient ourselves in the world. Additionally, facticity is not a special condition but how we are in our everyday lives. As Grondin (1994) explains, “Heidegger’s hermeneutics of facticity is intended to be a hermeneutics of everything that is at work behind statements” (p. 93). In other words, we do not understand statements in isolation; our culture, our history, and our language come to bear upon them. For example, let’s take the assertion that Abraham Lincoln is the greatest U.S. president. This statement would not be intelligible without knowing something of the U.S. history, the struggle for freedom and equality that our forefathers went through, and the sacrifices that were made for our ideals. Additionally, the concept of a U.S. president would be unintelligible without an understanding of nation states and forms of government. Even the past tense “was” of the existential verb “is”, as Havelock (1983) explains, is a result of the PreSocratic effort to learn about the world outside of mythos in which everything happened because someone caused it. Thus the world is at work behind every statement and the first part of Care is that we are always thrown into this world that is not of our making and yet it shapes us every day. Heidegger’s view of history is positive, it is not something that can, or even should be, bracketed from ourselves to arrive at pure understandings because history is a necessary condition on the horizon of which things gain meaning.
Nature of Mood or State-of-Mind

Each aspect of Care produces a certain mood in us, but before we delve into specific moods, we need to first understand what Heidegger means by mood. He states, “Discourse is existentially equiprimordial with state-of-mind and understanding” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 203). In other words, Heidegger believes that one of the three constitutive ways of being in the world is state-of-mind, the other two ways are discourse and understanding which are dealt with in chapters two and four respectively, but in this chapter, we turn our attention to state-of-mind. Mood or state-of-mind is central in Heidegger’s ontology because as Ballard (1991) notes, “Heidegger is convinced that the phenomenon of Dasein has been so distorted almost uninterruptedly throughout the history of philosophy that his return to the experience of everyday life is a necessity if anything unambiguous is to emerge” (p. 9). Therefore, Heidegger turns to something basic and familiar, namely moods, to show how we are essentially in the world.

In Being and Time, Heidegger (1962) draws our attention to three characteristics of mood or state-of-mind. The three characteristics are: (1) mood discloses Dasein in its thrownness; (2) mood shows how we are in the world as a whole; (3) mood lets things matter to us. These three characteristics refuse to remain in their respective categories as it is impossible to understand one without the other, therefore, it is best to view them not as distinct categories but as a clustering of characteristics. An explanation of any one characteristic in isolation, inevitably, incorporates another characteristic, and therefore the explanation may strike one as repetitive but only if one is looking for logical precision. However, if the three characteristics are viewed as a cluster that makes up how we are in the world, then the overlap gives the explanation more credibility rather than
less. With that caveat, let’s begin our analysis with the first characteristic of mood:

Heidegger believes that mood discloses our Dasein to us; he states:

> Ontologically, we thus obtain as the first essential characteristic of states of mind that they disclose Dasein in its thrownness, and – proximally and for the most part – in the manner of an evasive turning away (Heidegger, 1962, p. 175).

There are two important ideas that Heidegger communicates in this passage: First: state-of-mind discloses Dasein in its thrownness. Heidegger (1962) explains:

> An entity of the character of Dasein is its “there” in such a way that, whether explicitly or not, it finds itself in its thrownness. In a state-of-mind, Dasein is always brought before itself, and has always found itself, not in the sense of coming across itself by perceiving itself, but in the sense of finding itself in the mood that it has (p. 174).

In other words, we understand ourselves through our moods. So, for example, if a person gets angry at observing an act of injustice, such as parents buying ice cream for one child and not the other child, the mood reveals something about the person to themselves; the mood reveals what matters to them, in this case, issues of fairness. Heidegger’s point is that access to self is granted by way of mood not through some rational contemplation.

The second important idea that Heidegger expresses is that access to self is achieved not through actively seeking, but through an evasive turning-away. Heidegger (1962) states that Dasein is revealed as, “…a way of finding which arises not so much from a direct seeking as rather from a fleeing” (p. 174). In other words, we attempt to flee from ourselves, but the act of fleeing reveals what matters so much to us that we do not or cannot accept it right away. I would like to give a specific example from my life to clarify the concept of how Dasein is revealed to us in a certain mood and how the response of turning away from ourselves reveals our Being to us: In my Textual Studies class, I was sent to a restaurant that I had never been to before to practice recording thick
data. I went to a Japanese fast-food restaurant, ordered my food, and sat down to take notes of my surroundings. I found myself trying to describe a unique arrangement of a bamboo plant in extensive detail, and when words failed me, I got up to take a picture. While photographing the plant, an employee came up to me and informed me that no photography was allowed on the premises and pointed out a sign that said: Video Surveillance in Progress. No Photography Allowed. So, I quietly walked back to my table and sat down. Though I continued to take notes, something was gnawing at my spirit. I shied away from whatever my mood was telling me and instead focused on the task in front of me. But the food lost its taste and the assignment, any interest. I soon left. Later, while I was trying to sleep, the incident pushed itself to the forefront of my consciousness and it dawned on me that I was feeling unsettled because I was not allowed to take pictures while I was being videotaped at the same time. This seemed unfair and unjust to me and was the cause of my distress. This story illustrates how I understood myself through a mood, and though I was fleeing from what my mood was trying to reveal to me about myself, I found what mattered to me precisely because I cared so much that I could not deal with it and had to evasively turn- away. I understood something about myself through a mood. Thus, it is through our moods that we understand ourselves in our thrownness and this disclosure comes in the form of a fleeing or turning away from what matters to us. As Heidegger states:

For the most part the mood does not turn towards the burdensome character of Dasein which is manifest in it, and least of all does it do so in the mood of elation when this burden has been alleviated. It is always by way of a state-of-mind that this turning-away is what it is” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 174).

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My example was that of a disquiet mood but even when the mood is elation, such as one brought about by suddenly coming into some inheritance, the elated mood reveals that one had previously blocked out the burden of making a living, which is uniquely Dasein’s burden. Thus, typically, revelations of Dasein’s thrownness are moodal and evasive in nature.

The second essential characteristic of mood is that moods show how we are in the world as a whole. Heidegger (1962) states:

What we indicate ontologically by the term state-of-mind is ontically the most familiar and everyday sort of thing: our mood, our being attuned (p. 172).

In other words, we are all familiar with what a mood is because we all have moods, all the time; it is how we are in the world, all the time. For example, perhaps we woke up in a good mood this morning but then realized that we had an early morning meeting which put us in an annoyed mood, then at the meeting, we were perhaps in a bored mood, but then our mood cheered up at lunch time, and after lunch, perhaps we were in a sort of a quiet mood which one might mistake as no mood. Heidegger (1962) states:

States-of-mind are so far from being reflected upon, that precisely what they do is assail Dasein in its unreflecting devotion to the ‘world’ with which it is concerned and on which it expends itself. A mood assails us. It comes neither from ‘outside’ nor from ‘inside’ but arises out of Being-in-the-world, as a way of such Being (p. 175-176).

In other words, we are always in some mood but we fail to grasp the significance of our moodal existence. Mood is not something that arises from inside us or outside us but is a property of being in the world; it shows our devotion to the world to the extent that we

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7 The moods mentioned in this example are not the moods that Heidegger considers constitutive of Dasein, but they indicate how moods are colloquially understood in their everydayness.
forget ourselves. Heidegger explains that, “state of mind is very remote from anything like coming across a psychical condition by the kind of apprehending which first turns round and then back” (p. 175). In other words, psychical phenomena (those pertaining to the human psyche) are often considered primary in fields like psychology and the world secondary but Heidegger thinks that the world is already disclosed in having a state-of-mind. True to form, Heidegger reveals something significant that we have failed to grasp precisely because it is so close that we have overlooked its significance. He states:

Both the undisturbed equanimity and the inhibited ill-humor of our everyday concern, the way we slip over from one to the other, or slip off into bad moods, are by no means nothing ontologically, even if these phenomena are left unheeded as supposedly the most indifferent and fleeting in Dasein (Heidegger, 1962, p. 173).

In other words, we always have some mood; to be in the world is to have a mood.

Though moods are transient and we do not make much of them, it is fundamentally how we are in the world. A mood can be mastered but moods cannot be eliminated altogether.

Mood is ontologically prior to volition and cognition, and therefore, it lies outside the range of human will and knowledge. Heidegger states:

Factly, Dasein can, should, and must through knowledge and will, become master of its moods; in certain possible ways of existing, this may signify a priority of volition and cognition. Only we must not be misled by this into denying that ontologically mood is a primordial kind of Being for Dasein, in which Dasein is disclosed to itself prior to all cognition and volition, and beyond their range of disclosure. And furthermore, when we master a mood, we do so by way of a counter-mood; we are never free of moods (Heidegger, 1962, 175).

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8 Ballard (1991) in his book, The Role of Mood in Heidegger’s Ontology, explains that “Heidegger uses the term factical rather than factual when describing the characteristics of a person or group because persons do not have properties in the same way that things do. For example, the factical characteristics of being a student is a state that doesn’t simply occur of itself, nor is it caused in the way a natural event is caused. Being a student is a role which is acted out…It is a state requiring continual decision and renewal. In these, and numerous other ways, characteristics of persons (factual) should be distinguished from properties (factual) of inanimate things” (p. 11).
In other words, we can overcome a mood, such as a lethargic mood through volition but only to replace it with another mood, such as an energetic mood. Moods cannot be subtracted from Dasein because it is an integral part of our make-up; it is how we are wholly in the world. Heidegger (1962) states, “The mood has already disclosed, in every case, Being-in-the-world as a whole, and makes it possible first of all to direct oneself towards something” (p. 176). In other words, it is through moods that we primarily encounter the world.

The third characteristic of mood is that it lets things matter to us. Heidegger (1962) states, “Dasein’s openness to the world is constituted existentially by the attunement of a state of mind” (p. 176). He further states, “…a state-of-mind implies a disclosive submission to the world, out of which we can encounter something that matters to us” (p. 177). In other words, through moods, the world that is encountered can matter to us. Senses, that is, sight, touch, smell, hearing, and taste are grounded ontologically in a being that has a state-of-mind otherwise, sensual data would have no meaning. In other words, there is no such thing as pure beholding. Would beholding a lion in the wild matter to us if it did not arouse a mood of fear or even amazement? Heidegger notes that the primary discovery of the world is through bare mood not pure beholding; pure beholding, Heidegger (1962) states, “could never discover anything” (p. 177). Ballard (1991) too notes that Heidegger is taking a stance against the traditional view “that moods only obscure, rather than contribute to, the intelligibility of a human situation” (p. 30). Mood brings things near so we can attend to it. The idea of nearness is not to be confused with the idea of distance or lack thereof. Let’s take an example of how mood can bring something near. The example is of an event that was distance-wise far from
most of us yet our mood brought it near: the devastation caused by the tsunami of 2004. Our mood associated with the watching the tsunami footage brings it close and makes it matter. Pure beholding could never make anything matter to us. It is mood that brings something to attention and makes it matter to us. Even if someone claims apathy or desensitization, such as when soldiers are trained to kill, apathy and desensitization are itself mood-like responses with which the world is encountered and dealt with. In a way, we are forced to submit to the world because it produces a mood in us. Our primary relationship with the world is not one of rational contemplation but of having a mood in the face of the world we are thrown in. In other words, we are attuned to the world through our moods not through some theoretical knowledge. As Critchley (2009) notes, this is one of Heidegger’s central insights: that we cannot exist independently of the world and that our relationship with the world is a matter of mood, not a matter of rational contemplation. Thus, for Heidegger (1962), what we know of the world through our moods is not to be considered knowledge of an inferior kind “by measuring it against the apodictic certainty of theoretical cognition of something which is purely present at hand” (p. 175) nor is to be “banished to the sanctuary of the irrational” (p. 175). Instead, moods are how we know the world phenomenologically and it is an authentic way of being in the world. Therefore, moods are not irrational or arational but rather prerational. Heidegger further notes that the world is never the same from day to day and to enforce such theoretical uniformity on the world is to dim it down. At the same time, he explains, this is “not to be confused with attempting to surrender science ontically to feeling” (p. 177). Heidegger (1962) is merely pointing out that it is possible for even the purest theory to accommodate the moods with which we respond to the world because “even when we
look theoretically at what is just present-at-hand, it does not show itself purely as it looks” (p. 177) unless this looking means that we tarry alongside it. So, our primary relationship with the world is a matter of mood and not theory and the world shifts with our mood instead of remaining stable as it does in theoretical knowledge. Mood touches us in a way that theory never could.

To recap, mood has three characteristics: it discloses Dasein in its thrownness indirectly through an evasive turning away; it is how we are fundamentally in the world; it is how things matter to us. To state it differently, prior to rational or theoretical knowledge, we have meaningful knowledge about ourselves and about the world through moods; we know ourselves and our world, and things matter to us because we have moods. Heidegger (1962) summarizes it well when he states:

A state-of-mind not only discloses Dasein in its thrownness and its submission to that world which is already disclosed with its own Being; it is itself the existential kind of Being in which Dasein constantly surrenders itself to the world and lets the world matter to it in such a way that somehow Dasein evades its very self (p. 178).

**Mood Associated with Facticity/Thrownness**

Now that we have clarified what Heidegger means by moods or state-of-mind, we are in a position to understand the constitutive moods of Dasein. The moods mentioned earlier – anger, boredom, annoyance etc are not the constitutive moods of Dasein as we can be sans anger, sans boredom, sans annoyance etc. The constitutive moods are those which can never be subtracted from Dasein. The constitutive moods of Dasein are: curiosity, ambiguity, anxiety, and guilt. With the exception of anxiety that Heidegger associates with fallenness, nowhere does Heidegger explicitly state that such and such mood is associated with such and such aspect of Care, he only hints at it. Such hinting is
typical of Heidegger. However, it is possible that if anxiety is most closely associated
with fallenness, then perhaps the other specific moods that Heidegger discusses may also
be primarily associated with one or the other constituents of Care. Of course, by no
means is anxiety experienced only in fallenness and not in thrownness or projection,
because these aspects of Care unify in Dasein and make our Being apparent to us.
Categorization is therefore elusive but perhaps we can make the concept more accessible
by viewing the moods as stages in a cycle. If the cycle is completed without interruption,
then the nature of man would be naked before us, as philosophy has attempted to do from
the beginning. In such a case, we would have a master amongst us. As Heidegger (1971b)
states:

> Discourse cheers us to companionable reflection. Such reflection neither
parades polemical opinions nor does it tolerate complaisant agreement.
The sail of thinking keeps trimmed hard to the wind of the matter.

> From such companionship a few perhaps may rise to be journeymen in the
craft of thinking. So that one of them, unforeseen, may become a master
(p. 6)

In our everyday lives, the mood cycle constantly gets interrupted and we frequently go
back to stage one. Even when we reach the last stage, guilt, we do not stay there, we
either go back to being curious or become anxious about our fallenness and thus get
captured in the cycle again. Such is the nature of life in-the-world. The cycle ends in death,
which is when Heidegger (1962) notes, all possibilities are cut off. Therefore, the cyclical
view is a better reading of Heideggerian moods than the static view because these four
moods (curiosity, ambiguity, anxiety, and guilt) make-up how we are, as long as we are.
Even though Heidegger does not explicitly talk about moods as a cyclical phenomenon,
the cyclical view represents the way he thought about moods better than the static view.
The static view is not incorrect, it simply does not emphasize enough the way these four moods make-up Dasein. The cyclical view shows that moods cannot be bracketed from Dasein to achieve purely rational conclusions; one cannot step outside of the mood cycle. Only in death does our moodal attachment to the world end. Therefore, I invite you to view the Heideggerian moods as a repetitive cycle which ends in death, and though moods are treated as belonging to one aspect of Care, Care itself is a whole and not a fragmented orientation to the world. Only the explanation is fragmented. Leave the fragmented explanation behind, as soon as you can, and attempt to see to the totality of Dasein as Care.

**Mood Cycle**

![Mood Cycle Diagram]

**Curiosity**

The mood associated with facticity is curiosity. Recall that facticity or thrownness is one of the constituents of Care which corresponds to the idea that we are thrown in a
world that is already there; our history or our past comes to bear upon us to such an
extent that nothing is intelligible without it. Let us first understand what Heidegger means
by curiosity and then we will turn to the question of why I associate curiosity with
thrownness. Heidegger equates curiosity with seeing. Heidegger (1962) observes that
sight has primacy in our everyday lives; he states:

The basic state of sight shows itself in a peculiar tendency-of-Being which
belongs to everydayness – the tendency towards seeing. We designate this
tendency by the term curiosity… (p. 214).

Here, Heidegger sounds very much like Plato (2005) who expresses in the *Phaedrus* that
sight is our strongest sense and that is why seeing beauty on Earth reminds us of the
beauty we saw in the other world. However, he differs from Plato in the sense that
Heidegger does not believe seeing is restricted to cognition. He aligns himself, once
again, with Aristotle’s view of sight. Heidegger believes that Aristotle said, “The care for
seeing is essential to man’s Being” (as quoted in Heidegger, 1962, p. 214). This sentence
may seem odd to people who are familiar with Aristotle’s treatise on ontology, because it
is more commonly translated as “All men by nature desire to know” (as quoted in
Heidegger, 1962, p. 215) but Heidegger translates “to know” as “to see” and “desire” as
“care” so that we “care to see” not “desire to know”. The emphasis on this distinction
makes all the sense when Heidegger’s thought is examined collectively. Care is
ontologically prior to all emotions such as desire, and seeing is how the world is
encountered prior to any knowledge of the world. Thus “care to see” is more primary
than “desire to know”. Heidegger even draws upon Augustine’s insight on the primacy of
seeing to support his thesis of primacy of sight. He states, “The remarkable priority of
seeing was noticed particularly by Augustine, in connection with his interpretation of
concupiscentia\(^9\) (p. 215). Heidegger further explains Augustine’s point of view that seeing properly belongs to the eyes, but seeing is often used for other senses as well while the reverse is not true. For example, one might say, see how it sounds or see how that feels but never hear how it glows, or smell how it glistens. Thus, to be in the world is to see the world.

However, for Heidegger, curiosity is not merely seeing. He states:

…curiosity which characteristically is not confined to seeing but expresses the tendency towards a peculiar way of letting the world be encountered by us in perception (Heidegger, 1962, p. 214).

Here, Heidegger is making an important distinction: seeing for the sake of seeing and seeing for the sake of encountering. When we see just in order to see, we are not encountering the world, we are merely distracted and we leap from novelty to novelty without understanding. As Heidegger (1962) explains:

…curiosity is characterized by a specific way of not tarrying alongside what is closest. Consequently it does not seek the leisure of tarrying observantly, but rather seeks restlessness and the excitement of continual novelty and changing encounters. In not tarrying, curiosity is concerned with the constant possibility of distraction (p. 216).

Not tarrying and distraction are two of curiosity’s characteristics. They do not allow us to observe or to be amazed by anything that we see. We are constantly distracted by new possibilities. The example of a tourist is apt here. Tourists rush from place to place to cover all the sights that a city has to offer, they do not have the time or the inclination to tarry in any one place, the possibility of seeing something new constantly distracts them.

Which brings us to the final characteristic of curiosity: “never dwelling anywhere” (p. 217). Curiosity is everywhere but nowhere does it reside or dwell. We constantly uproot

\(^9\) A Latin word which often appears in Christian theology and denotes a sensual longing for a person, object, or an experience.
ourselves to see something new, to be lively, never to tarry or marvel at anything. Only when we see to encounter the world, will we have a deeper and richer understanding of the world.

I associate curiosity with thrownness because when we are born, the world may be thousands of years old, but for us it is new. Babies and toddlers literally explore their environment until they are so sensually overwhelmed that they either fall asleep with exhaustion or cry themselves to sleep. If we really wanted to see everything there is to see, we would run out of time but never out of world. Thus, we have this tendency to see something hurriedly and then move on to the next thing. This happens because we are thrown into the world that was already there before us and now we feel that we have to learn everything about it as quickly as possible or we are going to miss out on things. So, we act like butterflies, going from flower to flower to suck on nectar but never to tarry within the flower.

**Fallenness or Alienation**

The second constituent of Care is that we are alongside the world and it refers to our present. We are thrown in the world but at the same time, we are also alienated from the world or fallen. By fallen, Heidegger does not mean the fall of man as understood in theology but fallen as in adopting the ready-made perspectives that are easily available to us. Heidegger (1962) states:

This term does not express any negative evaluation, but is used to signify that Dasein is proximally and for the most part alongside the world of its concern. This absorption-in has mostly the character of Being-lost in the publicness of the they. Dasein has in the first instance, fallen away from itself as an authentic potentiality for being its Self and has fallen into the world (p. 220).
In other words, instead of knowing things authentically, we become conditioned to respond to our environment in popular or even rebellious ways. The “they” refers to average or common understandings that exist in a society. The “they” prescribes what and how one sees. We get so wrapped up in the “they” perspectives of the world that we share with others that we never question things that we just know. Alternately, Heidegger also calls fallenness, idle talk or idle chatter. He states:

The expression idle talk is not to be used here in disparaging signification. Terminologically, it signifies a positive phenomenon which constitutes the kind of Being of everyday Dasein’s understanding and interpreting (Heidegger, 1962, p. 211).

In other words, idle talk is not an insignificant or meaningless activity in which we engage; idle talk forms the basis of everyday life and it makes a communal life possible. However, the problem is that idle talk only offers a superficial understanding of the matter; we only understand what is said about the matter and not the matter itself. Heidegger calls this gossip or passing the word along. Heidegger (1962) notes:

What is said-in-the-talk as such, spreads in wider circles and takes on an authoritative character. Things are so because one says so. Idle talk is constituted by just such gossipping and passing the word along – a process by which its initial lack of grounds to stand on becomes aggravated to complete groundlessness. And indeed this idle talk is not confined to local gossip, but even spreads to what we write, where it takes the form of scribbling. In this latter case the gossip is not based so much upon hearsay. It feeds upon superficial reading. The average understanding of the reader will never be able to decide what has been drawn from primordial sources with a struggle and how much is just gossip. The average understanding, moreover, will not want any such distinction, and does not need it, because, of course, it understands everything (p. 212).

In other words, idle talk or superficial understandings that are not grounded in the source or in the matter itself, become the authority on the subject and no one bothers to question these perspectives because they are taken to be true and it relieves everyone of the task of
uncovering a deeper and richer intelligibility. Idle talk is not just a feature of verbal conversations but also exists in the written word in the form of superficial readings, in which truths that are drawn from primordial sources with great struggle by the writer are not distinguished from what everyone is saying and what everyone already knows about the matter. And since average understanding claims to already understand everything, it does not even need a distinction between deep understandings and surface understandings. We do not have to search far for an example to elucidate this concept. Let’s take the example of rhetoric. When I tell people that I study rhetorical theory, they ask, “What is that?” It is strange that the word “rhetoric” has been around since Plato coined it (approximately 400 years BCE), and people have not heard of it. And those who have heard of it only know of it as the art of deception. As President Obama, when asking for a balanced approach to deficit reduction, stated, “It is my hope that everybody is going to leave their ultimatums at the door, that we’ll all leave our political rhetoric at the door and that we’re going to do what’s best for our economy and do what’s best for our people” (“Remark by the President”, 2011). So, the term “rhetoric” is either not recognized or it is misunderstood even though a battle about rhetoric, its nature, and its place in society has been raging since Antiquity. Let’s take a different example: In the previous chapter, we discussed the example given by Heidegger of a jug. We all use a jug without giving any thought to its fourfold nature that Heidegger reveals, therefore, we have only an average understanding of it. The point is that we are all fallen. However, idle-talk is not always a deficient way of being-in-the-world; our everyday lives consist of such idle talk which makes a communal life possible. Let’s take a positive example of idle talk: We get our children vaccinated without looking too deeply into the issue and it
has served us well for decades, many diseases have been eradicated and many others controlled because of our fallenness. Thus, to be in the world is to be fallen. Indeed, we are in the world so much that we are fully absorbed in it and yet alienated from it at the same time.

Although idle talk is not malicious in the sense that there is no conscious effort to pass off something as something else, idle talk cuts off the possibility of disclosure, as in uncovering of entities, and that is why it is a problem. We will delve deeper into the issue of authenticity in the next chapter, Rhetoric as Understanding. For now, it is sufficient to note that within our fallenness lies the possibility of authenticity because the twin nature of fallenness, absorption in the world and our alienation from the world, produces two moods in us, namely, ambiguity and anxiety.

**Ambiguity**

Ambiguity is a mood that is associated with fallenness. For Heidegger, ambiguity is the state of mind that is produced when we cannot distinguish anything that is true or authentic from idle talk. He states:

> When, in our everyday Being-with-one-another, we encounter the sort of thing which is accessible to everyone, and about which anyone can say anything, it soon becomes impossible to decide what is disclosed in a genuine understanding, and what is not. This ambiguity extends not only to the world, but just as much to Being-with-another as such, and even to Dasein’s Being towards itself (Heidegger, 1962, p. 217).

In other words, we are curious and we want to see how things are but we are never sure of what we see. We doubt ourselves, others, and everything around us. Doubt comes in two forms: Either things appear as if they are genuinely understood and genuinely spoken but we doubt their genuineness or things appear doubtful, but at the bottom, they are genuine. For example, the anti-smoking campaign leaves me with an ambiguous
perspective. (Recall, that states of mind or moods are not like emotions, they are ontologically prior to emotions and better conceived of as a perspective rather than a feeling. As Ballard (1991) explains, Heidegger focuses on moods as an attunement (Stimmung) which “encompasses our total perspective rather than on fleeting emotions” (p. 1).) It appears to me that smoking is harmful for our health and Center for Disease Control (CDC) and American Medical Association (AMA) have our best interests at heart when discouraging us from smoking, but I question the degree of harm when quitting reverses most of the damage and brings life expectancy close to that of a non-smoker (Blue, 2008)\(^\text{10}\). Let us take a different example in which something was probably spoken truly but I doubted its genuineness: I have sometimes been given compliments that involved words like good or interesting and it produced an ambiguous mood in me. I questioned the sincerity of the compliment, even though, as Heidegger notes, at the bottom, it was probably genuine. Thus, because of fallenness, it is difficult to distinguish between truth and idle talk and we are left with an ambiguous perspective.

Ambiguity cuts off the possibility of meaningful action because idle talk is fast paced and by the time understanding has been reached, it is too late to do anything about the issue at hand because people have already moved on to something new. Heidegger (1962) states:

> Dasein’s understanding in the ‘they’ is constantly going wrong in its projects, as regards the genuine possibilities of being. Dasein is always ambiguously there – that is to say, in the public disclosedness of Being-with-one-another where the loudest idle talk and the most ingenious curiosity keep things moving, where in an everyday manner, everything (and at the bottom nothing) is happening. This ambiguity is always tossing to curiosity what which it seeks; and it gives idle talk the semblance of having everything decided in it (p. 218-219).

\(^\text{10}\) I am not promoting smoking, nor do I smoke myself.
Here, Heidegger is foretelling the future. He wrote about ambiguity and the associated lack of action long before the postmodern thinkers wrote about mediated information which fascinates us and petrifies us into non-action (Jeudy, 1994) or the precession of the simulacrum in which form comes before and determines all content (Baudrillard, 1983) or the domination of the spectacle which leads to alienation from ourselves and from others (Debord, 1983). Heidegger raised again the question of Being because perhaps he foresaw the collapse of meaning that occurs when people become incredulous towards grand narratives (Lyotard, 1984) or when information is treated as a bodiless entity (Hayles, 1999). Fifty years earlier, Heidegger drew our attention to how our relationship with the world is primarily moodal and how ambiguity leads to non-commitment and non-action.

**Anxiety**

Anxiety is a mood that is also closely associated with fallenness. Heidegger (1962) distinguishes anxiety from fear. Fear is about something specific and once the threatening thing is removed, the fear is gone. But anxiety is different from fear. Heidegger (1962) states:

> In anxiety one does not encounter this thing or that thing which, as something threatening, must have an involvement…That in the face of which one has anxiety is characterized by the fact that what threatens is nowhere….Nowhere however does not signify nothing: this is where any region lies, and there too lies any disclosedness of the world for essentially spatial Being-in. Therefore, that which threatens cannot bring itself close from a definite direction within what is close by; it is already there, and yet nowhere; it is so close that it is oppressive and stifles one’s breath, and yet it is nowhere (p. 231).

In other words, we have anxiety over being fallen. By anxiety, Heidegger does not mean anxiety over something specific and definite like anxiety over a test or a car accident...
because when these events pass, the feeling recedes as well. What Heidegger means is that being in the world, which is essentially Being-fallen, makes us anxious and since we can never escape the world, we can also never escape the anxiety. Where is the world? It is everywhere and nowhere specific. Where is anxiety? It is everywhere and nowhere specific. To be in the world (temporally and spatially present) is to be anxious and it is this anxiety as a mood that calls us away from idle talk and conditioned responses and asks us to know a matter genuinely and not what is said about it (idle talk).

Besides the property of ‘nowhere yet everywhere’, anxiety also makes us uncanny. Heidegger (1962) states, “In anxiety one feels uncanny” (p. 233). Heidegger explains that “here uncanniness means not-being-at-home” (p. 233). He further explains that:

This character of Being-in was brought to view more correctly through the everyday publicness of the they, which brings tranquilized self assurance – Being at home, with all its obviousness into the average everydayness of Dasein. On the other hand, as Dasein falls, anxiety brings it back from its absorption in the world. Everyday familiarity collapses. Dasein has been individualized, but individualized as Being-in-the-world. Being-in enters into the existential mode of the not-at-home. Nothing else is meant by our talk about uncanniness (p. 233).

In other words, when one feels tranquil, secure, or at-home in their knowledge or their understandings, then one has fallen again. In that case, anxiety will make one uncanny or homeless and individualize one again. Grondin (1984) seems to have the opposite opinion: he notes that the concept of being-at-home in Heidegger’s hermeneutics means “to be equal to or master of” something (p. 93). But I disagree with Grondin’s interpretation of Heidegger. Concepts such as “equal to” or “master of” are very foreign in Heidegger’s thought; Heidegger’s thought is permeated through and through with humility so that understanding is never a mastery over a matter which implies
subservience to human will but a choice to listen to what speaks for a matter in each moment. Heidegger is very clear about this: to be-at-home is to be fallen, to be-at-home is to become tranquil and self-assured in our understandings. On the other hand, to be homeless is to be anxious about our provisional understandings, our fallenness, and our “they” perspectives. Young (2006) explains the German meaning of home, he states, “The difference between the homely (in the sense of the German heimisch) and the foreign is that one feels secure in the former in a way one does not in the latter” (p. 378). But security is not a constitutive mood of Dasein. If it was, we would be released from the cycle of moods prior to our death and Care would no longer form the basis of our being. The realization that we have fallen and gotten ensnared in the idle talk of the “they” or become secure in our provisional understandings causes us to lose the secure and tranquil feeling of being at-home and produces a mood of anxiety. Anxiety over being fallen and the accompanying feeling of homelessness wakes us up from our tranquil states and calls us towards our possibilities. To be clear, understanding itself is not fallenness, only the moods produced by understanding, tranquility or security, lead to fallenness. All understandings are provisional and therefore should not lull us into tranquility or security but must be maintained in anxiety. One must be willing to be anxious so that our understandings keep growing. Heidegger explains that anxiety is ontologically prior to tranquility because “…Dasein is anxious in the very depths of its Being…From an existential-ontological point of view, the not-at-home must be considered as the more primordial phenomenon” (p. 234). Being in the world makes us anxious, and as such, anxiety is ontologically prior to the false tranquility of being-at-home. Heidegger (1962) notes that though we flee from our uncanniness (homelessness),
“uncanniness pursues Dasein constantly, and is a threat to its everyday lostness in the ‘they’, though not explicitly” (p. 234). To sum up, anxiety, for Heidegger, is not a psychological disorder that needs to be treated with medication; anxiety is a primordial mood that cannot be subtracted from us and also a heuristic mood which reveals our possibilities to us.

**Existence or Projection**

The third and final aspect of Care is that we are ahead of ourselves and this refers to our future. Heidegger (1962) states, “...Dasein is Being-possible which has been delivered over to itself – thrown possibility through and through” (p. 183). Heidegger further states that Dasein is “thrown projection” (p. 186), that Dasein “projects itself upon possibilities into which it has been thrown” (p. 330), and that “In being a basis – that is, in existing as thrown – Dasein constantly lags behind its possibilities” (p. 330). What Heidegger means to say is that just like our thrownness influences how we are in the world, our thrownness also influences our possibilities, our future. The possibilities emerge out of thrownness and do not exist independently of our facticity. Grondin (1984) too notes that “our projections are not in the first place a matter of choice, rather, we are thrown into them (p. 95). Let’s take the example of Martin Luther King, Jr.: King was thrown into a world in which equality was guaranteed by law but not practiced. The situation he found himself in also gave rise to the possibility of doing something about his thrownness. However, we never have power over our possibilities because they are determined by our thrownness which is outside of our control. Heidegger (1962) states, “Thus Being-a-basis” [being-thrown] means never to have power over one’s ownmost Being from the ground up” (p. 330). For example, the possibilities open to Abraham...
Lincoln were different from the possibilities open to Martin Luther King, Jr. because their thrownness was different.

Heidegger (1962) further explains that though our possibilities emerge out of our thrownness, these possibilities remain indefinite and null until a choice is made. Heidegger (1962) notes that we are rooted in nullity; he states, “Not only is the projection, as one that has been thrown, determined by the nullity of Being-a-basis; as projection, it is itself essentially null” (1962, p. 331). By nullity, he does not mean worthlessness or inconsequentiality but wants to bring to our attention that possibilities are not yet, they are null, and therefore, they remain indefinite until we take on one possibility, make something our project. For King, the possibility of becoming a leader of The Civil Rights Movement was there but in the form of an indefinite and null possibility until he made the choice. For Lincoln, the possibilities of keeping the union intact and for abolishing slavery were indefinite and null until he acted upon those possibilities. Heidegger (1962) further states:

The nullity we have in mind belongs to Dasein’s Being-free for its existentiell possibilities. Freedom, however, is only in the choice of one possibility – that is, in tolerating one’s not having chosen the others and one's not being able to choose them” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 331).

In other words, to be free means that we have the freedom to choose only one possibility out of many and we have to tolerate the fact that we could not choose the others. For example, the possibility of what one is going to be when one grows up is indefinite and null until one is in a position to make a career choice and then upon making one choice, other possibilities remain null or not yet. So, if one chooses to become a professor then, for the time being, the possibilities of becoming a construction worker or a nurse etc remain null. We are fallen in our everyday lives but to be not fallen is also a possibility.
Just like we are thrown in the world that is not of our making and we become ensnared in the idle talk of the “they”, we are also projecting ahead of ourselves, towards our undefined possibilities. Thus thrownness, fallenness, and projection are what constitute Dasein’s being as Care. As Heidegger concludes, “Dasein’s Being is care. It comprises in itself facticity (thrownness), existence (projection), and falling” (p. 329).

Guilt

The mood most closely associated with projection is guilt. Heidegger (1962) states:

Thus Care – Dasein’s Being – means, as thrown projection, Being-the-basis of a nullity (and this Being-the-basis is itself null). This means that Dasein as such is guilty…(p. 331).

Heidegger’s (1962) concept of guilt is different from colloquial usage. He notes that in everyday common sense guilt has two meanings: having debts and being responsible for. Having debts, he notes, means that we owe something or have something due on an account. It can even mean that “one is to give back to the Other something to which the latter has a claim” (p. 327). For example, owing money on a credit card or owing someone a favor can produce guilt. Guilt can also mean being responsible for, or “being the cause or author of something, or even being the occasion for something” (p. 327). For example, being the cause of a car accident can produce guilt. However, Heidegger’s analysis of guilt is, not surprisingly, different from colloquial usage. He notes that, in everyday usage, guilt “gets thrust aside into the domain of concern in the sense of reckoning up claims and balancing them off” (p. 328). Heidegger believes that the idea of guilt needs to be formalized so that the ordinary phenomenon of guilt will drop out. For Heidegger, guilt is not something that can be remedied because it is constitutive of how
we are in the world. The common assumption is that we are indebted or responsible first
and then we have guilt but Heidegger reverses this common assumption and notes that
“indebtedness becomes possible only on the basis of a primordial Being-guilty” (p. 330).

The intent of this reversal is to make ontological guilt prior to factical guilt. He states:

The idea of guilt must not only be raised above the domain of that concern
in which we reckon things up, but it must also be detached from
relationship to any law or ought such that by failing to comply with in one
loads himself with guilt. For here too guilt is still necessarily defined as a
lack – when something which ought to be and which can be is missing
(Heidegger, 1962, p. 328).

Here Heidegger is distinguishing between “lack” and “not”. For Heidegger, guilt is a
matter of “not” or nullity not “lack”. Lack implies that if the situation was rectified, then
things would be perfect and the guilt would be gone but in that case guilt could not be a
constitutive mood of Dasein. Heidegger notes that the question of “notness” has been
explored thoroughly in ontology and logic without unveiling what “notness” is
ontologically. He asks:

Has anyone ever made a problem of the ontological source of notness, or,
prior to that even sought the mere conditions on the basis of which the
problem of the not and its notness and the possibility of that notness can
be raised? And how else are these conditions to be found except by taking
the meaning of Being in general as a theme and clarifying it (Heidegger,
1962, p. 332)?

In other words, traditional ontology has not understood how we are always oriented
towards our undefined possibilities (nullity) and how our guilt comes from not seizing
these possibilities. The possibilities do not end as long as we are in the world and neither
does our guilt. The reason we have factical guilt (such as debt or responsibility) is
because we are ontologically guilty. Guilt is even prior to any knowledge about guilt, that
is, we may not be aware of our guilt, in which case it is asleep or undisclosed, but it still

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forms the basis of our being. This guilt calls us towards the possibility of being authentic, which remains an undefined possibility until one makes a choice to walk on the path of authenticity. I say path, because absolute authenticity remains a telos. The path of authenticity terminates in death when all possibilities are cut off. As Heidegger (1962) explains, death orients us towards our possibilities because our time here is limited and we care about our life in the world. We live always in anticipation that our guilt will be assuaged but that can never be because at the basis, we are always guilty of being fallen and guilty of not seizing the possibility of authenticity.

In guilt, the mood cycle reaches its last stage. In Heidegger’s thought, there is no cathartic mood, such as happiness or euphoria because those moods mean that we have fallen again. It is very unsatisfying for a cycle to end in guilt but it is this very dissatisfaction that makes us avoid guilt and takes us back to the beginning of the cycle so that we merely see things without encountering them and remain tranquil and at-home in our fallenness. Only death releases us from this cycle when Care will give up her dominion over us and Jupiter will claim our spirit and Earth, our body. As long as Dasein is, Dasein is Care, and therefore the constitutive moods of Dasein – curiosity, ambiguity, anxiety, and guilt can never be eliminated or made perfect. As Heidegger summarizes:

Care, as a primordial structural totality, lies before every factical attitude and situation of Dasein, and it does so existentially a priori; this means that it always lies in them (p. 238).

The three aspects of Care: Our thrownness, the possibilities that emerge out of our thrownness, and our absorption in the world, collectively reveal how are fundamentally in the world. The moods that are produced by thrownness, fallenness, and projection
provide a primary orientation to the world that is prior to any theoretical or propositional knowledge of the world.

**Rhetoric as Care**

Now that we have elucidated how Dasein is Care and why Dasein’s existence is moodal, we are in a position to turn our attention to how Heidegger’s insights about our moodal existence can contribute to a better understanding of the pathetic appeal of rhetoric. Let’s begin with a brief overview of the treatment (or mistreatment, as Heidegger would say) of *pathe* in Platonic thought and Aristotelian tradition; examine how *pathe* have been mistreated in philosophy and science; and then see how Heidegger once again destructs tradition to provide a more central role for pathos in rhetorical theory.

Tradition has viewed pathos either incorrectly or suspiciously. In Platonic thought, particularly in the *Phaedrus*, emotions are elevated so much that they became appeals to our soul to become like the god that we admire the most (Plato, 2005). In the chariot myth related in the *Phaedrus*, the emotions of reverence and awe aroused in the face of beauty helps our soul recollect the forms of Beauty and Truth that we witnessed in the other world and this recollection frees our soul from relativistic knowledge. This is the noble view of rhetoric which Plato wanted to reserve for the training and use of the philosophers, particularly, the Philosopher King. However, Plato believed that pathetic appeals in the hands of the masses would become a device for manipulation, and therefore, in *The Republic*, Plato (2007) bans the poets from his city and wants the Philosopher King to be the only poet in his Republic.
Although Aristotle (2007), Plato’s student, inherits this pejorative view of pathos from Plato, and prefers logos over pathos, he realizes that pathos can serve an important function, namely, it can prepare an audience to receive the discourse, especially if they are not philosophers or experts, and therefore, he studies the pathe for their dispositional effect. As Walker (2000) notes:

Aristotle is recognizing the rhetor’s practical necessity to accommodate the depravity of the audience of common citizens, the crowd of *hoi polloi* ("the many") that does the judging in the jury-courts and public assemblies (p. 75).

Although Aristotle (2007) brings back pathos in rhetoric but he does so reluctantly; he believes that using pathetic appeals is like using a crooked ruler to measure something. Such a view of Aristotle is common in the rhetorical tradition. As Olian (1985) notes:

Aristotle decried the general neglect of the logical constituent. He regarded with dismay the meager attention devoted to reasoning…A detailed discussion of this theme suggests a distaste for the non-logical means of persuasion and a preference for appeals based upon reason (p. 137).

Kennedy (2007) too, in his translation of Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* notes:

Aristotle believed that truth was grounded in nature (physis) and capable of apprehension through reason. In this he differs both from Plato (for whom truth is grounded in the divine origin of the soul) and from the Sophists (for whom judgments were based on nomos (conventions), which in turn results from the ambivalent nature of language as the basis of human society) (p. 35).

Thus tradition teaches that logos is primary and pathetic appeals are suspect but sometimes necessary to appeal to a mass audience which is often less educated and usually not an expert in the matter under discussion. Indeed, appeal to emotions is considered a fallacy and, even today, raises a red flag in a formal argument. Such readings of Aristotle’s view of pathos are typical in extant literature.
Aristotle was the first to study and categorize emotions and their dispositional
effects but since Aristotle, the study of pathe has not progressed much. About this
Heidegger (1962) states:

…the basic ontological interpretation of the affective life in general has
been able to make scarcely one forward step worthy of mention since
Aristotle. On the contrary, affects and feelings come under the theme of
psychical\(^{11}\) phenomena, functioning as a third class of these, usually along
with ideation and volition. They sink to the level of accompanying
phenomena. It has been one of the merits of phenomenological research
that it has again brought these phenomena more unrestrictedly into our
sight (p. 178).

From Aristotle onwards, the study of affects has been relegated to fields such as
psychology that studies the emotions and the mental life of individuals. At the same time,
philosophy and science have mostly ignored affects. Philosophy seeks statements that are
true independent of context, time, and emotions. As Grassi (1976) notes, theoretical
thinking tried to eliminate all pathetic influences because they cloud rational thought.
Grassi quotes Locke:

…if we would speak of things as they are, we must allow that all the art of
rhetoric, besides order and clearness; all the artificial and figurative
application of words eloquence hath invented are for nothing else but to
insinuate wrong ideas, move the passions, and thereby mislead judgment;
and so are perfect cheats (as quoted in Grassi, 1976, p. 200).

Kant (2005) also notes that the art of rhetoric only borrows what it needs from poetry to
influence the minds of people before they have weighted the matter and that rhetoric
deserves no respect because it clouds judgment and makes free judgment impossible.
Descartes (1998), a key figure in Modern philosophy asks us to doubt all sensual data and
emotions and rely on strict rationality—*cogito ergo sum* (I think, therefore I am) – and to
devote attention exclusively to abstract and decontextualized fields such as geometry,

\(^{11}\) By psychical, Heidegger means the ontic characteristics of the mind.
dynamics, and epistemology. Such pejorative views of pathetic appeals are typical in philosophy. Natural science too brackets emotions to arrive at conclusions that are a result of applying the scientific method.

Heidegger is troubled by such bracketing of emotions and he rectifies the situation by providing a more robust view of emotions. In other words, Heidegger destructs the traditional interpretations of affect and finds a more fitting place for it. In order to remedy the fact that affects have not been studied ontologically since Aristotle, which has distorted our understanding of pathos, Heidegger, surprisingly, turns to Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* and attempts to rehabilitate Aristotle’s view of affects. He does this in the Summer Semester at Marburg in 1924, also known as SS 1924 or the Aristotle lecture or the Marburg lecture. This lecture was prior to Heidegger’s magnum opus, *Being and Time*, in which he advances his own theory of moods. He briefly refers to his Aristotle lecture in *Being and Time* and states:

Contrary to the traditional orientation, according to which rhetoric is conceived as the kind of thing we ‘learn in school’, this work of Aristotle must be taken as the first systematic hermeneutic of the everydayness of Being with one another. Publicness which belongs to the kind of Being which belongs to the they not only has in general its own way of having a mood, but needs moods and makes them for itself. It is into such a mood and out of such a mood that the orator speaks. He must understand the possibilities of moods in order to rouse them and guide them aright (Heidegger, 1962, p. 178).

Here, Heidegger clearly believes that Aristotle’s understanding of pathos was ontological but the interpretation of affects fell under patristic and scholastic theology and consequently lost its ontological foundation. Misinterpretation of Aristotle’s view so that the logos is primary is typical in extant literature. But such a (mis)reading of Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* does not make much sense, particularly when we buy into the standard
translation of Aristotle’s definition of man as the rational animal. This is a definition by
classification and differentiation where man is classified as animal but differentiated from
animals through reason. The idea was never to eliminate emotions but to bring them
under the control of reason. Based on such a definition, how tradition got the idea that
logos was primary for Aristotle is outside the scope of this discussion but what is within
the scope is a restoration of Aristotle’s view of pathos. Heidegger wants to restore the
rightful place of pathos not only in rhetorical theory but also as a primordial way of
knowing and being in the world. As he states in the Aristotle lecture:

> Tradition has long ago lost an understanding of rhetoric – such was the
case already in the Hellenistic and Early Middle Ages inasmuch as
rhetoric became merely a school discipline. The original meaning of
rhetoric had long since vanished. Insofar as we forget to ask about the
concrete function of Aristotelian rhetoric, we lost the fundamental
possibility of interpreting and making it transparent (as quoted in Gross,

Once again, Heidegger destructs tradition to arrive at primordial phenomena. He keeps
alive Husserl’s cry: to the things themselves. Agosta (2010) too notes that the
conventional account of affects “is cleared away by and does not survive a reading of
Heidegger’s volume 18 on book II of Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*” (p. 333). So, let’s take on
Heidegger’s challenge and see if we can understand the pathetic appeal of rhetoric more
authentically than what has been handed to us by tradition.

**The Rightful Place of Pathos**

Heidegger makes a crucial discovery in the Aristotle lecture which he further
develops in *Being and Time*: He finds the rightful place of affects. In Heidegger’s theory,
moods are not emotions that move the soul towards the divine or a device for
manipulation and distortion or individualistic orientations towards the world but provide
a primary orientation to the world. Often the continuum of knowledge is drawn such that there is divine knowledge on one end, relativistic or conventional knowledge on the other end, with rational knowledge in the middle. In such continuums, moodal knowledge is conspicuous only in its absence. As we learned in the foregoing analysis, Heideggerian moods are a fundamental way of knowing the world and ourselves and that there are four moods, curiosity, ambiguity, anxiety, and guilt, that make-up Dasein. To differentiate between the constitutive emotions and transient emotions such as boredom or annoyance, Heidegger renames the constitutive emotions as moods and draws our attention to the existential and ontological foundations of these moods. Although Heidegger does not explicitly state that he is renaming the constitutive emotions as moods, such renaming is typical of Heidegger. In his attempt to wake us up from the slumber of conventional meanings, he uses new terms to signify that he is changing the conventional meaning of old words to reveal a more authentic meaning. Therefore, I feel confident in positing that Heidegger renames the constitutive emotions as moods to show that these moods are not just emotions but these moods provide an existential orientation for Dasein. At the very bottom of our being, we are curious about the world that we are thrown in, acquire conventional meanings to satisfy our curiosity which leads to ambiguous understandings and anxiety over being fallen, and ultimately have guilt over not seizing the possibilities inherent in our thrownness. These moods are not transient emotions but form the basis of our existence in the world and therefore Heidegger changes their classification from emotions to moods. Indeed, the cyclical view of moods further emphasizes how there is no escape from moods save in death. These four moods define our being, not individually, but for every Dasein. For Heidegger, the ontological foundations of affects
need to be disclosed first so that affects can be studied from the ground up otherwise the project of understanding affects will constantly go amiss. Thus Heidegger finds the rightful place of affects: not a source of divine knowledge, not a device of manipulation and distortion, not a relativistic orientation, but an authentic way of knowing the world through an attunement. If Heidegger was asked to draw a continuum of knowledge, I think he would draw it like this: Conventional Meanings and Divine Knowledge on either ends with Rational Knowledge closer to Conventional Meanings and Moodal Knowledge (or Poetic Knowledge) closer to Divine Knowledge.

We see in this chapter that mood is an essential component of how we are in the world and this insight revealed the essential role of pathos in rhetoric. After such a reading of Heidegger and Aristotle, no longer can appeals to emotions be considered a fallacy and a potential ground for dismissal of argument; no longer can pathetic appeals be considered an ancillary argument or a device for deception; no longer can pathos be viewed as putting one in touch with the divine. Dasein is a Being that is in the world and as long as we are in the world, we are permeated with moods through and through. This insight of Heidegger gives pathos a much more central role in rhetorical theory than rhetorical tradition has done so far.
Chapter 4: Rhetoric as Understanding

The Ant and the Chrysalis – An Aesop Fable

An Ant nimbly running about in the sunshine in search of food came across a Chrysalis that was very near its time of change. The Chrysalis moved its tail, and thus attracted the attention of the Ant, who then saw for the first time that it was alive. "Poor, pitiable animal!" cried the Ant disdainfully. "What a sad fate is yours! While I can run hither and thither, at my pleasure, and, if I wish, ascend the tallest tree, you lie imprisoned here in your shell, with power only to move a joint or two of your scaly tail." The Chrysalis heard all this, but did not try to make any reply. A few days after, when the Ant passed that way again, nothing but the shell remained. Wondering what had become of its contents, he felt himself suddenly shaded and fanned by the gorgeous wings of a beautiful Butterfly. "Behold in me," said the Butterfly, "your much-pitied friend! Boast now of your powers to run and climb as long as you can get me to listen." So saying, the Butterfly rose in the air, and, borne along and aloft on the summer breeze, was soon lost to the sight of the Ant forever (The Ant and the Chrysalis, n.d.).

In chapter two, Rhetoric as Silence, we shifted our focus from speech acts to the silent aspect of discourse which leaves room for possibilities of discourse to unfold over time. However, our focus was still on the choices made by the rhetor, which was further illustrated by the silent discourse in the I Have a Dream speech. Now our focus shifts from Dasein as the rhetor to Dasein as the listener. Heidegger (2009) defines rhetoric as “the possibility of seeing what at each moment speaks for a matter” (p.78). Recall that the verb “seeing” does not exclusively indicate sight, but may refer to other senses as well. Thus Heidegger’s definition of rhetoric implies that the art of rhetoric is not just the art of speaking but also an art of hearing. Heidegger’s definition of rhetoric could very well read: “the possibility of hearing what at each moment speaks for a matter” because rhetoric is a type of discourse and in every discourse, there is a speaker and a listener. As Heidegger (1962) notes, “Hearing is constitutive for discourse” (p. 206). However, Heidegger’s idea of a listener, as we shall see, is different from the traditional idea of an
audience. For Heidegger, the concept of hearing is synonymous with self-understanding. Recall also that Dasein is made-up of three things: discourse, moods (or state-of-mind), and understanding. As Heidegger states, “Discourse is existentially equiprimordial with state-of-mind and understanding” (p. 203). As such, understanding is an integral part of Dasein. Keeping all this in mind, let’s begin our analysis of the Heideggerian concept of understanding and see how it informs our view of Rhetoric as Understanding.

**Definition of Understanding**

To understand Heidegger’s definition of understanding, we must first differentiate ontological understanding from ontical understanding. Heidegger (1962) states:

> When we are talking ontically we sometimes use the expression ‘understanding something’ with the signification of ‘being able to manage something’, ‘being a match for it’, ‘being competent to do something’ (p. 183).

For example, we might say that we understand how to use MS Word or understand how to do drive a car, but that is not what Heidegger means by understanding. Heidegger (1962) further states, “In understanding as an existential, that which we have such competence over is not a ‘what’, but Being as existing” (p. 183). In other words, we understand how to exist in the world. As Gelven (1989) explains:

> Heidegger, in laying the groundwork for his analysis of what understanding means, points out the German use of ‘understanding’ that means ‘to have control over’. What one has control over in this case, he points out, is one’s own existence (p. 91).

To state it differently, understanding means having a competent understanding of our Being, not merely a mastery over things. Recall from the previous chapter, Rhetoric as Care, that to think that one has control of something (other than Dasein) is to become tranquil and fallen. Heidegger is more interested in what understanding is ontologically
rather than what understanding is ontically. Gelven (1989) further notes that “understanding is not something restricted to the mind’s cognitive activities”, instead, cognitive function is possible because we know how to exist in the world. For example, we know that to exist in the world, we need to meet our needs of food, water, and shelter. Cognitive function is directed towards procuring food, water, and shelter because we always already know that we need these things. Understanding our existence gives direction and impulse to cognitive function.

Heidegger (1962) defines ontological understanding as:

*Understanding is the existential Being of Dasein’s own potentiality-for-Being; and it is so in such a way that this Being discloses in itself what its Being is capable of* (p. 184).

In other words, to understand is to understand our possibilities. A key concept in Heidegger’s definition of understanding is possibility or potentiality. There are three points about possibility towards which we will direct our attention: possibilities are definite; possibilities are not necessary; and possibilities and actualities are not dichotomies. First, the possibilities of Dasein are definite: The possibilities that Heidegger is referring to are not free-floating but are actually possible. An example of a free floating possibility would be the possibility of riding a dragon or becoming a fairy. Such possibilities are better conceived of as fantasies because they bear no relationship to what is actually possible. On the other hand, the possibilities of Dasein are closely tied to what is actually possible. For example, the possibilities of flying a jet airplane (instead of riding a dragon) or of becoming a professor (instead of a fairy) are actually possible in a definite way.
The second point is that possibilities are not necessary but merely possible. Although Heidegger’s concept of possibility overlaps with Aristotle’s concept of entelechy, but Heideggerian possibility is different from Aristotelian entelechy. Aristotle emphasizes natural possibilities or entelechy whereas Heidegger views entelechy as one possibility among many. In *Metaphysics*, Aristotle (1999) limits the concept of entelechy to those possibilities which are reached of their own accord when there is no interference of a negative nature. For example, the entelechy of a seed is to become a plant if nothing adverse in the way of climate or predation occurs. So, for Aristotle, not all possibilities are equal; natural possibilities take precedence as they are entelechial. Another example is that, for Aristotle, the entelechy of man is to be rational; rationality will blossom in human nature just as naturally as a seed blossoms into a plant under optimum conditions. But Heidegger’s concept of possibility is different from Aristotle’s concept of entelechy. For Heidegger, the possibilities of Dasein are not necessary but merely possible. In this, Heidegger’s thought is very futuristic and aligned with Quantum Mechanics in which all actual possibilities remain open until one choice is made and only then the other possibilities are cut off. Heidegger (1962) states, “…possibility signifies what is not yet actual and what is not at any time necessary. It characterizes the merely possible” (p. 183). For example, imagine going to a paint store to buy a color for the walls of a bedroom. The dozens of choices that are available are all actually possible and none of them are necessary. The walls do not necessarily have to be painted any one color; all possibilities are open until one color is chosen. So, for Heidegger, the only thing natural about possibilities is that Dasein has them because Dasein is thrown projection. Heidegger (1962) states, “Dasein is Being-possible which has been delivered over to
itself – thrown possibility through and through” (p. 183). What is important to Heidegger is that we have possibilities to choose from not whether the possibilities are natural or not.

The third point is that Heidegger resolves the dichotomies of possibilities and actualities. Often, Heidegger is misinterpreted as valuing possibility over actuality. The source of this confusion stems from this dark passage:

> Ontologically it [possibility] is on a lower level than actuality and necessity. On the other hand, possibility as an existential is the most primordial and ultimate positive way in which Dasein is characterized ontologically (Heidegger, 1962, p. 183).

The above passage seems to indicate two opposing themes: actuality is ontologically prior and possibility is ontologically prior. Heideggerian scholars have mostly adopted the latter theme as being closer to Heidegger’s thought than the former. The rationale of the Heideggerian scholars is that if Dasein is possibility through and through, then possibility must be of higher value than actuality. Gelven (1989) in his commentary on *Being and Time* notes:

> The priority of possibility over actuality is rampant in Heidegger’s thought. It may be his most persistently used principle in describing the various existentials. It not only deeply affects his own internally developed problems, but affects to a great degree, his general attitude towards mankind (p. 79-80).

Indeed possibility is crucial in Heidegger’s theory but to postulate that possibility is more important than actuality is to misunderstand Heidegger’s point. The dark passage can be resolved by noting that actualities may be ontologically prior as the actual already exists but Dasein is made-up of possibilities, so for Dasein, possibilities are ontologically prior to actualities. Possibilities have meaning because they are actual possibilities. Actualities and possibilities are not in opposition to each other but have a harmonious relationship:
We do not have an actual life and a possible life; we have one life in which both the actual and the possible are significant. So, Heidegger destroys dichotomies of actualities and possibilities and notes that both are needed for a meaningful understanding of how we exist in the world.

**Nature of Understanding**

Now that we have elucidated the element of possibility in Heidegger’s definition of understanding, let’s delve more deeply into the nature of understanding. Understanding can move in two directions: [1] understanding the world and the entities within the world and [2] self-understanding or understanding Dasein. We will examine both directions in terms of authentic understandings and genuine understandings.

Heidegger makes a distinction between authentic understandings and genuine understandings. He states, “…authentic understanding, no less than that which is inauthentic, can be genuine or not genuine” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 186). Inwood (1999) explains the difference between “authentic” and “genuine” in Heidegger’s thought:

Dasein can be authentic when it seeks understandings by its own hand or from its own experiences so that the understandings are reliable. This makes sense as Heidegger was a phenomenologist. However, the meaning of the term “genuine” is different from the term “authentic”; genuine is simply that which is not false. So an understanding may be authentic in the sense that it was derived by one’s hand or phenomenologically but it may not be genuine, in which case it would be authentically un-genuine. Or an understanding may not be derived by one’s own hand but may be genuine nevertheless, in which case it would be inauthentically genuine. Heidegger imposes a double requirement of authenticity and genuineness in both understanding of the world and self-understanding.
Authentic and Genuine Understanding of the World

To grasp how understanding can meet the double requirement of authenticity and genuineness in the context of understanding the world and the entities within the world, we first explore why Heidegger emphasizes authentic understanding, that is, understandings derived from our own experiences; then explore how authentic understandings may be achieved; and finally see why Heidegger requires that understandings be authentic and genuine. Quite obviously, Heidegger emphasizes experiential knowledge to present a challenge to traditional epistemology. Science and philosophy have both attempted to bracket the scientist and the philosopher from knowledge in the attempt to create understanding that is universal and atemporal. But Dasein is a temporal Being, and as Grondin (1994) notes, atemporality denies our humanity. Therefore, Heidegger destroys such notions of knowledge by emphasizing experiential knowledge. According to Heidegger, (1962) understanding is inauthentic when we assume that knowledge about the world can be possessed without taking into account Dasein and Dasein’s possibilities. Heidegger (1962) states:

Understanding is either authentic, arising out of one’s own Self as such, or inauthentic. The ‘in’ of ‘inauthentic’ does not mean that Dasein cuts itself off from its Self and understands ‘only’ the world. The world belongs to being-one’s-Self as Being-in-the-world … In understanding the world, Being-in is always understood along with it, while understanding of existence as such is always an understanding of the world (p. 186).

Heidegger destroys traditional epistemology in which knowledge, to be considered knowledge, must be independent of the subject. For Heidegger, the Self and the World are always bound together and any attempt to separate the two lead to inauthentic understandings; the world cannot be understood as something apart from Dasein and Dasein cannot be understood apart from the world. Traditional epistemology does not
take into account the possibilities of Dasein but Heidegger’s point is that such possibilities are always already presupposed and precluded in all logical thinking. For elucidation, let’s take once again the law of non-contradiction for our example. The law of non-contradiction states that two antithetical propositions cannot be true at the same in the same way. To know that proposition p is inconsistent with proposition q, one has to be able to think of p and q together. Such pre-thinking already reveals our possibilities. Heidegger presents a serious challenge to traditional epistemology by revealing that possibilities of people cannot be separated from the cognitive abilities of people. Heidegger shows us how Dasein is that makes logical thinking possible in the first place. Thus authentic understandings are those in which the Self is not separated from the World and inauthentic understandings are those in which an attempt is made to separate the world from Dasein to arrive at pure knowledge.

For Heidegger, an authentic understanding (understanding that is derived by our own hand) of the world is achieved through a fore-having, a fore-sight, and a fore-conception which together form the fore-structure of understanding. Heidegger, in Being and Time, is brief and unclear when explaining these three concepts, therefore, we will turn to Inwood (1999) for a competent explanation. Inwood (1999) notes that fore-having is a general understanding of an entity. He gives the example of a sociologist and an economist: the two may share the same general understanding of how people behave in societies but they will differ in their fore-sight. Fore-sight, in Heidegger’s thought, is not a prophetic wisdom of some sort but a specific angle of viewing or a viewpoint which helps us zero in on some aspects and ignore the others. For example, a sociologist may

\[12\] Heidegger uses the term “interpretation” to refer to appropriation of understanding. For the sake of simplicity and clarity, we will only use one term: understanding.
observe how people behave with family members and friends whereas an economist may want to observe the spending habits of people. Thus, even though, the sociologist and the economist share the same general understanding (fore-having) of people, their specific angle (fore-sight) differs. And since their fore-sight differs, their fore-conception will also differ. Fore-conception means understanding things in terms of concepts that are available to us. For example, a sociologist may employ the concepts of power, conflict, cooperation etc whereas the economist may employ concepts such as exchange rates, inflation, import, export etc. Together, fore-having, fore-sight, and fore-conception form the fore-structure through which Dasein understands the world and the entities within the world. Thus, Heidegger reveals that the world is not apart from Dasein. In every authentic understanding of the world, fore-having, fore-sight, and fore-conceptions come into play to show that the world is understood in terms of Dasein’s involvement with the world.

Heidegger imposes the double requirement of authenticity and genuineness to emphasize that not all experiential understandings are equal and credible. This is a crucial way in which he is different from the deconstructionists for whom all knowledge is relative to the subject and all understandings are equally credible. Heidegger acknowledges that one’s fore-structure may be in error in which case the understanding will be considered authentic but false. For example, as Inwood (1999) explains, the sociologist’s fore-conceptions may be based in folk tales rather than as-structures in which case, they will need to be amended. Or the sociologist may distinguish between state and civil society and may explain civil society in detail but leave out the concept of state. Thus, partial and/or false fore-structures need to be amended so that understanding
can be authentic and genuine. Otherwise, understandings will become relativistic or perhaps nihilistic, which would be very unhermeneutical and distressing for Heidegger.

**Authentic and Genuine Self-Understanding**

The other direction that understanding can take is self-understanding. Before we proceed any further, we need to recall that Heidegger is interested in ontological understanding. In other words, self-understanding for Heidegger is an understanding of Dasein. Heidegger studies ontology through phenomenology; he wants to elucidate the nature of everyday Dasein which is not only the same for every Dasein but also accessible to every Dasein. As Heidegger (1962) notes, “…in each case Dasein is mine” (p. 68). Heidegger does not study the unique features of individuals but seeks those features that are common to every Dasein and then uses those common features (discourse, moods, and understanding) to understand Dasein itself. So, self-understanding in Heidegger’s thought is an understanding of Dasein and not an understanding of unique individuals.

Self-understanding, like understanding of the world and the entities within the world, can be authentic or inauthentic and genuine or un-genuine. For authentic self-understanding, Heidegger introduces the concept of sight as transparency and for genuine self-understanding, Heidegger introduces the concept of hearing the call of conscience.

**Sight as Transparency**

Self-understanding can be authentic when the fore-structure of Being is made transparent or put before our eyes. Here, we will first examine what Heidegger means by sight; then examine the role of sight in authentic understanding; and finally see why “sight” must be ultimately left behind. In the context of moods, Heidegger uses the
concept of sight synonymously with curiosity, but in the context of understanding, Heidegger uses the concept of sight synonymously with transparency. About the dual meaning of sight, Heidegger (1962) notes that both uses of the term “sight” are equiprimordial. In disclosing Dasein’s mood-like existence, sight was used in its outward meaning – to see the World; in terms of understanding, sight is being used in its inward meaning – to see Dasein. Heidegger (1962) states:

The sight which is related primarily and on the whole to existence we call transparency. We choose this term to designate ‘knowledge of the self’ in a sense which is well understood, so as to indicate that here it is not a matter of perceptually tracking down and inspecting a point called the ‘Self’, but rather one of seizing upon the full disclosedness of Being-in-the-world throughout all the constitutive items which are essential to it, and doing so with understanding. In existing, entities sight themselves only in so far as they have become transparent to themselves with equal primordiality in those items which are constitutive for their existence: their Being-alongside the world and their Being-with-Others (p. 186-187).

In other words, to see Dasein is to see the constitutive parts of Dasein which are discourse, moods, and understanding. Grondin (1994) emphasizes discourse as the primary constitutive element of Dasein; he states: “Discourse – or, better, discoursing – is the self-interpretation of Dasein as it manifests itself in its usual unselfconscious use of language” (p. 101-102). Grondin is interested in those aspects of Heidegger’s theory that shed light on how a text is understood and therefore he focuses on discourse. However, our project here is a bit wider as it encompasses all rhetorical transactions and therefore we need all three aspects of Dasein. Indeed, self-understanding involves discourse but discourse is equiprimordial with mood in allowing self-understanding to take place. As Heidegger notes in the passage quoted above, both elements are needed to arrive at self-understanding. There are three elements of existing: the Self, the Others, and the World; there are three elements of Dasein: understanding, discourse, and moods. We are with-
Others in discourse; we are with-World through moods; and we are with-Self through understanding. The three elements of existence are in perfect correspondence with the three elements of Dasein and to emphasize any one element is to disrupt the balance in which Dasein exists in the world.

The role of sight in self-understanding is to bring into light the traditional (mis)understandings of Being in order to clear the path for a more phenomenological understanding of Dasein. By sight, Heidegger does not mean perceiving with bodily eyes or a non-sensory awareness but a clearedness that brings the fore-structure of Dasein into focus. For example, an x-ray extends the boundaries and the power of bodily eyes to look within the body but that is not the kind of seeing that will give us meaningful information about Dasein. Nor is Heidegger advocating a Cartesian non-sensory seeing in which one can claim to have seen with the eyes of God so that knowledge is freed from all constraints of time and place. Heidegger’s view is different from both the notions of physical sight and rational sight; Heidegger views sight as clearedness (as translated by Macquarrie and Robinson in Being and Time) or as lightening (as translated by Hofstadter in Poetry, Language, Thought). So when Heidegger notes that understanding of Self is gained through sight, he means a way of seeing so that Dasein is disclosed. After all, for Heidegger, to have an understanding of our Being is constitutive of our Being, and therefore, to see is to make Dasein transparent to itself. Grondin (1994) states:

The interpretive dispositions underlying the fore-structure of our understanding are thus to be raised to transparency – that is, to interpretation – through the elucidation of the history of Being… This self transparency should not be conceived as self patency, of course; rather, like the Delphic “Know thyself,” it should be understood as insight into one’s own limits and insuperable thrownness – indeed, as the consciousness of one’s finitude and situatedness in the history of Being (Grondin, 1994, p. 103).
In other words, Grondin believes that Heidegger’s aim is not for each Dasein to acquire a unique or patented understanding of Self, but to make transparent how Being has been (mis)understood throughout history. Heidegger wants to do two things: make transparent how tradition has (mis)understood Being as well as make transparent the fore-structures of understanding Dasein. Heidegger wants to make the fore-structure of Dasein apparent or put it before our eyes to pave the road for an understanding of Dasein that is both authentic and genuine unlike the inauthentic and false understanding of Dasein that we have inherited from tradition. The reason for writing *Being and Time* was to raise anew the question of Being. As Heidegger sarcastically notes:

…a dogma has been developed which not only declares the question about the meaning of Being to be superfluous, but sanctions its complete neglect. It is said that ‘Being’ is the most universal and the emptiest of concepts. As such it resists every attempt at definition. Nor does this most universal and hence indefinable concept require any definition, for everyone uses it constantly and already understands what he means by it. In this way, that which the ancient philosophers found continually disturbing as something obscure and hidden has taken on a clarity and self-evidence such that if anyone continues to ask about it he is charged with an error of method (p. 2).

In other words, the question of Being that the ancient philosophers thought so important is now mostly neglected for three reasons: it is considered a most universal concept; it is maintained that it is indefinable; it is held that the concept of Being is self-evident. Heidegger disagrees with all three presuppositions of Being: Being may be universal but that does not mean that it is the most clearest and does not need any further discussion. Indeed, Heidegger notes that Being is the darkest of all concepts. Additionally, Being may be universal but universality does not mean that it is at the top of a classification system of genus and species; Heidegger believes that Being transcends any such
classification system. About the second presupposition, Heidegger notes that Being may be logically indefinable but that does not automatically mean that the question of Being should not be raised. Heidegger acknowledges that Being cannot be defined in terms of higher or lower concepts because Being is not an entity that fits into precise logical definitions. However, the search for answers should not be abandoned when logic fails us. Heidegger (1962) states, “indefinibility of Being does not eliminate the question of its meaning; it demands that we look that question in the face” (p. 23). In other words, we need to approach the question of Being phenomenologically rather than logically which Heidegger proceeds to do in *Being and Time*. About the third presupposition, Heidegger notes that our understanding of Being is such that “the meaning of Being is still veiled in darkness”; we use the term Being with only an average intelligibility such as “The sky *is* blue” or “I *am* merry” without really understanding how we comport ourselves towards entities or even our Selves and this is proof that we need to raise the question of Being again. Thus Heidegger’s aim in *Being and Time* is to destroy the presuppositions on which Being stands and understand Being from the ground up so that Dasein becomes transparent to us.

Transparency of the fore-structure can aid us in understanding Dasein authentically but ultimately “sight” must be left behind. Dasein is a much more complex Being than any other Being-in-the-world and therefore Dasein’s self-understanding follows a different trajectory (from the trajectory of understanding the world and the entities in the world) in order to fulfill the double requirement of authenticity and genuineness. Ricoeur (1981) speaks of a hermeneutic arc in which explanations are stage one of understanding which must be ultimately left behind to arrive at an in-depth
understanding. Heidegger’s thinking is similar to Ricoeur in this: we can begin with fore-structure to get an initial understanding of Dasein but ultimately fore-structure must be left behind in the interest of a deeper and richer intelligibility. For elucidation, we have to look no further than *Being and Time*. When Heidegger first begins his book, *Being and Time*, he orients us to the study of Dasein by providing a fore-structure: He raises the general question of Being (a fore-having); then he zeroes in on one Being, Dasein, a Being for whom its own Being is an issue (fore-sight); and since the question of Being has not been raised properly since the time of the Ancient Greeks, Heidegger provides us a range of concepts with which we can grasp the substance of Dasein (fore-conception). This fore-structure orients us to the authentic study of Dasein, but since Dasein is different from the Being of other entities in the world, Heidegger leaves the path of fore-structure, follows the hermeneutic arc upwards, and introduces the concept of hearing to arrive at self-understanding. In other words, to arrive at self-understanding, we must leave behind the path that led us to understanding the world and the entities within the world and follow the hermeneutical arc upwards. The role of sight or transparency in self-understanding is only part of the story; it elucidates only how authentic understanding of Dasein is achieved. To reiterate, this explanation must now be left behind to follow the hermeneutic arc up towards an authentic and genuine understanding.

**Hearing as Hearing the Call of Conscience**

A genuine self-understanding can be achieved in hearing the call of conscience. Here, we will first examine what Heideggerian hearing is not; then see what Heidegger means by hearing the call of conscience; and finally examine how conscience manifests itself in Care. To understand what Heidegger means by hearing, we must first understand
what Heideggerian hearing is not. By hearing, Heidegger does not mean hearing the sounds all around us. Indeed sounds do not come to us as pure sounds but in their as-structures which either indentifies the source of the sound or its purpose or both. For example, we do not hear the pure sound of a bell ringing; the ringing of a bell is heard as a telephone bell or a door bell or a recess bell which identifies the purpose of the bell or a bell is heard just as a bell which identifies the source of the sound but not its purpose. As Heidegger (1962) observes:

> What we first hear is never noises or complexes of sounds but the creaking wagon, the motorcycle. We hear the column on the march, the north wind, the woodpecker tapping, the fire crackling. It requires a very artificial and complicated frame of mind to hear a pure noise. The fact that motorcycles 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… (p. 207).

Heidegger notes that the same is true of discourse: we do not hear tone data but what is said in the talk. Even when we analyze diction or accent we do it in the context of the theme of the talk to judge the appropriateness of the diction. The same is true for written discourse: When we read, we see the lines of text as words and we judge whether the words convey or fail to convey the meaning of the talk, we do not characteristically see the squiggly lines that make-up the words. The squiggly lines become apparent only when there is a mistake such as when children reverse the letters “b” and “d” in their writing.

Hearing also has nothing to do with the closeness or remoteness of the sound. Heidegger (1962) states:

> …our seeing and hearing always go proximally beyond what is distancially closest. Seeing and hearing are distant senses not because they are far-reaching, but because it is in them that Dasein as deseverant mainly dwells… Equipment for seeing – and likewise for hearing, such as the
telephone receiver – has what we have designated as the inconspicuousness of the proximally ready to hand (p. 141).

Here, *deseverant* means bringing things close or making the distance vanish. Dasein as *deseverant* decides which things to bring close and which to keep remote. For example, one may look through a telescope to observe the stars and though the telescope is the closest and the stars at an unimaginable distance, it is the stars that Dasein brings close not the telescope. Similarly, when one receives a phone call, the phone is closest and the person on the other side farthest, but Dasein brings the farthest closest. Thus Heideggerian hearing is not about hearing the sounds around us but the sound that Dasein chooses to bring close even though it may be remote distance-wise.

For Heidegger, the most genuine case of hearing is hearing the call of conscience. As Heidegger notes, the possibilities of self-understanding are familiar to us as a voice of conscience. Before we discuss how and why the call of conscience is sounded and heard, let’s first explore what Heidegger means by conscience. As always, Heidegger explains every concept by first destroying traditional interpretations of them, thus clearing a path for a more ontological understanding. We too follow that path. Heidegger (1962) states:

The ontological analysis of conscience on which we are thus embarking, is prior to any description and classification of Experiences of conscience, and likewise lies outside of any biological explanation of this phenomenon (which would mean its dissolution). But it is no less distant from a theological exegesis of conscience or any employment of this phenomenon for proofs of God or for establishing an ‘immediate’ consciousness of God…Nevertheless, even when our investigation of conscience is thus restricted, we must neither exaggerate its outcome nor make perverse claims about it and lessen its worth (p. 313).

To state it differently, Heidegger wants us to understand conscience similar to the way he invited us to understand the role of pathos in rhetorical theory: conscience is not something lofty that puts us in touch with God or gives us proof of God nor is conscience
reducible to biology. The rightful place for conscience is not in the extraordinary experience of God or in the involuntary biological processes but in the everyday experiences of Dasein. Heidegger’s phenomenology is all about the everyday experiences so that understanding is not something remote or rare or an exceptional case but a possibility that is available to every Dasein in our everyday lives. Additionally, Heidegger (1962) notes, to demand inductive empirical proof of the voice of conscience is a perversion of the phenomenon of conscience. In such perversions, “conscience is taken as something just occurring from time to time rather than as a universally established and ascertainable fact” (p. 314). In such a demand for facts, the phenomenon of conscience cannot present itself. This lack of presentation is not a deficiency in the phenomenon but in our approach. As King (2001) notes:

Both extremes of a theological and a scientific explanation are rejected by Heidegger on the ground that neither takes sufficient account of Dasein’s existential-ontological constitution…there is no ontological need to go outside for an explanation, nor is there any justification for denying conscience just because its facticity cannot be proved in the same way as the fact of a substantial thing (p. 166).

Thus Heidegger destroys the traditional approaches to conscience and notes that to understand something that is constitutive of Dasein, there is no need to go outside of Dasein to comprehend it. The authentic and genuine answer, for Heidegger, is within not without and is prior to scientific proofs.

The natural question that now comes to mind is this: If not theology and not science, then what is the correct approach for understanding the phenomenon of conscience? Heidegger’s answer is unequivocal: Conscience must be understood in the context of Care and moods because the call of conscience originates in Care. As Heidegger (1962) states, “Conscience manifests itself as the call of Care” (p. 322). The
three aspects of Care (thrownness, falleness, and projection) reveal who calls; who hears the call; how is the call sounded; and what is the purpose of the call? Let’s see how Heidegger answers these questions:

The answer to the first question, who calls, is related to the answer to the second question, who hears, therefore, we will examine them together: The caller and the called is Dasein. On the surface, the answer sounds contradictory but Heidegger has never shown any respect for the law of non-contradiction. As we discovered in Chapter Two, Rhetoric as Silence, Heidegger notes that it is contradictions that reveal the foundation of things and therefore, it is the law of non-contradiction that needs to be discarded, not contradictions. The answer appears contradictory on the surface but a deeper examination reveals a richer intelligibility: there is an ontological relationship between the called and the caller. As Heidegger (1962) states:

We shall not obtain an ontologically adequate Interpretation of the conscience until it can be made plain not only who is called by the call but also who does the calling, how the one to whom the appeal is made is related to the one who calls, and how this relationship must be taken ontologically as a way in which these are interconnected in their Being (319).

What is this relationship that Heidegger is hinting at? The called is the “fallen” Dasein and the caller is the “homeless” Dasein. As Heidegger (1962) states, “…Dasein is at the same time both the caller and the one to whom the appeal is made” (p. 320). These are not two different people because remember that falleness is constitutive of every Dasein and we are all fallen to some degree. However, homelessness is also constitutive of Dasein and this homelessness (or uncanniness) calls us towards genuineness. Thus the caller and the called is the same Dasein. As Heidegger (1962) states, “In conscience Dasein calls itself” (p. 320). The called Dasein is lost in idle-talk and the “they” perspectives; it
expects no such call because it does not even realize that it is fallen; the called Dasein even resists the call because to be fallen is to be tranquil and to already understand everything. But Dasein is also the caller – this is the Dasein that remains homeless always so that it can call to the fallen Dasein always. As Heidegger explains, “The call undoubtedly does not come from someone else who is with me in the world. The call comes from me and yet from beyond me and over me” (Heidegger, 1962, p. 320). To elucidate, just like fallenness is constitutive of Dasein, projection is also an integral part of Dasein; we become tranquil when we are fallen but the fallen Dasein also has anxiety over its fallenness and guilt calls it towards its possibilities. This is why all understandings must be maintained in homelessness for it is the homeless Dasein that calls to the fallen Dasein. The homeless Dasein and the fallen Dasein co-exist and therefore, the “they” self and the “genuine” self also co-exist in each Dasein. This is what I hinted at in chapter three, Rhetoric as Care, when I said that within our fallenness lies the possibility of authenticity. As Heidegger states:

The caller is Dasein in its uncanniness: primordial, thrown Being-in-the-world as the “not at home” – the bare ‘that-it-is’ in the nothing of the world. The caller is unfamiliar to the everyday they-self; it is something like an alien voice. What could be more alien to the “they”, lost in the manifold world of its concern, than the Self which has been individualized down to itself in uncanniness …” (p. 321-322).

Thus for Heidegger, the call of conscience is sounded by the homeless Dasein and the one who hears is the fallen Dasein. Though the voice may seem alien to the fallen Dasein who is lost in the “they” perspectives, the caller is none other than itself – the homeless Dasein.

The remaining two questions, how is the call made and what is the purpose of the call, are also related. Though Heidegger does not make their relationship explicit, I will
treat them as one idea because the mode of the call reveals its purpose and the purpose of the call is fulfilled in its mode. To separate the two questions is to create confusion in the answers. How is the call sounded? Heidegger (1962) answers: “Conscience discourses solely and constantly in the mode of keeping silent” (p. 318). Though Heidegger notes that the call of conscience is discourse because it is a call and a call is discursive but he is careful to also note that the call is not communication. He states:

The fact that what is called in the call has not been formulated in words, does not give this phenomenon the indefiniteness of a mysterious voice, but merely indicates that our understanding of what is called is not to be tied up with an expectation of anything like a communication (Heidegger, 1962, p. 318).

Heidegger does not want us to think that the call of conscience is communication between the fallen self and the homeless self because it is from such public talk and communication that Dasein is being called away. The call is not communication because there is nothing to report, no case to present, there is not even any inner dialogue taking place. Indeed, Heidegger (1962) notes that when such delusions of dialogue arise in the context of the call of conscience, as in a Kantian moral court, there has been a (mis)call and Dasein has been drawn back into the “they” self. The call of conscience is made in the mode of silence. Heidegger explains:

…it calls without uttering anything. The call discourses in the uncanny mode of keeping silent. And it does this only because, in calling the one to whom the appeal is made, it does not call him into the public talk of the ‘they” but calls him back from this into the reticence of his existent potentiality-for-Being” (p. 322).

What Heidegger means to say is the call is not made in speech acts because it is from public chatter that Dasein is being called away. Therefore, to make more speech acts would be counterproductive. Instead, the call quiets the impulse to busily talk and it
makes Dasein reticent instead of talkative. It is in such silence that Dasein hears. Thus the job of the homeless Dasein is to create a quiet space that is empty of idle chatter. Why is such a space needed? The answer to this question brings us to the purpose of the call. The purpose of the call is self-understanding; in silence, something about Dasein comes into the clearing. This is how the mode of the call and the purpose of the call are connected. The mode of silence fulfills the purpose of the call; the purpose of the call can only be fulfilled in the mode of silence. The mode of silence creates a quiet space where self-understanding can take place and for self-understanding to take place, the call must be silent. The call shatters the “they” perspectives and individualizes Dasein. To elucidate, I would like to share a personal experience of how conscience can call in silence and how silence is needed for self-understanding: I was waiting to speak to someone with great anticipation, I felt like I had dozens of things I wanted to say to them, but when the person finally arrived, they were irritable and said something hurtful. For a few moments, I tried pretend that nothing happened (an evasive turning-away from what the mood was trying to disclose) but the homeless feeling was strong; the call was loud though silent and sans speech acts. Luckily, I got the chance to leave without any further communication. I did not discuss this with anyone nor had any dialogue with myself over it. I wanted a quiet space in which I could make sense of what happened. It was in reticence and in absence of any speech acts that I learned something about the nature of Dasein – our dependence on discourse and our mood-like existence. My example illustrates Heidegger’s point: we do not need any theoretical knowledge of Dasein because, phenomenologically, Dasein is accessible to everyone in the same way. We forget our Being though it is closest to us and sometimes something unusual happens that
makes us uncanny and shatters the tranquility of idle-talk. When we allow the homeless Dasein to overtake the fallen Dasein, we arrive at genuine self-understanding.

Thus we see that Dasein is not just a speaker but also a listener. As Heidegger (1962) states, “Hearing is constitutive of discourse. And just as linguistic utterance is based on discourse, so is acoustic perception on hearing” (p. 206). Thus hearing is an element of discourse. Would there be any sense in speaking if there was no one to hear? For Heidegger, the most genuine case of hearing is to hear the call of conscience which calls one towards an understanding of Dasein that is both authentic and genuine. The purpose of the call is to call the fallen Dasein away from idle talk and towards self-understanding.

**Rhetoric as Understanding**

Now that we have elucidated what understanding means in Heidegger’s thought and how we might comport ourselves to have an authentic and genuine understanding of the world and of Dasein, we can turn our attention to what Heidegger’s insights about hearing as a way to self-understand means for rhetorical theory. Of all the concepts discussed in this chapter, we will focus on hearing as hearing is synonymous with understanding and understanding (along with discourse and moods) is what constitutes Dasein. Heidegger does not make explicit connections between “hearing the call of conscience” and rhetoric but such a connection follows naturally from Heidegger’s analysis of Dasein. Specifically, I want to draw attention to three things: First, as Heidegger notes, the call of conscience is a *call* and therefore, it falls within the realm of discourse. Second, a *movement* takes place from absorption into the “they” perspectives and tranquility of being fallen to anxiety over being fallen and guilt over not seizing our
possibilities. Third, “the possibility of hearing what speaks in each moment for a matter” points to the role of rhetoric in outing contingent truth. These three ideas put the call of conscience very much in the realm of rhetoric. No matter how rhetoric is defined, there are three things that cannot be eliminated from rhetoric without doing damage to our conception of rhetoric: rhetoric is a type of discourse, the purpose of rhetoric is movement, and rhetoric outs the truth in contingent situations. Therefore, let’s examine the above mentioned ideas one by one and see if indeed the call of conscience is rhetorical in nature and function.

The first reason for claiming that the call of conscience is rhetorical in nature is because the call is made in discourse. Let’s examine the Venn diagram below to understand the relationship between language, discourse, rhetoric and communication:

Fig. 4: Relationship between Language, Discourse, Rhetoric, and Communication
Aristotle (2007) defines man as a discoursing animal (if we accept Heidegger’s position that logos refers not to rationality but to discourse) and Kenneth Burke (1966) defines man as the symbol using animal. Therefore, language is our widest circle. But as Saussure (1983) explains, language has two parts: 1] langue or the system of language such as grammar, syntax, punctuation etc and 2] parole, which is speech or discourse. Therefore, the concepts of discourse and language are not coterminous and discourse falls within the circle of language. The circles of language and discourse are not contested much in extant literature but the placement of the next two concepts is quite contested. Is rhetoric a subset of communication or is communication a subset of rhetoric? An in-depth analysis of this controversy is outside the scope of our project. Besides, such tension between the concepts of rhetoric and communication keeps both concepts alive with unfolding possibilities and as such it is not necessary or productive to resolve the tension once and for all. The aim here is not logical precision but understanding and as Gadamer (2004) notes, method does not lead to understanding. So, for our purpose here, let’s adopt the idea that rhetoric is a subset of discourse and see how that informs our view that the call of conscience is rhetorical discourse. As we discussed earlier in chapter two, Rhetoric as Silence, whether rhetoric is defined as art, artifact, or function, in each case, rhetoric entails discourse. If the call of conscience was outside the realm of discourse, it would also be outside the realm of rhetoric. Heidegger also notes that conscience discourses in the mode of keeping silent. Again, silence presents no problem in Heidegger’s definition of discourse. In chapter two, Rhetoric as Silence, we noted that, though it seems contradictory, silence is an essential constituent of the three-part structure of discourse: the saying; what is said; and what is not yet said. Therefore, the
fact that the appeal is silent is not a problem in the conception of discourse that Heidegger provides. Heidegger further notes that the call of conscience is discourse but not communication. As we noted earlier, rhetoric is a type of discourse and discourse does not necessarily have to take place between self and others; discourse can also take place between self and self as in the case of imagined rhetoric or self-talk. For example, if someone repeats positive affirmations to themselves to induce movement towards greater self confidence, then such affirmations fall under discourse (or imagined rhetoric) but not communication. When discourse takes place between self and others, it is communication but when discourse takes place between self and self, it is still discourse but not communication. Heidegger distinguishes between communication and discourse because one could discourse with one self so that the speaker and the listener are not necessarily two separate minds, but communication requires two separate minds so that they can commune. For communication, the information in one mind has to be encoded into behavior which is then decoded by another mind to turn the behavior back into information. Communication entails a transaction between two separate minds and therefore, Heidegger is careful to note that the call of conscience is not communication. Since Dasein calls itself, the information has no need to leave the mind and is not dependent on behavior. Thus the call of conscience is discourse but not communication because the caller and the called is the same Dasein. Since rhetoric is a type of discourse and the call of conscience is also discourse, we can provisionally grant that the call is rhetorical. I ask for provisional agreement because two more arguments need to be made before we can conclusively say that the call of conscience is rhetorical in nature and function.
The second reason why the call of conscience is rhetorical in function is because there is movement from curiosity about the world that we are thrown into to the tranquility of fallenness and absorption in the “they” perspectives to anxiety over being fallen and having guilt over not seizing our possibilities. It is the call of conscience that keeps the cycle of moods moving until death cuts off all movement. Dasein moves towards an authentic and genuine understanding and though an understanding that is absolutely authentic and absolutely genuine is a telos, but the movement itself is authentic and genuine. Whenever we talk of movement through discourse, the term that immediately leaps to mind is “rhetoric”. This moving function of rhetoric has been noted since antiquity. Gorgias (1982), in his *Encomium of Helen*, notes that rhetoric is the power of speech over the constitution of the soul; Bacon (2011) notes, “The duty and office of rhetoric is to apply reason to imagination for the better moving of the will” (p. 80); and Kennedy, in his introduction to Aristotle’s (2007) *On Rhetoric*, states, “Rhetoric in the most general sense, is the energy inherent in emotion and thought, transmitted through language to others to influence their decisions and actions” (p. 7). So, if the call of conscience is discourse and the call creates movement, is it not rhetorical in nature and function? The rhetoric of the homeless Dasein persuades the fallen Dasein to seize its possibilities. Extant literature on the theme of rhetoric and call of conscience tries to show that rhetoric *can be* more than idle talk. For example, Hyde (1994) notes that rhetoric can be more than idle talk because it has the potential to sound the call of conscience for Self and Others; Black (1994) notes that rhetoric can be more than idle talk when it functions as an archaic form of conscience and creates the places where people are to be moved; Scult (1998) claims that rhetoric can be more than idle talk when
it listens to traditions and then speaks of new understandings to others; Zickmund (1997) notes that rhetoric can be more than idle talk when it guides the souls of others through speech; Zickmund (2007) posits that a rhetor can provide a clear space in which people can receive the call; Scult (1994) believes that rhetoric can avoid the trap of idle talk by providing a space in which an authentic experience of language can take place and so on and on. I claim that the call of conscience is rhetorical by virtue of its discursive nature and the function of movement that it performs. To ask how rhetoric can be more than idle talk is to suspect that rhetoric is idle talk in its present state. This refers back to the age old differentiation between the true art of rhetoric and the false art of rhetoric which is no doubt a worthy discussion. However, our project begins with the assumption that rhetoric is a true art or genuine discourse. As such, a more appropriate question for us to explore is how and why the call of conscience is a rhetorical transaction. We noted that the call is made in discourse which opens the possibility for it to be examined as rhetorical discourse and secondly we noted that the call creates movement towards authentic and genuine understandings, therefore, the call of conscience falls squarely in the realm of a rhetorical transaction. At this point, I further claim that not only is the call rhetorical discourse but it is also noble rhetoric which as Plato (2005) and Weaver (1985) both note, seeks to leave the called better off than before and creates power parity between the caller and the called. The homeless Dasein appeals to the fallen Dasein to take hold of its possibilities whatever they may be and thus the fallen Dasein is made better by the rhetoric of the homeless Dasein. And since absolute authenticity and absolute genuineness is not possible and no one mood dominates Dasein for long, the homeless Dasein and the fallen Dasein exist in tension and this tension creates power parity and
keeps the call alive with possibilities. Thus, the call of conscience is noble and genuine rhetoric.

The final reason that the call of conscience is rhetorical is because it emphasizes temporal understandings. The call asks Dasein to listen to what speaks for a matter in each moment. The role of rhetoric has always been to out the truth in contingent situations. Aristotle delineated three realms of knowledge: science; dialectic; and rhetoric. In the realm of science, both the premises and the conclusions are known for certain as in geometry and astronomy. In the realm of dialectic, conclusions are certain but the premises are probable as in ethics and politics. In the realm of rhetoric, both the premises and conclusions are uncertain and no judgment can be made about the matter without looking at the facts. This idea of “looking at the facts in order to make a judgment” corresponds to the idea of “seeing/hearing what speaks in each moment for a matter”. Dasein is a temporal being and as such Dasein’s knowledge is never fixed but always changing. When Dasein comports itself towards understanding the world, the entities within the world, or itself, it seeks a temporal understanding that is always open for revision. When we listen to what speaks for a matter, we are not binding matters in logically precise categories nor are we imposing our will upon matters. When we listen, we open the possibility of understanding not only ourselves but also everything around us. Of course, it is not possible to listen to all matters and here comes in the role of choices in determining the projects that we undertake. When a project becomes our own, essentially, our goal should be to listen to what the project has to say for itself. Hearing transforms a Dasein-centered view of the world so that Dasein does not violate what comes in its path. Hearing/understanding is a check on Dasein’s power. Heidegger
defines the world as existing in Dasein but to ensure that Dasein does not take such a view of the world to justify doing violence to the world and the entities within the world, Heidegger introduces the concept of hearing. By making hearing/understanding constitutive of Dasein, Heidegger incorporates the crucial ethical component which is neither religious nor biological but arises out of the nature of Dasein – a Being for whom its own Being is an issue. This of course points to the ethical sanction of rhetoric towards which all rhetoric must comport itself in order to be considered good or genuine rhetoric. Thus we see that the call of conscience is rhetorical in nature and function because it is discourse; it moves Dasein, and it emphasizes temporal understandings.

This chapter completes our analysis of the three constitutive elements of Dasein: discourse, moods, and understanding and the significance of these elements for rhetorical theory. The second chapter added the component of silence to rhetorical discourse; the third chapter found the rightful place of pathos in rhetorical theory, and the fourth chapter emphasized the role of hearing and understanding in rhetorical theory. Like the Chrysalis in the fable, we are always struggling to become something and though the Chrysalis turns into a butterfly and is done becoming, but only in death do Dasein’s possibilities end.
Chapter 5: Conclusion

Summary

The three research questions we ask in this project correspond to the three constitutive elements of Dasein. Each research question is presented at the beginning of each chapter summary below. Dasein is made up of discourse, moods, and understanding and we use the substance of Dasein to shed light on the substance of rhetoric which is logos, pathos, and ethos.

Rhetoric as Silence

In the chapter, Rhetoric as Silence, our research question is: How can Heidegger’s conception of discourse inform rhetorical theory so that our understanding of rhetoric grows richer and deeper? Towards this end, we clarify how concepts can be understood; define discourse; define silent discourse; explore how poetic discourse embodies the virtues of silence; and finally examine the role of silence in rhetorical discourse.

Concepts can be understood through definitions and as-structures. Genuine definitions have three aspects: basic experience (a non-theoretical experience of the phenomenon); guiding claim (what is said about the phenomenon); and a tendency towards intelligibility (new horizons of disclosure that are capable of being brought to language). Concepts can also be understood through as-structures: knowing things in accordance with the manner in which they are used.

In defining discourse, Heidegger follows the path of genuine definitions and first takes us back to the Ancient Greek experience of discourse; provides guiding claims about discourse; and finally discloses a richer and deeper horizon of meaning. The Ancient Greeks existed in discourse and Heidegger rehabilitates Aristotle’s definition so
that man is not the rational animal but the discoursing animal. The guiding claim about discourse offered by Heidegger is that genuine discourse has a three-part structure: the saying, what is said, and what is not yet said. What remains to be said is not arbitrary but hinted in what is said and it keeps alive the possibility of understanding the phenomena rather than binding it in reductive categories. The richer and deeper intelligibility that Heidegger provides about discourse is that discourse has two modes: speaking and keeping silent. Logically speaking, the idea that silence is an integral part of discourse seems contradictory. However, a close analysis of Heidegger’s concept of silence reveals that the idea of silence as a mode of discourse is indeed contradictory and therefore foundational. Laws of logic or thought dismiss contradictory ideas or statements as invalid but Heidegger shows that it is contradictions that keep things moving between dichotomies and that it is within such movement or play that the foundation of things is unveiled.

Heidegger does not view silence as the mere absence of speech or noise but notes that keeping silent is an essential possibility of discourse. Silence is an essential component of three-part structure of genuine discourse: the act of saying, what is said, and what is not yet said. Silence is valuable because it leaves room for something more to be said. Second, silence has an existential foundation. What Heidegger means is that silence is a choice in the same way that speaking is a choice because both speaking and silence can say something. The final idea in Heidegger’s (1962) definition of silence is that excessive chatter does not advance understanding, indeed it closes off possibilities by attempting to fix the concept or phenomenon in assertions, whereas silence allows the
possibility of understanding. Heidegger’s point is that silence is valuable because it leads to understanding.

Virtues of silence are embodied in poetic discourse. Heidegger’s conception of poetic discourse is not limited to verse poems, instead, for Heidegger, the opposite of poetic discourse is propositional discourse. Heidegger believes that propositional discourse fixes thinking into assertions that are held to be true independent of context and time and therefore is not genuine discourse. Everything can never be said, and therefore, darkness is not only inevitable but an essential component of knowledge, of light. In all the ways that propositional discourse is deficient, poetic discourse triumphs. According to Heidegger, the speech of genuine thinking is by nature poetic and the potency of language lies in poiesis. Close readings of Heidegger’s texts led us to the discovery of a three-step process through which discourse becomes poetic and therefore genuine. The first step is to bring something near: Scientific investigation of objects supposedly makes things come closer by demystifying their properties but Heidegger notes that the true nature of things does not get a hearing in scientific (or propositional) discourse. It is the poet who draws our attention to the true nature of things by shifting our angle to reveal deeper meanings. The second step is to see how the fourfold are gathered in the nearness; the fourfold are earth, sky, mortals, and divinities. In a thing, there is a gathering or a staying of the fourfold which reveals a symbiotic relationship between nature and culture. The final step that makes discourse poetic is that it allows the advent of truth. Heidegger notes that agreement has long been taken to be the essence of truth but truth is not agreement. For the Ancient Greeks, truth was unconcealment or aletheia and aletheia
happens when we take poetic measure of things. Poetic measure allows us to see things not as they are manifest but as they can be.

In rhetorical theory, much attention has been given to the speaking mode of discourse: The Sophists delineated the field of rhetoric as speeches, and traditionally, rhetoric has chiefly been conceived of as oratory. Heidegger (2009) defines rhetoric as “the possibility of seeing what at each moment speaks for a matter” (p. 78). To see what speaks for a matter, rhetoric goes “beyond what is simply given” (Heidegger, 2009, p. 80) and extracts something from the speaking itself, only then is it genuine. In other words, genuine rhetoric has the three-part structure of genuine discourse or poetic discourse: the saying, what is said, and what is not yet said. Historically, rhetoric has been conceived of as a separate discipline from poetics but Heidegger breaks down these hard divisions by noting that all genuine discourse is poetic, thus genuine rhetoric is also poetic. We end this chapter by briefly examining a relatively modern rhetorical artifact, a great American speech, in which poetics and rhetoric come together to create genuine discourse: The I Have a Dream Speech. King addresses the matter of freedom and equality by speaking of only the ideals on which our country was founded. At the same time, he discourses in silence about the laws that need to be changed or formulated to correspond more closely to our values. He does not fix the idea of freedom and equality in any one law but leaves open the possibility that if we stay fast to the promises made by our forefathers then we will continue to travel the road of absolute freedom and absolute equality. King chooses to stay silent about which precise actions or which carefully worded policies will guarantee freedom because he knows that in silence something can more can be said and that silence will allow possibilities to unfold. King’s rhetoric is genuine discourse.
because of its three part structure: he speaks; he speaks of values and promises, of right and wrong, of justice and equality; and he discourses in silence about which actions and which laws will make good on the promise of freedom and equality as each generation is going to have to work that out for themselves. Thus, we answered our research question and found a place for Heidegger’s concept of silence in rhetorical tradition.

Rhetoric as Care

In the chapter, Rhetoric as Care, our research question is: How can Heidegger’s insights on the moods of Dasein shed light on the pathetic appeals of rhetoric? Towards this end, we examine the substance of Care and we find that Care is made-up of Thrownness, Fallenness, and Projection. These three elements of Care correspond to the past, present, and future of Dasein respectively. Further, each aspect of Care is associated with a mood. To understand how Dasein is Care, we take each aspect of Care and examine the associated mood. Finally, we discuss how the value of pathetic appeals in rhetoric changes as a result of Heidegger’s analysis of Dasein’s moodal existence.

The first aspect of Care is thrownness or facticity: we are born into certain conditions that we did not choose or that preceded our existence and these conditions make us who we are and influence how we orient ourselves in the world. The mood associated with thrownness is curiosity. We are with-World through moods in the same way that we are with-Others through discourse. Just like discourse is fundamental to Dasein, moods also cannot be subtracted from Dasein. Moods disclose our Dasein to us; moods show how we are in the world as a whole; and moods let things matter to us. However, not all emotions are moods, only those emotions that constitute Dasein are moods: curiosity, ambiguity, anxiety, and guilt. These moods cycle in Dasein until death.
Our thrownness gives rise to curiosity about the world so that we want to see the world. However, not all seeing is equal. Heidegger distinguishes between seeing for the sake of seeing and seeing for the sake of encountering. Only when we see to encounter the world that seeing will reveal deeper and richer meanings.

The second aspect of Care is Fallenness or Alienation. Fallenness is the adoption of readymade perspectives that are easily available to us. Instead of knowing things authentically, we become conditioned to respond to our environment in popular or even rebellious ways which Heidegger calls the “they” perspectives, idle-talk, chatter or fallenness. Though fallenness makes a communal life possible but it robs us of the chance to know something authentically. Fallenness gives rise to two moods: ambiguity and anxiety. Ambiguity refers the problem of our inability to distinguish what is true from what is said about the matter which leads to inaction in the face of exigencies. Anxiety refers to the feeling of homelessness in our fallenness which is actually a productive mood because it moves us towards authenticity and genuineness.

The final aspect of Care is Existence or Projection which refers to our possibilities. Our possibilities emerge out of our thrownness but they remain indefinite and null until a choice is made to take-up one possibility. The mood most closely associated with projection is guilt. For Heidegger, guilt is not something that can be remedied because it is constitutive of how we are in the world. We have guilt over not actualizing our possibilities and this guilt calls towards an authentic and genuine knowledge of the World and Self.

Now that we have elucidated how Dasein is Care and why Dasein’s existence is moodal, we are in a position to turn our attention to how Heidegger’s insights about our
moodal existence can contribute to a better understanding of the pathetic appeal of rhetoric. *Pathē* have been misunderstood in Platonic and Aristotelian thought. Though Plato viewed emotions as something lofty that would put one in touch with the divine but ultimately he was suspicious of pathetic appeals because he feared its misuse in the hands of an average citizen and therefore wanted to reserve pathetic appeals only for the use of the philosopher king. Aristotle acknowledged the usefulness of pathos in convincing an audience of non-experts but he too was suspicious of pathetic appeals and wanted to give primacy to logical appeals. From Aristotle onwards, the study of affects has been relegated to fields such as psychology that studies the emotions and the mental life of individuals whereas philosophy and science have mostly ignored affects. Heidegger rectifies the situation by providing a more robust view of emotions. In Heidegger’s theory, moods are not emotions that move the soul towards the divine or a device for manipulation and distortion or individualistic orientations towards the world but provide a primary orientation to the world. Thus we answered our research question: Heidegger gives pathos a much more central role in rhetorical theory than rhetorical tradition has done so far.

**Rhetoric as Understanding**

In the chapter Rhetoric as Understanding, the research question we ask is: How do Heidegger’s insights on hearing as a way to self-understand shed light on the ethical appeal of rhetoric. Towards this end, we define understanding; note that understanding can either move in the direction of understanding the world and the entities within the world or move towards self-understanding; and finally note that the call of conscience is rhetorical in nature and function and acts as a check on Dasein’s power.
Heidegger defines understanding in terms of possibilities. The possibilities of Dasein are definite, not necessary, and exist in harmony with actualities. Understanding can move in two directions: [1] understanding the world and the entities within the world and [2] self-understanding or understanding Dasein. We examine both directions in terms of authentic understandings and genuine understandings. In understanding the world and the entities within the world, Heidegger emphasizes authentic understanding (the ones derived from our experiences) as a challenge to traditional epistemology which posits that the world can be understood apart from Dasein. Heidegger notes that all understandings which separate the World and Dasein are inauthentic because the world is understood only in terms of Dasein’s involvement with it. For Heidegger, authentic understandings are achieved through the fore-structure of understanding (fore-having, fore-sight, and fore-conception). Heidegger imposes the double requirement of authenticity and genuineness to emphasize that not all experiential understandings are equal and credible. Genuine, in Heidegger speak, is that which is not false.

The other direction that understanding can take is self-understanding or understanding Dasein. For authentic self-understanding, Heidegger introduces the concept of sight as transparency. Self-understanding can be authentic when the fore-structure of Being is made transparent or put before our eyes. The role of sight in self-understanding is to bring into light the traditional \(mis\)understandings of Being in order to clear the path for a more phenomenological understanding of Dasein. By sight, Heidegger does not mean perceiving with bodily eyes or a non-sensory awareness but a \textit{clearedness} that brings the fore-structure of Dasein into focus. Although, transparency of the fore-structure can aid us in understanding Dasein authentically but ultimately “sight”
must be left behind in order to attain a genuine understanding of Dasein. A genuine self-understanding can be achieved in hearing the call of conscience. Heidegger does not believe that conscience can be understood properly through theological or scientific explanations but through the structure of Care. The three aspects of Care (thrownness, fallenness, and projection) reveal who calls; who hears the call; how is the call sounded; and what is the purpose of the call. The answer to the first question, who calls, is related to the answer to the second question, who hears, therefore, we examine them together: The called is the “fallen” Dasein and the caller is the “homeless” Dasein. The fallen and the homeless Dasein co-exist in tension within each Dasein. The other two questions, how is the call made and what is the purpose of the call, are also related. The mode of the call reveals its purpose and the purpose of the call is fulfilled in its mode. Conscience discourses in the mode of keeping silent; the call is not made in speech acts because it is from such public chatter that Dasein is being called away. Therefore, to make more speech acts would be counterproductive. Instead, the call quiets the impulse to busily talk and it makes Dasein reticent instead of talkative. It is in such silence that Dasein hears. Thus the job of the homeless Dasein is to create a quiet space that is empty of idle chatter. Why is such a space needed? The answer to this question brings us to the purpose of the call. The purpose of the call is self-understanding; in silence, something about Dasein comes into the clearing. This is how the mode of the call and the purpose of the call are connected.

What do Heidegger’s insights about hearing as a way to self-understand mean for rhetorical theory? Of all the concepts discussed in this chapter, we focus on hearing because hearing is synonymous with understanding and understanding (along with
discourse and moods) is what constitutes Dasein. Heidegger does not make explicit connections between “hearing the call of conscience” and rhetoric but such a connection follows naturally from Heidegger’s analysis of Dasein. Specifically, we examine how the call of conscience is rhetorical in nature and function. First, as Heidegger notes, the call of conscience is a call and therefore, it falls within the realm of discourse. Second, a movement takes place from absorption into the “they” perspectives and tranquility of being fallen to anxiety over being fallen and guilt over not seizing our possibilities. Third, “the possibility of hearing what speaks in each moment for a matter” (Heidegger, 2009, p. 78) points to the role of rhetoric in outing contingent truth. These three ideas put the call of conscience very much in the realm of rhetoric. No matter how rhetoric is defined, there are three things that cannot be eliminated from rhetoric without doing damage to our conception of rhetoric: rhetoric is a type of discourse, the purpose of rhetoric is movement, and rhetoric outs the truth in contingent situations. Thus we see that Heidegger mitigates a Dasein centered view of the world with the concept of hearing and understanding so that Dasein does not violate what it encounters in the world. Hearing/understanding is a check on Dasein’s power which of course points to the ethical sanction of rhetoric towards which all rhetoric must comport itself in order to be considered noble or genuine rhetoric.

Thus, we see that the substance of Dasein: discourse, moods, and understanding is in perfect correspondence with the substance of rhetoric: logos, pathos, and ethos.
As you may recall, we set out to systematize Heidegger’s contribution to the paradigm of “rhetoric as a mode of human understanding” and this study makes a significant contribution in that direction. Heidegger’s insights on the nature of Dasein have clarified the nature and function of the three proofs or rhetoric.

**Conclusions**

This study arrives at two conclusions: it provides a new vision of power parity and it offers a view of logos as founded upon pathos.

**A new Vision of Power Parity**

The ideal of “good” rhetoric has always been to create power parity so that the speaker and the audience have an equal chance to move each other but the matter under discussion has not been included in our vision of rhetorical discourse that is power neutral. Brockriede (1972) compares rhetoric to love and states, “Lovers differ radically from rapists and seducers in their intentions. Whereas the rapist and seducer seek to establish a position of superior power, the lover wants power parity” (p. 10). But before
there can be power parity between the speaker and the audience, there needs to be power parity between the speaker and the matter at hand so that the matter also has an equal chance of moving the speaker. In other words, “good” rhetoric exists in the tension between the matter, the speaker, and the audience. Bryant (1953) comes close to such a vision of rhetoric when he states that “rhetorical function is the function of adjusting ideas to people and people to ideas” (413). However Bryant focuses on how the rhetor presents an idea to an audience so that the idea is simplified and then people are moved towards it. But Bryant falls short of explicitly noting the tension created by the idea itself and the force that it exerts upon the speaker. Once the speaker has given himself/herself over to such a tension and has “heard” the case made by the matter, then the speaker can ethically adjust ideas to people and people to ideas. Booth (1970) comes the closest when he describes the rhetorical stance as “…a stance which depends on discovering and maintaining a proper balance among three elements: the available arguments about the subject itself; the interests and peculiarities of the audience; and the voice, the implied character, of the speaker” (p. 27). Booth’s definition of the rhetorical stance is closely aligned with our study because it balances the three elements of the subject matter, the audience and the speaker but when Booth refers to the “available arguments about the subject itself” it sounds dangerously close to “fallen” discourse. Heidegger’s point is that matter has a being and if we tarry, we will hear what speaks for a matter. In order to rectify this situation so that a definition of rhetoric acknowledges the Being of the matter and the force that the Being of the matter exerts upon a speaker, I offer the following definition of rhetoric: *Rhetoric is that discourse in which movement takes place when, in each moment, the matter and the audience have roughly the same chance to influence the
speaker. How can a matter exert force upon the speaker? Such tension is felt in all genuine discourse that is oriented towards understanding. In the *I have a Dream* speech, is not the matter of equality exerting force upon King? In the *Gettysburg Address*, is not the matter of the union exerting force upon Lincoln? Lincoln and King both “hear” the matter, acknowledge the force it exerts upon them, and out of such tension, “good” rhetoric emerges. When we listen/read the *I have a Dream* speech today, the matter of equality still exerts force upon us but in different way, in a way that addresses the exigencies of our time. The matter gets a fresh hearing because King discourses in silence about which laws and policies will fulfill the promise of equality. Silent discourse creates that space in which a matter gets a fresh chance to be heard every time a speech is replayed or a piece reread. Rhetoric needs silence so that the possibilities of the matter will continue to unfold in each moment and matter will be liberated from idle talk. In essence, for rhetoric to be “good”, we need to incorporate the idea of power parity not just between the speaker and the audience but also between the speaker and the matter under discussion so that the matter has an equal chance to move the rhetor.

**Logos Founded upon Pathos**

Secondly, this study concludes that the primary proof of rhetoric is not logos but pathos. Heidegger demonstrates how moodal knowledge is ontologically prior to rational knowledge and thus forms the foundation of all knowledge. Moods cannot be subtracted from Dasein and therefore our primary orientation to the world is based not on rational knowledge but on our moods. Heidegger further outlines those moods (curiosity, ambiguity, anxiety, and guilt) that form the substance of Dasein and keep us moving towards authenticity and genuineness. It has always been the job of rhetoric to out
contingent truth and then to actualize that truth but how exactly these two jobs are performed is not always clear. Heidegger lightens this darkness by noting that we are with-World through moods so that moods give us valid information about the world and ourselves prior to any rational contemplation. So, in essence, moods create knowledge. Then rhetoric takes that knowledge and grounds it back in the body so that it can have meaning and can move us either psychologically or physically. (Both types of movements need a body.) Therefore the suspicion of pathetic appeals in rhetoric is unwarranted.

Not only is the primary proof pathos, but logos is founded upon pathos. We learned in the previous chapters that our existence is moodal and those moods, along with discourse and understanding, make-up our Being. As such, pathos can never be an ancillary argument. Since moods are ontologically prior to reason, then logos must necessarily be founded upon pathos. To elucidate the significance of this Heideggerian insight for rhetorical theory, we will draw from the research of four scholars: Crosswhite, Grassi, Kisiel, and Gross to draw three conclusions about the growing recognition of the dominant role of pathos in rhetorical theory that Heidegger awakens us to rather than the subservient role that it was assigned to by tradition. I say “growing recognition” because each conclusion chips away at rhetorical tradition until the last conclusion destroys it. Of course, the term “destroy” is used here in a Heideggerian sense of waking something from the slumber or fallenness of conventional meanings.

The first conclusion we draw is that a strict division between the types of proofs is possible in theory only. In theory, it can be said that logical appeals form logos and emotional appeals form pathos but in practice, the two merge together. Crosswhite (1989)
believes that people who attempt to distinguish between emotions and reason misunderstand both and he believes that the reason for this misconception is the incorrect view of emotions held in psychology and cognitive science. He states:

What is an emotion according to this perception? It is all of the following:
(1) A psychological event ontologically independent of our cognitive activities, especially logical reasoning and argumentation, but also perception, imagination etc. (2) An event whose essential effect is to interfere with pure cognition, reasoning, argumentation, and to decrease their power. (3) A purely subjective event which allows analysis and description independently of any account of the way the emotion is connected to an experience of the world (p. 29).

If Crosswhite is correct in his analysis of the misinterpretation of emotions, then Heidegger has already destroyed all such misconceptions. As we noted in the chapter, Rhetoric as Care, moods are an authentic way of encountering the world that is ontologically prior to any rational contemplation and such moodal knowledge is not inferior to any other form of knowledge, indeed, it is the most authentic. For elucidation, let’s examine a speech and see if proofs are as distinct in praxis as they are in theory.

Sojourner Truth, an African-American abolitionist and a women’s rights activist, gave a speech titled *Ain’t I a Woman?* at the 1851 Ohio Women’s Right’s Convention for women’s suffrage. Her first point is that women are strong enough and she gives an account of how she has ploughed and planted, borne thirteen children and watched them being taken from her, and endured lashes. Her second point is that women are smart enough and she makes a joke about not knowing the word “intellect” and the audience has to supply the word. She further points out that “if my cup won’t hold a pint, and yours holds a quart, wouldn’t you be mean to not let me have my little half measure full?” Her final point is that women are virtuous enough because Jesus came from a woman and a God; man had nothing to do with it. Now, let’s analyze her speech to find
the three different proofs. In the first point, she is mixing all three proofs: she makes us feel for her plight because she bore lashes and watched her children being sold into slavery. At the same time, this is also an ethical appeal because we immediately feel that such treatment of any human being is not morally right. But this is also a logical appeal because when we measure the strength it takes to endure what she has endured, we do not find her physically inferior to any man. A similar thing occurs in her second point: she jokes about her lack of intellect (appeal to emotions), then gives a very logical argument about pints and quarts, and throws in the ethical element of giving people their due even if they are not equal. This brief analysis reveals that in practice, appeals come as a whole package and any attempt to separate them seems theoretical at best and artificial at worst. Thus logos cannot be the primary proof of rhetoric because it is not possible to keep the appeals distinct in praxis. Crosswhite (1989) further notes that rhetoric is a combination of appeals and Grassi (1976) observes that the three different proofs of rhetoric are interdependent on each other. Agosta (2010) concludes that the conventional account of affects “is cleared away by and does not survive a reading of Heidegger’s volume 18 on book II of Aristotle’s Rhetoric” (p. 333).

The second conclusion we draw is that the three proofs of rhetoric correspond to the three elements of Dasein and to give primacy to any one proof is to make rhetoric and Dasein unbalanced. Kisiel (2000) seems to mention this correspondence of Dasein and rhetoric in passing in his essay on rhetorical politics but I do not think he realizes the significance of Heidegger’s discovery for rhetoric. This is overwhelming proof that rhetoric is not merely a tool for persuasion or a system of training orators; rhetoric is part of our humanity and is a fundamental mode of human understanding. Rhetoric is made-
up of the same substance that Dasein is made of. Heidegger discovered in 1927, while writing *Being and Time*, that the three elements that cannot be separated from Dasein are discourse, moods, and understanding and that these elements correspond perfectly to what Aristotle discovered so long ago about rhetoric, that rhetoric is composed of logos, pathos, and ethos. Logos, though traditionally translated as reason, essentially means word or discourse, and Heidegger first draws our attention to this translation in his Aristotle lecture to shift us away from the emphasis on logic demanded by the scientific rhetoric dominant in his time period. Dasein exists in discourse which matches perfectly with logos as one proof of rhetoric. Moods, as our earlier investigation revealed, is not just emotions but a fundamental way of being in the world which again corresponds perfectly with pathos as another proof of rhetoric. Understanding demands that we hear so that we do not violate whatever comes in our path which again corresponds perfectly with ethos as a proof of rhetoric. So once again, we see that logos could not be the primary proof of rhetoric as no one aspect of Dasein or rhetoric makes much sense without the other two. The substance of rhetoric comprises of the same elements as Dasein and therefore Dasein is in the world rhetorically, that is, in discourse, through moods, and towards understanding. As Heidegger states:

Rhetoric is nothing less than the discipline in which the self elaboration of Dasein is expressly executed. Rhetoric is no less than the elaboration of Dasein in its concreteness, the hermeneutic of Dasein itself (as quoted in Gross, 2005, p. 1).

The final tradition-destroying conclusion of our analysis is that logos is founded upon pathos. Gross (2005) notes that Heidegger’s interpretation of Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* allows him to reverse the philosophical hierarchy inherited from Plato in which passions obscure the logic of good judgment. The ground that Aristotle asked for (“I must have
ground under my feet”) in opposition to Plato’s Forms is found in pathos. Gross (2005) notes that for Heidegger, “…pathos is the ground of rational discourse (logos) and not simply its supplement (p. 7). Gadamer too thinks that Enlightenment thinking underestimates the role of affects in motivating the human mind (as noted in Gross, 2005). Heidegger shatters centuries of interpretation of Aristotle’s Rhetoric: Tradition believes that Aristotle looked down upon pathetic appeals and thought that emotional appeals warp a court case. Specifically, Aristotle is cited as having said that using emotional appeals is like using a crooked ruler to measure something. But as Gross (2005) notes, “Heidegger finds a very different Aristotle in book 2, where pathos provides the very condition for the possibility of judgment, or krisis…The pathe are no mere afterthought. They are, one could say, before-thought” (p. 30). There are two reasons for such a fundamental reversal: 1] pathos is the connecting point between social and physical phenomena and 2] pathos draws the logos out of doxa. First, the pathetic bridge between social and physical phenomena: Social phenomena are the changeable human habits, skills, and institutions whereas physical phenomena are subject to precise definitions and knowledge. Heidegger believes that Aristotle’s most profound insight is that the social is grounded in physical categories with pathos acting as a bridge between the two. As Gross (2005) explains:

Being-moving – the heart of rhetorical thought – necessarily exceeds the rational psyche because people have bodies of a certain sort. We are there, we grow and decompose, we can be damaged or excited, mobilized or dispersed…Being moved in a human way is thus a continuous function of physiology and shared minds (p. 13).

In other words, movement is possible because we have a body and our body does not exist in isolation because to be is to be with others. As Heidegger (1962) notes, Dasein is
essentially Dasein-with. But Dasein also has a body which cannot be ignored as purely rational discourse attempts to do. Being-moved somewhere, either physically or socially, has consequences for our body in the world. For example, discourse that moves us towards racism has an influence on our mind (physiological) which then leads to social consequences such discrimination in jobs and housing, which then influences what happens to our bodies (physiological). Therefore, social phenomena cannot be separated from physical phenomena; the physis and the polis are interconnected and the connecting element is pathos because we belong with others primarily through pathos. Pathos are not abstract – there is no such things as pure fear detached from a body:

    Rather pathe indicate possible ways of being-moved that tie humans in a unique way to their embodiment. They do so not by providing a definite material body upon which to work, but rather by determining the possibilities for moving about in a shared world (Gross, 2005, p. 26).

Heidegger (1962) believes that we are primordially in the world through pathos and this world is always one that we share with others in discourse. Remember that Dasein exists in discourse equiprimordially with moods and understanding. Thus, Heidegger (2009) argues, pathos serves as the foundation of logos or social discourse. Heidegger also notes that pathos draws logos from doxa. Doxa is of course, conventional meanings/idle talk/they perspectives/fallenness. Heidegger (2009) notes that doxa is not to be viewed pejoratively as doxa is how are with each other in our everydayness. However, Heidegger (2009) warns that the seductive power of doxa is strong. But the mood of anxiety calls us towards authenticity. Without anxiety, we would carry on in apathy and unexamined belief. Doxa is always subject to revision because all our knowledge is contingent and unfinished. Therefore, we must constantly examine our knowledge and convince each other of our contingent truths. To think that we can have probabilistic answers without
pathos is a fantasy of statisticians that Heidegger destroys. As Heidegger (2009) notes, in
the doxa a bringing-to-language is always ready to spring forth. Gross (2005) explains:

But logos cannot spring forth from belief like the Christ child – conceived
in abstraction and born into a divine plan. Something mundane must
motivate this event in language and give it human voice. Logos is nothing
without a human body and a shared situation in which it can be heard, no
matter how messy such practicalities may be (p. 33).

In other words, knowledge needs a concrete ground and this concreteness it finds in
pathos. Without pathos, belief would remain abstract, unable to move us or provide any
kind of judgment. For example if someone shouts fire, reason alone would not move us
but because fire produces an affect of fear in us, we are mobilized individually and
communally, we ask, “what needs to be done?” We are moved because fear moves us,
our bodies are threatened; we are not moved by some abstract idea of fire. Thus it is
pathos that provides the movement necessary to draw logos out of doxa and therefore,
once again, we see that logos is founded upon pathos.

Implications

One implication of this study is that it invites us to shift our focus from speech
acts to “silent acts” in discourse. In the West, silence has negative connotations; it implies
non-action, guilt, or oppression. We are encouraged to speak out against the budget cuts,
hire lawyers to argue against any assumption of guilt, and raise our voices against
discrimination. As a result, we have evolved into a culture of excess messages. Though
this is an oversimplification and there may be other causes of excess messages such as
the growth of communication technology, but “silent acts” cannot be quantified and
digitalized and therefore “silent acts” may be a way of disturbing the hegemony of
technological communication and a way of actualizing personal and group agency. The
possibilities of silence as a rhetorical strategy have not been fully realized, therefore, future scholarship can perhaps clarify the role of silence in resistance strategies and in maximizing the available freedoms within our society.

A final implication of this study is that the field of rhetoric and hermeneutics can both benefit from the insights in each field. In Communication Studies, hermeneutics is considered a separate field from rhetoric. One focuses on understanding and the other on persuasion or cooperation, but such divisions are unnecessary and unproductive. To communicate understandings to others, knowledge of rhetorical principles can be helpful and in order to out contingent truth in a rhetorical situation, knowledge of hermeneutical principles might be helpful. Therefore, such artificial and reductive divisions of discourse should be avoided so that we may more fully realize the possibilities of discourse.
References


Semiotext[e].


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