

**Liberty and Truth**  
**– Fragments about the “Cave-myth”–**

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**Motto:**

*“Whatever happens with historical human  
beings comes in each case from a decision  
about the essence of truth that happened  
long ago and is never up to humans alone.”*

**Martin Heidegger<sup>1</sup>**

*„Philosophy is destined to deal with the  
Deepest and most disturbing questions.  
It would hardly survive, if they were  
definitively solved.”*

**József Hajós<sup>2</sup>**

**Keywords:** truth, liberty, cave-myth, essence of truth, search for truth, *paidéia*, *aletheia*, openness, language and philosophy, poetic language, hermeneutics of natural sciences, scientific truth

**Abstract**

This study, related to Plato’s cave-myth, attempts to open up the meaning and existential importance of the essence of truth by focusing on the interdependence of liberty and truth. It points out that the essence of truth is liberty and vice versa, the essence of liberty is truth, for without the

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<sup>1</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Plato’ Doctrine of Truth*. English translation by Thomas Sheehan, in: Martin Heidegger, *Pathmarks*, ed. William McNeill, Cambridge, UK, and New York, Cambridge University Press, 1998, p. 182. (The motto in the Hungarian version of this study was taken from the following edition: Martin Heidegger, “Platón tanítása az igazság lényegéről”, in: idem., *Útjelzők*, Budapest, Osiris, 2003, p. 224.)

<sup>2</sup> József Hajós, “Ötlések” (Ideas), in *Színkép – A Romániai Magyar Szó Melléklete* (Spectrum – The Supplement of the “Hungarian Word of Romania”), 28–29<sup>th</sup> June, 2003, p. A.

liberty and openness of search there can be no (artistic, scientific or philosophical) truth at all. Far from giving a final definition of this relationship, the paper illustrates the way in which these two essential components of human life constantly refer to, question and open up one another, showing that, according to the Heideggerian motto: "Whatever happens with historical human beings comes in each case from a decision about the essence of truth that happened long ago and is never up to humans alone."

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### 1.

One may wonder why is it that we, human beings are always inclined or even "compelled" to think about and grasp notions like truth, good, beauty etc. only in contrast with their conceptual counterparts: untruth, evil, ugliness etc. These conceptual opposites constantly refer to one another, and eventually they prove to be continuously interlinked, each notion of these pairs indispensably requiring its counterpart.

The question asked above does neither refer to how the mentioned oppositions are divided for example in a "proper" or a "non-proper" way... nor does it try to find or discover a way to surpass somehow "dialectically" the polarities. The question's aim is to make understandable the interdependence of the opposites as opposites, and above all to throw light on the ontological source where we may possibly find their origin too.

Therefore those roots would be interesting, from which and from where springs the *intermediarity* – and not the commonness, commonality – of the opposites: truth and falsity, truth and untruth; opposites which belong together, moreover are interdependent. These roots later on decide the counterparts' historical fate.

But this source, of course, is probably deeper and beyond any kind of "theory of science", epistemology or logical formalism. For, as Martin Heidegger formulates as well: such a question actually refers to the *essence of truth*.

According to the "title" these fragmentary sentences would treat however "liberty" *as well as* "truth", wouldn't they? Moreover the title states the relationship "between" them with an "and", that is, exactly as "and". But what does really mean – first of all and actually – to treat/to think about "liberty"? And, likewise, what does it mean at all – again first of all or in the first place – to regard "truth"?

However, if we really consider all these questions – as questions! –, we may immediately find out that to think about “liberty” actually means to investigate – for its own possibilities – the “truth” related to it, respectively, together with and by this investigation to operate “truth” in a very essential sense!

And if we have considered this as well, then it may probably occur that we cannot in fact “treat” truth otherwise than as the operation and “assertion” of liberty itself; operation and assertion divided in a determined way and very much *asserted*!

In this way it may strike the eye from the beginning that the “and” present in the main title is not a simple “conjunction” – which therefore would “serve” for connecting some notions “with” it<sup>1</sup> –; on the contrary: it is the problematising-thematising connecting-name of the interconnected intercommunication of liberty and truth.

Therefore, according to all these, “*Liberty and Truth*” in the title tells that liberty and truth belonging to one another do belong historically to our own selves or our existence – and through this – to existence in general too, as specifically our own existential possibilities, as question, respectively as provoking difficulty.

According to these: we would belong to our (existential) possibilities as belonging to ourselves in the expressed question/case of liberty and truth; we would belong to existence – and existence to us as well – placed into these notions and “contained” by them in an accentuated and questioning way...

We have heard for a long time and frequently: truth is the benefactor and ally of liberty. It is also frequently said that, on the contrary, being in the possession of truth often ensures the domination over others... And also that: truth exactly liberates! It may not be accidental that nowadays the renamed and “operationalised” collective name of liberty(s) is “justice”<sup>2</sup>...

We obviously often hear that: neither liberty is boundless arbitrariness, nor truth is absolute or everlasting... That is, liberty is delimited by non-liberty or the sham-liberty of arbitrariness and truth is

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<sup>1</sup> Say: we connect – and this actually always remains an external connection – a problem of “speciality” (liberty), belonging to the domains of “political philosophy”, “moral philosophy”, or “philosophy of law”, with another “speciality” problem (truth), this time an “epistemological” one.

<sup>2</sup> There is here a pun that cannot be rendered in English. In Hungarian “justice” is derived from the same stem as “truth”.

delimited by untruth, falsehood and the historicity of truth. In other words: these make the two notions “relative”.

Truth and liberty bear – usually with a reconciled dejection – the not quite meaningful attribute of relativity rather in relation to themselves, their own *imperfection* and not in relation with one another. Consequently they relate to – more precisely they are compared to – one another as being “relative”; obviously this relationship is “relative” as well...

Therefore when, all of a sudden, Heidegger thought of showing the essence of truth as being expressly and definitely in liberty, in the essence of liberty, this has not really caused an uproar.<sup>1</sup> For, between the many relative things everything always finds its similarly relative place shortly and easily. That is to say: it gets lost.

It is therefore a question, whether truth and liberty can be defined at all as relation(s)/relationship(s), respectively attribute-like state(s), or they rather are – in a more profound sense – the existence-like divisions of belonging to one another, respectively of belonging to (the) existence.

## 2.

The tale of Plato’s allegory of the cave is about education, according to its main theme, or, to be more precise, about the *paideia*.<sup>2</sup> Meanwhile and to the same extent the myth is about truth as well, and, as it can be proved, about liberty, too...

For here education is outlined as the “art of bending the soul”, which – captivating the entire soul – orientates the abilities and “organ” present in everyone’s mind towards the Idea of Good. By this it makes able for the soul to contemplate the being and the being’s brightest core, moreover to reside perseveringly at this core from now on.

However, the *paideia* here clearly outlines the absorption in truth and at the same time it outlines this also as **absorption in liberty!** Actually there is more than this. Here truth and liberty are not only devised as being in some kind of eurhythmic parallelism; they are presented as being interlaced, interwoven, the one supposing/questioning

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<sup>1</sup> It has caused by no means as much uproar as for example the Heideggerian thought of the *aletheia*, notion connected also with the issue of truth.

<sup>2</sup> See Plato, *Az állam. Részletek* (The Republic. Excerpts), selected, introduced and annotated by Sándor Pál, Budapest, Gondolat Publishing House, 1968, pp. 194–198.

the other, and/but at the same time they increase and complete one another.

Nevertheless, the cave myth – at least seemingly – presents and narrativizes liberty as a kind of “condition” for truth, more precisely as its “milieu”. The people chained since their childhood at first are at the mercy of those who, using the firelight from behind the scenes, confine their perception to the illusory truths of the shadow world. On the other hand (their) liberty – namely (their) liberation from the chains, which is quite casual and it does not depend on the chained persons themselves or it has an “educational” (*paideuticos*) aim – will practically be an “appropriate” milieu for truth. Later on the liberated individuals encounter the beings and get to know them “in” this environment, this cognitive process being actually orientated toward truth.

At first, of course, the search for truth is not directed towards the things themselves, but towards the light. In the beginning this is the firelight, then, gradually, it becomes the “true” light, that of the Sun. Only in sunlight things appear in their truth; all that is truth and true or, on the contrary, is shadow, illusion and falsehood is compared to it and measured by it.

True enough, in the myth liberty itself consists at first only in the possibilities to turn round, to move... This, however, is a decisive bearing as regards the matter of truth. For this only has made clear that, though in the cave some things *can be regarded as being true without* this liberty – that means, while being chained –, there is not **and there cannot be at all** any actual truth without freedom!

There is not and there cannot be truth exactly because one does not – cannot – turn round and “move”. That is to say, because there is not and there cannot be: *search for truth!*

Here therefore liberty belongs to, or – and this is probably even more important – is interweaved with truth in the first place as the possibility and prerequisite of the search for truth. Without coexistence with liberty there can be no truth at all; may this truth be defined, conceived and asserted as “rightness”, “appropriateness” or even as *aletheia*, as unconcealment.

This therefore means that when we *search for truth* in a certain fundamental sense we are already “at” truth. For without this search no “knowledge”, “truth” etc. can be born, can exist or, if it does exist, it lacks all sense. But it is also clear that the name of this searchingly existing-in-truth, being-in-truth is no other than: *liberty!*

The “search for truth” – more narrowly, “specifically” called “cognition”, or even “investigation”, that is: the search for knowledge – is not merely an accidental or external prerequisite of truth, but it is precisely its constant source, component and definite coefficient. Without this probably there is no “truth” at all that can be obtained.

Therefore liberty – as the being-in-truth constituted together with the search for knowledge and truth – is at the same time precisely a continuous (internal) “component” of truth as well. On the contrary, for example the stupidity of “omniscience” consists exactly in the fact that such a person “could know everything”, however, he could never know that he “knows” at all. For “to know” one needs exactly to experience the **knowledge of not-knowing** that is constituted only during the search of truth. And this is not characteristic to the “omniscient” person. For he necessarily always knows everything *ab ovo*... Otherwise he would not be called “omniscient”. The situation is the same with the immortal too: such a person “does never die”, but meanwhile he never lives a moment at all.

Consequently things like “truth” and “liberty” exist only in and through the existence of that finite – *mortal* – being, which, exactly *because* of this, has a relationship full of risks with existence...

Of course, the situation is the same with “falsity”, too. “Falsity”, untruth also acquires its meaning and its (dangerous) weight only *in and from* the being-in-truth constituted in and through the search for truth. However, all this indicates that being-in-truth is not simply outlined in the mere opposition with untruth, but it appears as real being-in-untruth.

But this is far from referring us to some conceptual or other kind of “dialectic”; it rather sends us to a more profound *openness*. Namely, the *openness of search!*

The search and the openness that is constituted and outlined through it and in it – therefore asserted, articulated and never without a direction – give on the one hand the weight of liberty and its real “ontological” dimensions, on the other hand its relevance related to truth. Of course, this holds good vice versa as well.

Therefore the question arises: is there something like that which is usually called “one’s own truth”, “self-truth” or “truth according to one’s own conviction” etc.? For each of these expressions actually means that far from asking the question referring to the essence of truth we close or suspend this same inquiry! In the same way we would suspend communication by using “private languages”. For, when Pilate asks Jesus, “What is truth?”, in fact he receives no answer because the

question has no “room” or “space”. Not only because the question of “truth” is asked during the trial of a prisoner, but mainly because the inquiry is made in the atmosphere of **already decided**, formed and outlined convictions etc. In what regards the belief that the so-called “self-truths” are harmless for one another – this harmlessness also “constituting plurality” –, it would probably be better to consider that as much as Pilate contributed to Jesus’ death, so much contributed Jesus’ conviction to the destruction of Pilate’s Roman Empire.<sup>1</sup>

However, “truth” is not to be found where knowledge, already formed convictions, “epistemological” evidences or petrified beliefs exist, but only where and when the question referring to/searching for the essence of truth *can* work and *is working*. Consequently truth exists where liberty is working as well; that is, where liberty can be asked and can happen with regard to (the) truth.

Therefore the question referring to the essence of truth actually is the question of that liberty with and through which truth exists and works; that is: through which the question of liberty itself is problematised, more precisely thematised in its weight related to truth.

In other words: the essence of truth – leading through and back to the essence of liberty – is in fact the explicit *inquiry* that constitutes the essence and structure of liberty itself. How else would/could (the) liberty, (the) truth and (the meaning of) existence find each other in interrelation? If, however, – and how else could it possibly be? – the strength and weight of the questionable/questioning interconnected intercommunication of liberty and truth really penetrates to the point of the *meaning of existence*, then probably the problem of truth is bound to the being too – and not only to the “ideas”, “knowledge” and assertions “formed about it”. And bound it is like that which “correctly” and “adequately” “corresponds” to it.

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<sup>1</sup> I cannot agree for example with Mihály Vajda who does not place the so-called “self-truths” into a historical – more precisely existential historical – context and dimension. For in this context it could become clear that the “truths” which have not been or allegedly cannot be converted into doctrines – like the teaching of Jesus – how easily “acquire” their dogmas, and that they do not function merely as a (private) “way of life” in these cases. See: Mihály Vajda, *Igazság és/vagy szabadság* (Truth and/or Liberty) in: idem, *Nem az örökkévalóságnak – Filozófiai (láb)jegyzetek* [Not for the Eternity – Philosophical (Foot)Notes] Budapest, Osiris, 1996, pp. 78–83.

### 3.

The question inquiring after the essence of truth essentially may not even refer to the *quidditas* and the *qualia*-s of truth. Therefore it does not (merely) ask what the epistemological or pragmatic criteria of truth consist of or the parameters by which decisions can be made relating to truth. For all these questions are – essentially – “secondary” for the inquiry referring to the essence of truth. That is, they are *ab ovo* and “implicitly” standing in the – always historical! – questionability or in the process of decision making that concerns the essence of truth.

It is another matter whether their inquiry of all times knows about this standing-in and takes this into consideration or, whether it really and explicitly questions it... For example the “almost three thousand years old” truth of the Pythagorean theorem, that can easily seem “eternal”, consists of the fact that its validity has been confirmed and outlined anew since then by repeated questioning. The situation is the same in the case of Euclidean geometry as well...

The “permanence” or “definiteness” of truth consists only of this. The truth of the so called “analytical truths” or tautologies too is revalidated only by the history of successive generations of finite and mortal “rational beings” without which validation they would have no sense at all. For mathematics, physics or formal logic cannot be imagined without the history of the successive lives of mathematicians, physicians and logicians as well as their mutually inspiring works that re-question one another and offer new proofs.<sup>1</sup>

This means that truth actually is and happens only when and where the question referring to the essence of truth opens up and is kept open as well – at least according to possibility and horizon – in an explicit questioning.

The *question* opening to the essence of truth has another name as well: liberty! For neither “truth”, nor “liberty” are some kind of “notions” waiting and longing yet for their “perfect” definition. On the contrary, they are *questions* and problems that instead of being defined

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<sup>1</sup> This is the actual ontological relevance of the probably right assertion – which can be considered a descriptive assertion – that the immediate essence of communicating/transmitting scientific truths (this may also be called the pedagogy of scientific truths) consists in *demonstration*. That is: each and every scientific truth is questioned and – if it seems valid *once more!* – proved *anew* each time when communicated. It is essential that more is “handed over” on these occasions than the “additional” knowledge or “information” surrounding the formal or objective content or the “demonstrations” of the theorems, formulas etc.



must/should rather always be asked – in a way that the question referring to the one may open up to the other as well.

#### 4.

Three years after the publication of *Being and Time*, in 1930, in a lecture entitled *On the Essence of Truth* – considered a turning point in his oeuvre – Heidegger re-examines the problem of liberty. Here thought strives towards the essence of truth. On this road – probably not accidentally at all – it encounters liberty.

Of course, it is not unusual to seek the essence of truth in liberty. But this is so not only “from the point of view” of truth, but that of liberty as well. Thus it becomes clear *ab ovo* and again that liberty is not just some “state” that is given to us or not (and if it is given, then obviously it is constantly “limited” etc.). Liberty actually has an existential character, it is *characteristic to one’s existence*.

Having a *relation-like* attitude towards the being supposes that one should be situated in the openness. This is the basis of all assertions related to which the “epistemological” problem of “rightness” – of “truth”, “falsity” – afterwards constantly occurs. But even the possible “rightness” and “wrongness” of the assertions originates from that openness in which the assertion *can be brought* at all to its right “state”, “form”. The rightness thus achieved is built on the possibility and accomplishing of those *corrections* that can only be made on the basis of openness, respectively as openness.

Therefore, we must be open *ab ovo* to the urgings of such a correction, for only thus the question of “rightness” or “wrongness”, occurring related to the assertions, may have some consequence at all...<sup>1</sup>

In other words: liberty here (as well) will become the essence of truth as something that actually is the basis, source, exponent, coefficient of the “interior” possibility of truth.<sup>2</sup> We are able to form correct judgements – more precisely to form “judgements” at all –, only if meanwhile we are and remain *free* to let that something to be and to manifest itself “as something”. And if, related to all these, we *reckon* with the possibility of being right or wrong – continually correcting

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<sup>1</sup> With reference to this see also the paper entitled *Állítás (asszerció), kérdés és tagadás* (Assertion, Questioning and Denial) from the volume István Király V., *Kérdő jelezés* [Question(ing) Mark(ing)]. Bratislava, Kalligram, 2004.

<sup>2</sup> See: Martin Heidegger, *Az igazság lényegéről*, in: idem, *Útjelzők*, Budapest, Osiris, 2003, pp. 173–193.

“ourselves” too – in a way that suits the weight of the question being at stake.

Therefore truth and liberty refer to one another, but they do this in a basic sense and way which already urges the modification of the essence of both truth and liberty. Liberty is revealed to be “letting-be” (*Sein-lassen*), letting the being to – possibly – reveal itself in the openness in its unconcealment as a – possible – self-self.

Truth will become *aletheia* (unconcealment), while liberty will be a letting-be *openness to existence* which exists while it lets be, which depends on possibilities and is divided in these – and it is not some kind of “characteristic” or “state”.

“To be free” therefore means to be open to the manifestation/appearance of unconcealment and to the quite self-concealing guidance of this, while one is in the problematic and weighty concealment. Consequently, it means that one must be open to one’s endeavour to let-oneself-be!

Therefore and repeatedly: liberty is not some characteristic of humans, on the contrary, – if we need to think here in property relations – actually the human being is the one “owned” by liberty.<sup>1</sup>

## 5.

In this way, of course, truth transcends that, which is usually regarded the subject and domain of epistemology and logic as “cognition”, respectively “science”. For thus one can realise that for example works of art or more generally art have their own truth. And this is not an indifferent or secondary truth at all.

For how could we people actually face for example such things like the truth “related to” ungratefulness or avarice, if not by the means of Shakespeare’s Iago or Balzac’s Gobseck? And in what “judgements” or “assertions” “is placed” the truth of these works of art?

Truth, however, can only transcend the narrower and more “special” existentiality of “cognition” – meant as studying and specifically outlined – in an existentially and horizon-like way. It can obtain a world-like importance, only if it exists and happens always in a common essentiality with liberty.

However, what differentiates to some extent typically the various – scientific or literary-artistic etc. – “texts” is that they exist within the language. The language essential to these texts has an

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

ontological character, belongs to the historical world and is well articulated. This manifests itself while one is “merely reading” the texts.

The language of the literary work of art is specific and of distinguished importance because “the poetical evocative power of language created by sound as well as meaning is intimately interwoven”.<sup>1</sup> This interconnectedness cannot be superseded and is ever valid. In this respect literary texts are “eminent” texts for Gadamer too.

Contrary to this, for example philosophical texts are characterised by a certain “intermediarity”. For these essentially “operate” with *notions*. Because this they cannot achieve the unity of sound and meaning characteristic to the work of art. However, they are bound to language as well – this being a constantly essential aspect for them. This is why the “eminence” of the relationship between philosophical texts, respectively philosophy and language consists in the fact that their words and texts perpetually surpass, transcend themselves.

Because of this, philosophers actually – or: consequently – have no “texts” at all. And even if there are such things, they essentially are the soul’s continuous historical conversation with itself that cannot be ended – thus “progressing towards infinity”. (As conversation, philosophy is – from a different direction, but – as “near” to the essence/existence of language, connected to existence in general, as poetry, which, beyond having a certain meaning, is identical with that which it means...)

According to this, poetry is not conversation, or it is – would be – that, which in the final, completed work is only the – one – end of conversation. Indeed, philosophy could not survive if it were like this...

In a well defined and historically divided western tradition all this appears as a kind of miserable “imperfection” of philosophy. This does not merely – and in the first place – mean that words become degraded and worn out during their theoretical “use”, but that they are “imperfect” from the beginning. This is because they are merely and excessively: human words.

Contrary to this – according to Gadamer’s hermeneutics – the “divine” word is perfect; because it is “one alone”. Obviously, in the case of poetic word “perfect” has a different meaning, namely: its formulation is final. A poem simply cannot be written “with other words”...

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<sup>1</sup> See: István Fehér M., *József Attila esztétikai írásai és Gadamer hermeneutikája – Irodalmi szöveg és filozófiai szöveg* (Attila József’s Writings in Aesthetics and Gadamer’s Hermeneutics – Literary Text and Philosophical Text), Bratislava, Kalligram, 2003, pp. 164, 166.

According to me, this means that, related to the formulation of poetic words, all “understanding by itself” is impossible. That is, poetry, maybe in contrast with other texts, always and *ab ovo* – and not only as the consequence of temporal distances etc. – claims the efforts of a hermeneutical interpretation; it demands application, the self-changing challenges of making the text one’s own.

As Heidegger puts it, poetry always and essentially urges us to *dialogue* by this. To a dialogue in which precisely the conversation of poets and thinkers may prove the most important and the most existence-like from the perspective of the subject, language, conversation and its importance...

But in what else does the *significance* of poetry’s perfection consist, if not in the fact that it orientates man – as a contrast – towards (his) language as a constantly emerging want of language and existence? Therefore it can be asked, whether philosophy has really some other “task”, related to which we could regretfully state, that it has no adequate, specific language of its own...<sup>1</sup>

Contrary to this, divine word, is “one alone”, as we have seen it. This does not mean that there is only “one piece” of it, for God talks quite a lot in the Bible. It would/could rather mean that this word contains the “whole thing” at once and as a whole. Compared to this, of course, human word is “imperfect”. That is, it is dependent on logic, grammar, etymology, language theory etc. and even hermeneutics... In other words: divine word may be considered a word *that has no language at all*, respectively it has no need of such a thing – at least it seems so. The special problem, however, is in this case as well that this word is addressed to man, who, on the other hand, has to struggle continuously with the multitude of words and their meanings in his language/languages – if only because the disposition made at Babel.

Consequently: “even *being dependent upon conversation* is the sign of imperfection and finitude.”<sup>2</sup> This, naturally, cannot happen with God... Gods – besides many other things – do not philosophize, but, maybe, they only present man with philosophy; and – at least according to Aristotle – this is their most important (good) deed.

According to this, however, there would be no sound reason for us to complain that we are constrained to practice philosophy, or even hermeneutics etc. For: only because divine word is without language, and

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. *ibid.*, p. 181.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 183.

poetical language is definitive, a challenging and even unavoidable opportunity presents itself, an opportunity to “elaborate theories”... and of course to practice philosophy/hermeneutics as well. For only these have to/are able to undo themselves and transcend themselves continuously – in dialogue –, while moving in the directions of truth and liberty, which are always and historically opened or opening to possibilities (and always dangerous).

## 6.

But even (natural-)scientific *discovery* will be pointless within the historical and linguistic situation outlined above unless “it subordinates itself to the hints of this situation and answers these by interpreting the conjectures formulated in them.”<sup>1</sup> So it becomes more and more clear that – in relation to natural sciences – the “place” of truth is not in assertion or verification, but rather in the real, living scientific *discovery* itself.<sup>2</sup> And this has not, after all, psychological, “epistemological” or “epistemological-methodological” character, respectively importance, but ontological one.

This is why we should here mention that nowadays the “hermeneutics of natural sciences” is being outlined once again, a hermeneutics that efficiently reaches back to the Diltheyian, Husserlian and most importantly to the Heideggerian tradition. The philosophical-hermeneutical value of such efforts cannot be overrated. For – either admittedly or unadmittedly – they tend to make acknowledged and to undertake the otherwise elementary *fact* that natural sciences are probably “cultivated” by the *same* Being-here (*Dasein*) – as its *own* and not at all secondary or indifferent *way of existence* –, which operates in the case of “spiritual sciences”, religions/theologies listening to divine words or all the arts and technical or political “professions”; and, of course, in the case of philosophy.

Therefore, as long as we “hermeneutically” or “phenomenologically” distinguish “the thing itself” according to the ways by which it manifests itself, is made *accessible* – that is, according to the “methods of the exact natural sciences”, the “methods of spiritual

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<sup>1</sup> Theodore J. Kisiel, *A természettudományos felfedezés hermeneutikája* (The Hermeneutics of the Natural-Scientific Discovery), in: Tibor Schwendtner, László Roppolyi and Olga Kiss (eds.), *Hermeneutika és a természettudományok* (Hermeneutics and Natural Sciences), Budapest, Áron Publishing House, 2001, p. 102.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 91.

sciences” etc. – (though many of these aspects are acceptable and important), we actually neglect the “more essential” aspect that *for us* “things” can only appear – as meanings – together with the *risks* of their manifestation... And this, of course, is valid in the case of natural sciences, as well as it is related to the other ways of existence of the *Dasein*, which are always specifically divided. Moreover, it is their essential, fundamental *aspect* – which, however, was hardly made explicit.

Therefore it is totally wrong to consider Heidegger’s “critique of – natural and social – science” as referring merely to science. On the contrary: his critique of science – leading to the critique of “metaphysics” and more generally to the critique of “philosophy” – actually widens and deepens to a *polemos* of existential history. In other words: it becomes the – in its essence entirely *factic* – critique and actual challenge of the “fate” of existential history...

Since, for example: “Mathematics is a human science as well as other sciences... and we need to count only because we are temporally finite beings.”<sup>1</sup> Consequently, not even Heidegger’s reflections aim to simply undo or suspend for example all the results/convictions related to the “criteria” of truth; and still less to give new “criteria” to science.

Heidegger only reflects on the essence of truth and in this he loosens up/liberates or re-questions all former cogitation about the essence of truth. He does not say that science does its job wrongly, respectively, that it forms wrong statements and propositions about wrongly presented facts. He only asks questions referring to the sense that determines the place, “role” and perspectives of science in existential history. And he asks, of course, whether these questions can be answered or not “within” the confines of science itself.

For, when we ask these questions, it is revealed that the “correctness” of assertions – including scientific assertions as well – is made possible only by the openness of the relation constituted, respectively divided by these questions, more precisely by the investigation itself, “and that, which makes this correctness possible, can claim the essence of truth by a more genuine right.”<sup>2</sup>

Although hereby the idea, that assertion is the only or the true, the essential “place” of truth, proves to be false, this does not mean that,

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<sup>1</sup> See: Oskar Becker, *Măreția și limitele gândirii matematice* (The Greatness and the Limits of Mathematical Thinking), Bucharest, Scientific Publishing House, 1968, pp. 168–169.

<sup>2</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Az igazság lényegéről* (On the Essence of Truth), p. 179.

in this way, assertions are *ab ovo* “untrue”, or that some truth or even the essence of truth does not abide in them as in “places”... It means that “all this” “is within the assertion”, but truth/the essence of truth is not confined only to this. Meanwhile the assertion itself, respectively the possibility of its correspondence to “objects” is actually based on the openness of the attitude divided precisely by the assertion itself. This openness of attitude, after all, proves to be exactly (the) liberty.

Therefore, if we say that the essence of truth is liberty – and here “essence” probably is not understood as a “pure” generality distilled to a flavourless, colourless, odourless state – this means exactly the opening up of the questioning investigation and the questioning and questionable relation in the openness – as the actual and real existential history of the dependence-on-existence brought into Being-here.

Moreover, indeed: “Whatever happens with historical human beings comes in each case from a decision about the essence of truth that happened long ago and is never up to humans alone.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Martin Heidegger, *Platón tanítása az igazság lényegéről* (Plato's Doctrine of Truth), p. 224.