

DAIMONION OF DASEIN:
A DISCUSSION ON HEIDEGGER'S GODS AND A POSSIBLE RELATION
BETWEEN GODS AND *ANGST* (ANXIETY)

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ABSTRACT

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“Only a god can save us,” says Heidegger. On the other hand, “by existence, Heidegger meant the search for God,” says Hans-Georg Gadamer. However, Heidegger’s book, *Being and Time*, is devoted to the inquiry of existence but devoid of an understanding of gods. Thus, two possible questions arise: what does Heidegger mean by gods, and is there any trace of a possible Being toward gods in *Being and Time*? In this thesis, I try to find answers to these questions. First, I try to reach an answer to the former question by explaining the truth of Being, the holy, and divinity in Heidegger. Finally, I show what a god signifies for Heidegger. Second, I try to answer the latter question by drawing an analogy between Socrates’ *daimonion* and Heidegger’s anxiety and the call of conscience. Consequently, I claim that there is a possible reciprocal relation between gods and anxiety in Heidegger. This claim also holds for a possible relation between gods and the call of conscience. My claim has three consequences for the readings of Heidegger. First, Dasein’s Being toward gods is possible thanks to anxiety and the call of conscience. Second, such concepts of the late Heidegger as gods, divinity, and the holy can be interpreted on the basis of the concepts of *Being and Time*

such as anxiety and the call of conscience. Third, based on these concepts, there reveals a possible line of continuity between the late Heidegger and the Heidegger of *Being and Time*.

Keywords: gods, anxiety, the call of conscience, divinity, holy



ÖZ

DASEİN'İN *DAİMONİON*'U:
HEİDEGGER'İN TANRILARI ÜZERİNE BİR TARTIŞMA VE TANRILAR İLE
ANGST (KAYGI) ARASINDA OLASI BİR İLİŞKİ

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“Bizi yalnızca bir tanrı kurtarır” der Heidegger. Öte yandan, “Heidegger’in varoluştan anladığı Tanrı arayışıydı” der Hans-Georg Gadamer. Ancak, Heidegger’in varoluş sorgulamasına adanmış olan *Varlık ve Zaman* adlı eseri bir tanrı anlayışından yoksundur. Bu noktada iki soru baş göstermektedir: Heidegger *bir tanrı* derken neyi kasteder ve *Varlık ve Zaman*’da *tanrılara doğru Olmaklık*’a dair herhangi bir işaret mevcut mudur? Bu tezde, bu sorulara bir cevap bulmaya çalışmaktayım. Bu doğrultuda ilk olarak, *Varlığın hakikati*, *kutsal* ve *tanrısal* kavramlarını açıklayarak Heidegger’in tanrı ile ne kastettiğini ortaya koymaktayım. İkinci olarak ise, Sokrates’in *daimonion*’u ile Heidegger’in *kaygı* ve *vicdanın çağrısı* kavramları arasında bir analogi kurarak Heidegger’de *tanrılar* ve *kaygı* arasında olası bir karşılıklı ilişki öne sürmekteyim. Bu iddia aynı zamanda, *tanrılar* ve *vicdanın çağrısı* arasındaki ilişki için de geçerlidir. Bu doğrultuda, tezde öne sürmüş olduğum temel iddia Heidegger okumaları için üç sonuç doğurmaktadır: ilki, *Dasein*’in *tanrılara doğru Olmaklık*’ının kaygı ve vicdanın çağrısı ile mümkün olabileceği, ikincisi, geç dönem Heidegger’deki *tanrılar*, *tanrısal* ve *kutsal* gibi kavramlarının *Varlık ve Zaman*’ın

kaygı ve *vicdanın* çağrısı gibi kavramları ile yorumlanabileceği ve üçüncüsü, bu kavramlar bağlamında, geç dönem Heidegger ile *Varlık ve Zaman*'daki Heidegger arasında olası bir devamlılık olduğu.

Anahtar Kelimeler: tanrılar, kaygı, vicdanın çağrısı, tanrısal, kutsal



To *nobody*



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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

“For, in fact, what is man in nature? A Nothing in comparison with the Infinite, an All in comparison with the Nothing, a mean between nothing and everything”
(Pascal, p. 13/72)

1.1. Two Questions and Motivations

Initially, I planned this thesis as a research on the concept of nothingness in Heidegger’s *What is Metaphysics*. With that aim, I started to analyze *Being and Time* along with *What is Metaphysics*. As nothingness was not a metaphysical concept in Heidegger, and it was anxiety (*Angst*) that revealed nothingness (Heidegger, 1993d, p. 101), I found myself contemplating the concept of anxiety as well. Especially, I was wondering why Heidegger claimed that anxiety rarely occurred among humans (Heidegger, 2001a, p. 234). At the same time, I re-read one of Plato’s works, *Apology*. I was impressed by Socrates’ case, who was called by his *daimonion*. I was impressed because the *daimonion* did not give any positive order to Socrates about what he should do but only drew Socrates back from his everyday concerns, habits, and practices (Plato, 2005, p. 115/31d). In other words, when Socrates heard the call of his *daimonion*, this call suspended the flow of Socrates’ everyday concerns and left him with the freedom to choose himself as it did not give any positive order. In short, Socrates seemed to have anxiety, like that of Dasein, via the call. Then, I searched for the concept of *daimonion* in Heidegger’s works. I realized that Heidegger translated *daimonion* as god in some of his passages (Heidegger, 1992a, p. 165; 1992b, p. 104; 1993a, p. 256). This led me to ask, “was there any possible relation between gods and anxiety as well as between the former and the call of conscience?”

Specifically, when we think of what Heidegger says in *Der Spiegel* interview, “only a god can save us” (1981, p. 57), there must be a relation between Heidegger’s core concept of anxiety which, as a condition for authentic existence, lies in the heart of the analytic of Dasein and apparently another core concept, “a god,” upon which Heidegger pins his hopes. Moreover, this idea is confirmed by one of Heidegger’s students, namely Hans-George Gadamer who says that “by existence, Heidegger meant the search for God” (2006, p. 122). However, before asking about the relation between anxiety and gods, we have to ask “what does Heidegger mean by a god?”

Accordingly, the aim of this thesis is to inquire into the relationship between the late Heideggerian understanding of gods and the anxiety of *Being and Time*. I will show the structural similarities between Heidegger’s concept of god and anxiety as well as between the former and the call of conscience that anxiety accompanies. Thus, I will claim that there is a possible reciprocal relation between gods and anxiety. My reading of gods along with anxiety and the call of conscience will also help me clarify what Heidegger means by “only a god can save us,” which seems mystical and inexplicable at first glance from the perspective of the Heidegger of *Being and Time*. It will also illuminate a possibility of a Being toward gods on the basis of *Being and Time*. Thus, it will show a continuity between the Heidegger of *Being and Time* and the late Heidegger.

1.2. Structure of the Thesis

What does Heidegger mean by a god? This is the first question that this thesis investigates. Heidegger’s concept of god has been under different interpretations. For example, Heinrich Ott claims that by god Heidegger means a being or an entity (Hodgson, 1969, p. 241). Secondly, John Macquarrie asserts that Heidegger’s Being is in fact god (1984, pp. 153-154). Thirdly, John Williams defends that neither Being nor a being but Beyng is Heidegger’s god (1977, pp. 152, 154). Fourthly, Schubert Ogden defends that “being-in-the-world,” namely Dasein, is god for Heidegger (1966, pp. 148-150). Besides, diving into theological discussions, some Heidegger scholars, such as Karl Barth, Régis Jolivet, and Hans Meyer, claim that Heidegger is an atheist while others, such as John Macquarrie, Heinrich Ott, and Thomas O’Meara, claim that

Heidegger is a theist (Williams, 1971, pp. 260-278). John Williams and John Cooper assert that Heidegger is a panentheist (Cooper, 2006, pp. 216-217; Williams, 1977, pp. 152, 154). In fact, Heidegger's usage of the concept of god in plural might make one think about whether he is a polytheist. On the other hand, one might think of the Christian God or the God of metaphysics as Heidegger's god due to his education in Christian theology in his youth.

Thus, the second chapter will start with refusing all those ideas just indicated by showing counter-references from Heidegger. Then, in order to understand and state what Heidegger means by a god, it will take a path that is formulated by Heidegger himself as a way to gods, passing through some concepts like the truth of Being, holy, and divinity. Firstly, it will focus on the concept of the truth of Being. The truth of Being will be a movement of concealing and unconcealing of Being. In other words, it will designate the fact that when an understanding of Being is opened, other possible understandings of Being are closed. In addition, the truth of Being will refer the reader to Heidegger's other concepts such as *Beyng* and the strife between the world and the earth. *Beyng* is to mean the historical happening of Being, namely the truth of Being. The world will designate the opening character of Being while the earth will designate the closing character of Being. Thus, the strife between these two characters will also be intrinsically connected with the truth of Being.

Following the path going to Heidegger's gods, secondly, the concept of the holy will be considered. Heidegger will claim that there are to be some people like poets who sense divinities of gods and convey them to people as holy names. When people will hear the holy, there will be a turn (*Kehre*) among humans and gods. In other words, there will occur *Beyng* or the truth of Being with the encounter between humans and gods. Thus, the holy will refer to the truth of Being in Heidegger.

Thirdly, divinities of gods will be considered before the last step toward gods. They are to be god-made signs or hints. Gods will beckon through divinities, and divinities will beckon to gods in return. Considering the web of signs of the world, they will be unusual signs, i.e., they will refer to unusualness in the usual world. They are to be

found in work, deed, thought, and sacrifice in the holy sphere. In addition, they are to be godly guiding elements in the truth of Being.

Finally, based on the ideas in the following three sections, I will elaborate on what Heidegger means by gods. Gods will appear via divinities. That is, the presence of gods is to be “known” via divinities like we detect an illness through its observable symptoms. Since these divinities are to be unusual, Heidegger’s gods will also mean extraordinariness in the ordinary world. In addition, the “existence” of gods will not be dependent on the concept of Being. However, gods will need the truth of Being in order to announce themselves to people. With their announcing themselves by sending divinities, they will play a part in the truth of Being. In this sense, a new understanding of Being will emerge, and this emergence will be designated by the passing away of an old god and an arrival of a new god, namely the last god. However, humans will also be at play in the truth of Being. Thus, gods are to be the ones who are in a strict relationship with humans.

This relationship between gods and humans will direct us to the third chapter which will try to find an answer to our second question, “is there any possible relation between gods and anxiety as well as between the former and the call of conscience?” Answering this question will contribute to the Heideggerian literature in three ways. First, it will show a possible Being toward gods in *Being and Time*. Heidegger does not explicitly establish this possibility in *Being and Time*, but he says that he leaves it open (1993a, pp. 252-253). Second, it will interpret the concepts related to Heidegger’s gods from the perspective of the concepts of *Being and Time*. Thus, it will aim at reaching a more comprehensive understanding of gods than the second chapter presents. In other words, it will aim to clarify the poetic or mystical language of the late Heidegger with the language of the Heidegger of *Being and Time*. Third, by trying to find an answer to the question, whether there is any possible relation between gods and anxiety, this thesis will present a possible line of continuity between the thoughts of the late Heidegger and the Heidegger of *Being and Time*.

Heidegger’s philosophy is usually divided into two different phases or periods. These periods are termed as the early and late Heidegger or, in William J. Richardson’s

(2003) formulation, Heidegger I and Heidegger II. Even if there is no consensus about when the change occurs or whether there is more than one change in Heidegger's thought (Hemming, 1998b, pp. 395-396), the "early" Heidegger usually refers to the works of Heidegger before the 1930s, and the "late" Heidegger refers to the thought of Heidegger in and after the 1930s (Olafson, 1987, p. 153; Sheehan, 2013, p. 32).¹ This so-called change in Heidegger's thought is usually characterized by his concept "the turn" (*die Kehre*) (Sheehan, 2001a, p. 3). It is argued that there are more than one turn in Heidegger's philosophy, but the main one might be that Heidegger's focus turns from the projection of Dasein to the truth of Being (Richardson, 2003, p. 624). To make it clear, while in *Being and Time*, Heidegger's main concern is to analyze of Dasein as the one who projects a possibility of Being, in *Contributions to Philosophy*, he focuses on the history or the truth of Being which conceals and unconceals itself without so much emphasis on Dasein as in *Being and Time* (Olafson, 1987, p. 158; Sheehan, 2001b, p. 184). Some scholars take this turn in focus seriously and argue that Heidegger also changes his standpoint, and so, they assert a change or transformation between the two Heideggers. Among these commentators are Karl Löwith, Otto Pöggeler (Hemming, 1998b, pp. 395-397), Bret W. Davis (2014), Markus Gabriel (2014), and Julian Young (2015). On the other hand, other scholars such as William J. Richardson (2003),² Reiner Schurmann (1987), Frederick A. Olafson (1987), James Risser (1999), Thomas Sheehan (2001a), Parvis Emad (2007), Laurence Paul Hemming (1998b), and James Magrini (2009) somehow defend a kind of continuity between the so-called two Heideggers.³ In this thesis, I will support the claim that there is a possible line of continuity between the earlier and late Heidegger's philosophy. In order to justify this, I will appeal to the concepts of Heidegger such as anxiety, the call of conscience, gods, divinity, and the holy. That is, I will claim that there is a common structure and a way of thinking between the concepts of the

¹ Throughout the thesis, if I refer to the so-called two periods of Heidegger, I will name the Heidegger before the 1930s as the early Heidegger and the Heidegger in and after the 1930s as the late Heidegger.

² Even if Richardson tries to take up a middle position in this issue, he tends to see Heidegger's philosophy in one. Still, this categorization of him might be controversial.

³ Almost all these scholars do not assert an absolute sameness or difference between the two Heideggers. Thus, I have tried to categorize them by considering how much they tend to take one side over another.

Heidegger of *Being and Time* such as anxiety and the call of conscience and the concepts of the late Heidegger such as gods, divinity, and the holy.

The third chapter of the thesis will begin with taking the case of Socrates' *daimonion* into its service. I will establish an analogy between the case of Socrates and anxiety in Heidegger. However, I will not state that the *daimonion* of Socrates is Heidegger's god. In addition, I will not attempt to interpret Socrates in terms of Heidegger's philosophy. That is, Socrates will not be a Heideggerian existentialist. Acknowledging the differences between the philosophies of Socrates and Heidegger, I will only use the *daimonion* of Socrates as an analogy that, I believe, will help our investigation. That is because Heidegger will translate Greek *daimonion* as a god and consider it as the ground of uncanniness. So, the case of Socrates will be interpreted as a case of anxiety by the call of *daimonion*. Thus, before going to establish a possible relation between gods and anxiety, firstly, a small survey will take place on the concept of *daimonion* and Heidegger's relation with it.

In order to give a background for the concept of anxiety and the call of conscience, I will explain Heidegger's concepts such as thrownness, being-with, and fallenness. Thrownness will designate that Dasein is thrown into a world that it does not choose or own. Being-with will signify that Dasein is always with others in that world, and so, it interprets itself on the basis of the world of others, namely the they-world. The concept of fallenness will denote the situation in which Dasein forgets that the they-world and the they-self into which Dasein is thrown are historically contingent. Thus, Dasein is inauthentically absorbed into its everyday concerns in its state of fallenness.

I will introduce Heidegger's mood of anxiety as that which annihilates the everydayness of Dasein. In anxiety, the familiar world of the they will sink into insignificance, and accordingly, Dasein will not find a public basis on which it can interpret itself. They-self and they-world will become nothingness, and so, Dasein will transcend them. In its transcendence, Dasein will return to its true self, namely its potentiality of Being itself. Thus, Dasein will be given a choice to be authentic or inauthentic. Either way, Dasein will project itself. In anxiety, Dasein will realize that its world or the understanding of Being into which it is thrown is contingent, and thus,

it will realize that it stands in an openness. Since an openness contains the movement of both opening and closing, anxiety will also reveal the truth of Being. As the truth of Being is the holy, anxious Dasein will stand in the holy area and await divinities of gods. However, this process can also be read reversely. That is, since gods draw near, Dasein has anxiety. To make it clear, when Dasein is anxious, the familiar world loses its significance. Thus, Dasein becomes ready for the arrival of new gods, a new understanding of Being, and a new world. Conversely, when Dasein gives ear to the unordinary signs (divinities) of gods, it becomes possible for one to recover from his/her inauthentic absorption into the turmoil of life and so to become anxious. Therefore, in this chapter, I will first claim that there is a possible reciprocal relation between gods and anxiety. This claim will also show that a Being towards gods on the basis of *Being and Time* is possible thanks to anxiety.

The voice of Socrates' *daimonion* is very akin to the call of conscience that is accompanied by anxiety in Dasein. As Heidegger particularly warns that the caller in conscience is not a god, I will not claim this. Rather, with the aid of our analogy, I will ask, "do the call of conscience and divinities (signs) of gods have similarities?" Before answering this question, I will explain the call of conscience. For Heidegger, the call of conscience shows itself as a "voice" to they-self, which says nothing. By calling, it draws Dasein back to its Being and annihilates the everyday familiar world and self. Dasein understands that it is a null basis of a nullity. By the call, anxious Dasein becomes resolute in projecting its Being.

When it comes to the question of similarities between the call of conscience and divinities of gods, I will, firstly, detect direct similarities without using the case of Socrates. I will claim that (1) both the call of conscience and divinities of gods manifest themselves as signs. (2) They are not encountered as entities within the world. (3) They are not formed by the they-self or the they-world. (4) They appear in ordinariness or address the everyday self and the everyday world. (5) Both show themselves as extraordinariness. (6) Both of them lead one to the truth of Being. By these direct similarities, I will claim that there is a possible reciprocal relation between the call of conscience and divinities of gods. Thus, a Being towards gods on the basis of *Being and Time* is also possible thanks to the call of conscience as well as anxiety.

I will assert further similarities by an analogy of the *daimonion* of Socrates. The *daimonion* of Socrates calls the everyday existence of Socrates, suspends it by discoursing nothing, and leaves him with the freedom to choose himself, just like the call of conscience does to Dasein. Thus, secondly, I will assert four more similarities, which I will call “indirect similarities,” between the call of conscience and divinities of gods by likening the god of Socrates to the gods of Heidegger. Thus, (7) both the call of conscience and divinities of gods address the they-self. (8) Both discourse nothing in a worldly manner. (9) Both annihilate the they-self and the they-world. (10) Both leave one with the freedom to choose oneself. These new four similarities will make contributions to a more comprehensive understanding of Heidegger’s gods. As I have indicated, divinities of gods show themselves in the ordinary, i.e., they are already that which address the they-self in the they-world. However, we will come to new understandings that these guiding divinities in the truth of Being will show themselves in a negative manner to someone who is lost in the public world of the they, i.e., they will discourse nothing. Thus, divinities of gods will annihilate everydayness. Also, divinities of gods will guide Dasein by giving it the freedom to choose itself, namely steward the truth of Being. Consequently, Heidegger’s gods will appear as the ones who give negative signs to people who are lost in the soothing everyday world in order to awaken them.

In addition, the overall effort to show similarities between anxiety, the call of conscience, holy, divinity, and gods will have positive consequences for the relation between the thoughts of the late Heidegger and the Heidegger of *Being and Time*. Even if Heidegger seems to change his focus in his late writings, he uses a similar structure or way of thinking compared to his discourses in the 1920s. That is, by referring to all these similarities, it should not be incorrect to claim that there is a possible line of continuity between the late Heidegger and the Heidegger of *Being and Time*.

Consequently, in this thesis, I will claim that there is a possible reciprocal relation between gods and *Angst* (anxiety) as well as between the former and the call of conscience in Heidegger’s philosophy. In order to justify this claim, I will show first what Heidegger means by a god. Second, I will discuss the relation of Heidegger’s

gods with anxiety and the call of conscience. At the same time, I will show that this claim will have positive consequences for the literature on Heidegger's anxiety, conscience, and gods and on the relation between the thoughts of the late Heidegger and the Heidegger of *Being and Time*.



CHAPTER 2

“ONLY A GOD CAN SAVE US”

“When I was a boy
A god often rescued me
From the shouts and the rods of men”
(Hölderlin, 1996, p. 13)

“Only a god can save us,” says Heidegger in his *Der Spiegel* Interview in 1966. He says this because the interviewer asks whether a person, with the aid of philosophy, can influence the world’s current circumstances. Heidegger does not seem frustrated that his or others’ philosophical endeavors could not succeed. Instead, he seems to be sure of himself that this is not the task that philosophy or any other human thinking can handle by itself:

philosophy will be unable to effect any immediate change in the current state of the world. This is true not only of philosophy but of all purely human reflection and endeavor. Only a god can save us. The only possibility available to us is that by thinking and poetizing we prepare a readiness for the appearance of a god, or for the absence of a god in [our] decline (Heidegger, 1981, p. 57).

Who is the god Heidegger talks about? Is the article “a,” which designates the word god, a sign that Heidegger believes in polytheism? Is he just a religious person who waits for the appearance of a god? If not, how does he, as a philosopher, define gods or place them in his philosophical system? What is the relation between “a god” and the idea of “the last god” in his *Contributions to Philosophy*? Besides, when Heidegger talks about an immediate change in the state of the “world,” does he have the same meaning in mind as that of the interviewer? Or by the concept of the world, does he mean what he means in his *The Origin of the Work of Art*? Lastly, since, for Heidegger, we should await, by thinking and poetizing, gods for their appearing even in their

absence, could this mean that his entire philosophical project is a wait or search for a god? And is this a declaration of the end of philosophy?

So, in this chapter, I will search for what Heidegger means by a god. To do that, I will first present what Heidegger does not mean by a god. This is because it is important not to confuse Heidegger's understanding of a god with a traditional or common way of understanding God. Secondly, I will try to show what Heidegger means by a god. But this will take four steps woven together and built upon each other: the first step will demonstrate "the truth of Being" for Heidegger. In this subsection, different concepts of Heidegger, such as *Beyng* and the strife between the world and the earth, will be explained along with the idea of the truth of Being. The second step will illustrate the concept of the holy in relation to the truth of Being. After asserting that the holy is the region where divinities occur, in the third step, divinities will be defined as beckoning messengers of gods, and they will be presented as godly elements that lead to the truth of Being. The last step will be to argue what Heidegger means by the concept of god. By gods Heidegger means that which (1) beckons; (2) is unusualness in the usualness; (3) passes by; (4) is at play in the truth of Being; (5) is in strict relation with humans; (6) needs the truth of Being; (7) dies and leaves its place to the last god.

2.1. What Heidegger does not mean by a god

Since to utter the word of God or gods, like any other historical concept, causes to evoke one's preconception of it,⁴ which most likely has its roots, in this case, in metaphysics or religions, it will be wise to show first what Heidegger does not mean when he talks about gods before going to explain his understanding of gods.

First of all, Heidegger's attachment of an article to the word god (namely "a god") does not mean that he has a polytheistic faith, which does not, in turn, refer to its opposite, i.e., Heidegger's having a monotheistic belief. It does not, at the same time, decide whether God or gods exist or not (theistic or atheistic). Ironically, there are

⁴ To avoid attributing a gender to God, from now on, pronoun of "it" will be used to designate God. However, this time, it does not mean God is a thing. It only designates a neutral term in the case of gender.

some theologians, like Karl Barth, Regis Jolivet, and Hans Meyer, who accuse Heidegger of teaching an atheistic philosophy like that of Jean-Paul Sartre, whereas John Macquarrie, Heinrich Ott, and Thomas O'Meara regard him as a theistic thinker (Williams, 1971, pp. 260-278).⁵ However, Heidegger claims that “the last god has his own most unique uniqueness and stands outside of any calculative determination expressed in the labels ‘mono-theism,’ ‘pan-theism,’ and ‘a-theism.’” (2012, pp. 325-326). Heidegger prevents such labels in advance. In addition, Heidegger’s plural usage of the word god implies nothing more than “the undecidability of the being of gods, whether one or many” (2012, p. 345). For having a prior decision about a concept could endanger the essence of questioning of that concept and lead to receiving an answer from the one who asks and not from the question itself. That is why Heidegger’s usage of the word gods in plural should be understood as an attempt “to name the undecidability as to whether a god, and which god, could arise once again” (2012, p. 345).

The second of what Heidegger does not mean by a god is another common preconception of God, which is the God of Abrahamic religions, especially the God of Christianity. This might even be the first thing that comes to the mind of Heidegger’s readers, knowing that he was born into a Christian world and educated as a Christian in his youth (Safranski, 1998, pp. 5-7). However, Heidegger explicitly indicates that the last god is “the god wholly other than past ones and especially other than the Christian one” (2012, p. 319). Thus, it seems evident that when Heidegger integrates the idea of gods into his philosophical system, he does not mean any past or present conception of God but a different (and new, in the sense of futuristic or the last) one (2012, p. 399).

Thirdly, as he, throughout his philosophical life, tries to overcome traditional metaphysics, Heidegger also tries to avoid any metaphysical conception of God. He writes:

⁵ For more, see Williams, J. R. (1971). Heidegger and the theologians. *The Heythrop Journal*, 12(3), 258-280.

A metaphysical consideration must represent God as the highest being, as the first ground and cause of beings, as the un-conditioned, the infinite, the absolute. All these determinations arise not from what is godly about God but from the essence of beings as such, insofar as this essence, conceived purely and simply in itself as constant presence and objectivity and as what is clearest in representational explanation, is attributed to God as object (Heidegger, 2012, p. 345).

For Heidegger, a metaphysical representation of God with such attributes reduces God to a mere ontic being, or an object, a thing. However, ontological concepts like Being, world, Dasein, and gods are not the same as beings, or entities, for Heidegger. He claims that “we hesitate to call God a thing. In the same way we hesitate to consider...a man...[as] a thing” (1993b, p. 147) and that “out of the hidden sway of the divinities the god emerges as what he is, which removes him from any comparison with beings that are present” (2001d, p. 176). However, Heinrich Ott, in his book *Denken und Sein*, infers that Heidegger’s god is a being, supporting this inference by referring to Heidegger’s uttering the name of god among beings in *Letter on Humanism* (Hodgson, 1969, p. 241) (Heidegger, 1993a, p. 227). However, obviously, Heidegger wants to differentiate God from beings. Consequently, metaphysical understanding of God or the God of philosophy, which designates God as “the highest being, as the first ground and cause of beings, as the un-conditioned, the infinite, the absolute,” should be put aside for Heidegger in order to get “closer to the divine God...[because non-metaphysical or even] god-less thinking is more open to Him than onto-theo-logic would like to admit” (Heidegger, 1969, p. 72).

Fourthly, there has been some misreading, jumping to a conclusion, or hasty interpretation of Heidegger’s central concepts, Being and Beyng, as if he meant god by these concepts. Among such misreading is included that of John Macquarrie who explicitly claims that what Heidegger means by god is nothing other than Being (1984, pp. 153-154). On the other side, John Williams goes so far in claiming that since Beyng is beyond Being (which is not, as we will see in the subsection of Beyng), Beyng as the event should be interpreted as Heidegger’s notion of god. Moreover, by regarding god and the human being as in a union, he thinks that panentheism⁶ is in line with the

⁶ Panentheism is the belief that the universe is God, but at the same time, God is more than the universe. In other words, the universe is “in God.” God cannot be held as equal to the universe like in pantheism.

elements of Heidegger's philosophy (Williams, 1977, pp. 152, 154). In addition, John Cooper agrees with Williams on the claim that the ideas of Heidegger are most suitable for panentheism (2006, pp. 216-217). However, these interpretations are clearly not correct. Heidegger particularly warns that the "essential occurrence of beyng [or of Being] is not itself the last god" (2012, p. 206) and "Being...is not God and not a cosmic ground" (1993a, p. 234). Moreover, anticipatory questioning of gods "denies beyng to 'the gods' in advance, means that every assertion about the 'being' and 'essence' of gods...says nothing about them, i.e., about that which is to be decided" (Heidegger, 2012, p. 345). At the same time, the issue of the undecidability of the being of a god has already implied that a god is not the same as Being. Furthermore, a god cannot be Being for Heidegger because Being is what gods need in the first place. This does not mean Being "is" superior to gods or vice versa. It also does not mean that Being "causes" gods or that gods need Being to exist. Instead, it signifies the essential occurrence of gods, i.e. through Being, gods draw near and abscond (Heidegger, 2012, p. 346).

Fifthly, other than interpreting Heidegger's god with such concepts such as Being, Beyng, and beings, Schubert Ogden claims that Heidegger's god is "being-in-the-world," namely Dasein, by setting "a strict analogy between the being of man and the being of God" (1966, pp. 148-150). However, Heidegger claims that "Da-sein is the between: between humans (as grounding of history) and the gods (in their history)" (2012, p. 247). So, Dasein means an openness where there is a wedding feast of humans and gods (Heidegger, 2001e, p. 91). Thus, Dasein cannot be held the same as gods.

Finally, for Heidegger, gods are not idols or human makings. People "do not make their gods for themselves and do not worship idols" (Heidegger, 2001b, p. 148). If people idolize someone or some facts, this means, indeed, that the gods are absconding instead of drawing near (Heidegger, 2012, p. 344). That is why a god cannot be a thing, or a fact, or a particular Dasein. In other words, for Heidegger, Socrates or Edmund Husserl or Adolf Hitler are not gods who revolutionize.

Consequently, by gods Heidegger does not mean polytheism or monotheism. He adapts the plural use of the word gods in the sense of undecidability of the being of god. Secondly, Heidegger does not refer to any present or past conception of God, especially the God of Christianity. Rather, he seems to propose awaiting a new (or the last) god. Thirdly, he does not propose a metaphysical understanding of God in his philosophical investigation because ontical nature of metaphysics reduces God to a mere thing with attributes like infinity, which is another preconception of god that is needed to be overcome. Fourthly, claiming that Heidegger's concepts of Being or Beyng are in fact a substitute for god is a misinterpretation because Heidegger explicitly makes a distinction between Being, Beyng, and gods in the sense that gods need Being or Beyng for their essential occurrence. Fifthly, Heidegger does not equate Dasein to gods. Rather, Dasein is what is between gods and humans. Finally, idols cannot be gods for Heidegger since to idolize an idol is, in fact, a sign that gods abscond instead of drawing near.

2.2. What Heidegger means by a god

Showing what Heidegger does not mean by gods dismisses possible misinterpretations and sets the boundaries on the intended explanation. Now we can properly ask what the concept god signifies in Heidegger's philosophy? In *Letter on Humanism*, he shows a path of thinking to find an answer to that question: "Only from the truth of Being can the essence of the holy be thought. Only from the essence of the holy is the essence of divinity to be thought. Only in the light of the essence of divinity can it be thought or said what the word 'God' is to signify" (1993a, p. 253). Thus, this path of thinking will be taken in this chapter on the way to answering what Heidegger means by gods. Firstly, the truth of Being will be laid bare. While doing this, other related concepts, such as beings, Beyng, world, and earth will be explained. Secondly, the concept of the holy will be described in relation to the truth of Being. Thirdly, the issue of divinities will be considered in the sphere of the holy. Finally, what the word god signifies for Heidegger will be presented with the aid of these three subsections.

2.2.1. The Truth of Being

To grasp Heidegger's idea of the truth of Being, his concepts of truth and Being will be elaborated separately. Then, it will be attempted to show what the truth of Being means. Subsequently, the concept of Beyng will be presented. After showing its difference from Being, it will be interpreted as the truth of Being. Finally, the strife between world and earth will be explained and claimed to be related to Beyng, and, so, to the truth of Being.

2.2.1.1. Truth

First of all, Heidegger rejects the traditional meanings of truth designated as these:

accuracy, correctness, or rightness (*Richtigkeit*), or more specifically as a kind of correspondence or agreement (*Übereinstimmung*) between one thing and another – a belief and a fact, a proposition and a state of affairs, more generally the mind and the world (Carman, 2021, p. 777).

In *Being and Time*, Heidegger rethinks the notion of truth with the Greek concept “*aletheia*.” For him, “*aletheia*” means “uncoveredness” or “unhiddennes” (2001a, p. 262). It is not a state of being. Instead, it is a movement of uncovering which is executed by Dasein. Dasein “uncovers entities within-the-world...What is primarily ‘true’—that is, uncovering—is Dasein” (Heidegger, 2001a, p. 263). Thus, in *Being and Time*, truth means Dasein's Being uncovering.

In *On the Essence of Truth*, Heidegger claims, in a similar fashion, that Dasein, as a free ek-sistence, lets beings be:

To let be – that is, to let beings be as the beings that they are - means to engage oneself with the open region and its openness into which every being comes to stand, bringing that openness, as it were, along with itself. Western thinking in its beginning conceived this open region as [ta alethea], the unconcealed (1998a, p. 144).

While truth, as *aletheia*, unconceals an openness or an open region into which every being comes to stand, it is also concealment because the unconcealment of beings as such inescapably comes with the concealment of beings as a whole (Heidegger, 1998a,

p. 148). That means, for example, while, in an epoch, the understanding of the Being of beings is disclosed as a deterministic material body, the other possibilities of Being are covered. In other words, “the unconcealment of entities is at the same time the concealment of being itself” (Schalow & Denker, 2010, p. 49). In addition, what is concealed (the concealment of being itself) is often forgotten (Heidegger, 1998a, pp. 148-149). Thus, the forgetfulness of Being takes place. Consequently, truth, for Heidegger, is the movement of, or the interplay between, unconcealing and concealing.

2.2.1.2. Being

Before explaining the truth of Being, it would be wise to indicate what Heidegger understands by Being and how he distinguishes it from beings (or entities). Heidegger claims that Being is not a being among beings. Rather, Being is “that which determines entities as entities, that on the basis of which...entities are already understood” (Heidegger, 2001a, pp. 25-26). That is why Heidegger always talks about the Being of beings. On the other hand, a being can be anything in the world, such as a pencil, a person, or even an abstract idea of a pupil. To make it clear, while a being is anything that “is,” Being is about its “isness.” However, this “isness” does not refer to the traditional metaphysical concepts like substance, form, *res extensa*, or *res cogitans*. Rather, by Being Heidegger understands Dasein’s conception of what it means to be, thanks to which beings become what they are. Also, this conception is historical and historically changeable. Richard Polt properly indicates the distinction between Being and beings in this way:

The term ‘beings’ translates *das Seiende*, more literally ‘that which is’. ‘Beings’, and its synonym ‘entities’, refer to anything at all that has existence of some sort. Clearly atoms and molecules...mathematical objects...even dragons are...beings...In fact, it seems that anything we can think about, speak about, or deal with involves beings in some way...Once we have noticed and celebrated the fact that beings are, we can take a step further...We can ask: what does this ‘are’ mean? What is it to be? Now, we are asking what makes a being count as a being, instead of as nothing: on what basis do we understand beings as beings? Now we are asking not about beings, but about Being (1999, p. 2).

Polt clearly shows that to ask what it means for beings to be is to ask “on what basis we understand beings as beings.” That is, to be is to be understood on a basis that can

change through the course of history, and this basis is, what Heidegger calls, Being with a capital B.

2.2.1.3. The Truth of Being

Then, what does the truth of Being mean? Combining the meaning of truth, which is the movement of unconcealing and concealing, with the meaning of Being, which is the basis on which entities are already understood, it can be asserted that the truth of Being is the unconcealment of a particular understanding by which entities are understood, as well as the concealment of other possible understandings. In other words, the truth of Being signifies the movement of the change of the basis on which we deal with entities in the sense of understanding, interpreting, using, and chatting about them. Schalow & Denker explains that “Being reveals and conceals itself in different ways at different times and ‘sending’ of different ‘epochs.’ This destining is the history of being” (2010, p. 278). So, by this very movement, namely the truth of Being (or the movement of Being’s occurring), different understandings of Being reveal themselves in different epochs.

Mark Okrent defines the truth of Being as “the clearing [or opening] in which beings can appear and in which Being, as the presencing of presence, can manifest itself” (2005, p. 473). Thus, the truth of Being can also be interpreted as opening an open region on which beings come to stand. That is, Being manifests itself in an openness, and entities are understood in that openness. On the other hand, when an openness is opened or disclosed, as it is shown, there occurs a movement of closing other possible kinds of openness. Thus, for Heidegger, the truth of Being can also be formulated as the movement of opening an openness and closing other possible kinds of openness. In addition, most of the time, there occurs forgetfulness of what is closed. In other words, the present understanding or framework by which entities are determined is thought to be necessary and natural, and the facts that this framework is contingent and that there could be other possible frameworks are forgotten. To make it clear, people mostly live their life in a fallen state into a particular understanding of Being (which belongs to everydayness), believing that it is the ultimate understanding of

Being and forgetting the fact that entities could be determined by a different understanding of Being (Heidegger, 2001a, p. 219).

2.2.1.4. Beyng (or Be-ing, *Seyn*)

When the truth of Being as a movement is considered, it seems that this movement takes place between Being and beings, or, in short, it is this betweenness. That is, while Being unconceals itself, beings are determined in a particular way in this unconcealment of Being. At the same time, since, in its unconcealment, Being also conceals itself and its other possibilities, this particular determination and other possible ways of determination of beings are concealed. For example, when entities in a room are enlightened by a yellow lamp, i.e., a yellow light of Being, entities are experienced yellowish. Mostly, the yellow light of Being is concealed, and beings are understood only as yellowish in themselves (fallenness, or forgetfulness of Being). However, when there is a turn in the color of the light of Being, let it be blue, now beings appear in a different light, and Being manifests itself in this turning. However, it does not take long to forget Being again and fall into a particular understanding of the Being of beings, therefore supposing that beings are blue in themselves. Accordingly, the truth of Being does not only concern Being itself but also beings. That is, the truth of Being occurs between Being and beings, i.e., between the lamp and entities.

In *On the Essence of Truth*, Heidegger calls the in-betweenness of Being and beings as Beyng. And this betweenness holds the ontological difference between Being and beings.

Beyng is thought as the difference that holds sway between Being and beings. Truth signifies sheltering that clears [*lichtendes Bergen*] as the fundamental trait of Being... The answer to the question of the essence of truth is the saying of a turning [*die Sage einer Kehre*] within the history of Beyng. Because sheltering that clears belongs to it, Beyng appears originally in the light of concealing withdrawal. The name of this clearing [*Lichtung*] is [aletheia] (Heidegger, 1998a, pp. 153-154).

As is seen, Beyng as clearing or *aletheia* is a fundamental trait of Being. It is at the same time “the difference that holds sway between Being and beings.” That means

Beyng is the movement that takes place between Being and beings. It seems that Heidegger designates the truth of Being as Beyng. That is, Beyng is nothing other than the movement of Being's occurring in the sense of unconcealing and concealing. We can come across with the same idea in Heidegger's *Contributions to Philosophy*. Heidegger discusses there what "beginning" is in the history of Being. He argues that "it is the essential occurrence of *being* itself...[In other words,] the beginning-grasped primordially-is beyng itself...[That is,] the *beginning* is *beyng itself* as event" (Heidegger, 2012, p. 47). That means that the occurrence of Being, which is the truth of Being as unconcealing and self-concealing, is Beyng itself as the event because both the occurrence of Being and Beyng, are matched with beginnings in the history of Being. In addition, the concept of the event here means the essence of Beyng as an appropriation (Heidegger, 2012, p. 6). That is why Heidegger defines Beyng as an "appropriating event." Richard Polt shows the relation between these terms:

'Be-ing' [Beyng] (*Seyn*) denotes the happening in which the being of beings is given to us as a questionable issue and we thus enter the condition of Dasein. 'Enowning' (*Ereignis*, formerly rendered by most translators as 'appropriation' or 'the event of appropriation') does not denote something beyond or separate from be-ing [Beyng] but rather the distinctive way in which be-ing [Beyng] holds sway or essentially happens (*west*). Heidegger's question in *Contributions* is how be-ing [Beyng] holds sway, and his answer is: as enowning [appropriating event] (2001, p. 82).

To make it clear, appropriating event designates nothing other than that Beyng holds sway, namely that Beyng as a movement takes place between Being and beings. It denominates Being's happening which constitutes the history of Being.

The event of appropriation as Beyng, in turn, means "a turn" in the history of Being, accordingly entities are determined by one basis or another in accordance with this history. This leads us to another important conception of Heidegger, which is "turn" or "*Kehre*." As Thomas Sheehan shows, the turn (*Kehre*) does not signify a turn in Heidegger's thought but "the inner movement of *Ereignis* [or Event]" (2001a, p. 3). Heidegger, in *Vortwort* [Preface] in William J. Richardson, *Heidegger: Through Phenomenology to Thought* (2003, p. XXI), asserts that "the supposed 'happening' of the turn... 'is' *Seyn* as such" (as cited in Sheehan, 2001a, p. 13). Accordingly, Heidegger's concepts like the event of appropriation, turn, Beyng, and the truth of Being point at the same movement of occurring of Being between Being and beings

in the sense that beings come to stand in an openness by which they become understood as such.

In addition, it can be argued that Beyng signifies the timely or temporal (or historical) character of the truth of Being (the presencing of presence) (Heidegger, 2012, p. 148). Daniel O. Dahlstrom, in his influential dictionary, *The Heidegger Dictionary*, terms Beyng as “historical being” by underlining the historical character of Beyng (2013, p. 95). I think this is a mistake because as it has been shown, Beyng, as appropriating event or turn, is the name for the truth of Being. That means Beyng is not Being but corresponds to the historical character of Being or its unconcealment in history. In addition, when we think of Heidegger’s placing Beyng between Being and beings, Dahlstrom’s move dissolves the difference between Being and Beyng.

2.2.1.5. The Strife Between the World and the Earth

After showing that the truth of Being is Beyng, another element related to the truth of Being can be considered: the strife between the world and the earth. These concepts are all related to the search for what a god signifies in Heidegger’s philosophy. Firstly, the concept of the world will be presented as a basis on which beings are understood. Thereby, the world will amount to an understanding of Being. Secondly, the concept of the earth will be considered as self-concealing concealment of Being in an openness of the world. Finally, the strife between the world and the earth will be shown as being in strict relation to the concept of the truth of Being.

First of all, Heidegger states that “the world is not the mere collection of the countable or uncountable, familiar and unfamiliar things that are at hand. But neither is it a merely imagined framework added by our representation to the sum of such given things...World is never an object that stands before us and can be seen” (1993b, p. 170). As is seen, the notion of the world is not the same as the traditional understanding of the world in the sense that the world is not a collection of things. Rather, for Heidegger, the world means a “context of assignments or references...as significance” (2001a, p. 121), i.e., the world is a “referential totality of significance (which as such is constitutive for worldhood)” (2001a, p. 236). That means the world is not a being

or “a horizon, but ‘the...whole of possible interconnection’ of beings. One such possible interconnection is the context of equipment.” (Critchley & Schürmann, 2008, p. 86). To make it clear, the world or “the whole possible interconnection of beings” designates a historical web of meanings in which Dasein ek-sists, is with others, and deals with entities. Aret Karademir describes Heidegger’s concept of the world more inclusively as that:

the world Dasein is born into, or as Heidegger likes to say, ‘thrown’ (*geworfen*) into, is the *shared* context of intelligibility of a historical community that determines the parameters of intelligible ways of existence, intelligible patterns of conduct, intelligible modes of interpreting beings, and intelligible forms of self-understanding for human beings (2013, p. 13).

For this reason, it is plausible to say that Heidegger’s concept of the world is a world of meanings by which entities are determined. And, through different epochs of the history of Being, there opens different worlds (or namely different worlds of meanings) according to which people exist, act, interpret and understand.

As it seems, Heidegger’s concept of the world is a background understanding by which beings make sense. This, in turn, means that the concept of the world refers to, as Hubert Dreyfus points out, an understanding of Being (2005, p. 407). To make it clear, we have already interpreted Being as the basis on which entities are already understood, and now we come to interpret the world in the same way as the basis by which beings make sense. That is why Dreyfus finds a strict connection between Heidegger’s Being and the world in the sense that the world is nothing other than an understanding of Being embedded and embodied in human practices at a particular period in history.

We have also interpreted the truth of Being as the movement of concealing and unconcealing in the sense that there occurs an understanding of Being on which beings are determined while other possible understandings of Being are covered up. Likewise, when a world is opened as a world, other possible worlds are covered up. Heidegger names this concealed “element” that arises when a world is opened in, for example, an artwork as earth (1993b, p. 173).

Thus, Heidegger employs another concept, earth, which is in strict relation to the concept of the world when he especially attempts to discourse on the Being of a work of art. Before the earth, Heidegger claims that “to be a work means to set up a world” (1993b, p. 170). For example, Van Gogh’s work of a pair of shoes of a peasant woman opens a world in which the peasant woman exists, performs his daily duties, and lives a meaningful life in the midst of beings (Heidegger, 1993b, p. 170). Thus, in the work of art, there occurs an opening of a world. On the other side, by the essence of truth, there also occurs a closing that Heidegger calls the earth. Heidegger warns that the notion of the earth should not be “associated with the idea of a mass of matter deposited somewhere, or with the merely astronomical idea of a planet” (1993b, p. 168). So, the earth does not simply mean the material of the artwork of peasant shoes.

That is why Robert Stulberg’s interpretation of the earth as the entities within the world (*das Siende*) is not correct. He claims that “the earth, [Heidegger] explains, is the so-called existing reality of the work of art—the paint of the painting, the stone of the sculpture, the words of the poem, or song” (Stulberg, 1973, p. 161). However, Heidegger says that the earth shelters the entities that arise in the artwork like the pair of shoes but does not reduce it to a being or beings (1993b, p. 168). That means when an understanding of Being (a world) is opened, Being conceals itself, and beings show themselves. In other words, if there would be no truth of Being which conceals and unconceals at the same time, there would be no chance for beings to be interpreted in one way or another because otherwise, the whole of “overmuch” possibilities of Being would be opened at the same time, and this would end up with no possible world for beings to show themselves. To make it clear, if a lane shines with all possible colors at the same time, it would not be possible for eyes to see beings under that light. Furthermore, if a color (such as yellow) of lamb shines on beings but does not conceal itself, there would again be no possibility to see lightened beings.

Thus, the earth means “the closed region...which rises up as self-closing” (Heidegger, 1993b, p. 180). That means that when, in the artwork, an understanding of Being is opened as a world, other possible understandings of Being are covered up as the earth. As the earth covers (namely, Being conceals itself), beings show themselves in a world (namely, in unconcealment of a particular understanding of Being). That is why the

earth comes to mean Being's self-closing aspect whereas the world means Being's self-opening aspect. In addition, Heidegger shows a mutual, circular, and contentious relationship between the world and the earth. The world's opening occurs on the earth while the earth's self-closing or self-secluding happens through the open area of the world (Heidegger, 1993b, p. 174). That means that an understanding of Being (a world as clearing) is opened on its ground (the earth) that is concealed, namely Being itself. Since the world is that which opens while the earth is that which closes, there also happens some sort of strife between the world and the earth: "The world, in resting upon the earth, strives to surmount it. As self-opening, it cannot endure anything closed. The earth, however, as sheltering and concealing, tends always to draw the world into itself and keep it there" (Heidegger, 1993b, p. 174). Consequently, in an artwork, there happens strife between the world and the earth in the sense of concealing (clearing) and unconcealing (closing) (Heidegger, 1993b, p. 180).

Heidegger terms this strife in the artwork as truth. Heidegger states that "truth establishes itself in the work. Truth essentially occurs only as the strife between clearing and concealing in the opposition of world and earth." (1993b, p. 187). Then, it is seen that the truth of Being which historically occurs as Beyng (the event) can take place in a work of art as the strife between the world and the earth in the sense of concealing and unconcealing. Thus, by this strife between the world and the earth, there happens an opening of beings or an understanding of Being by which beings are understood as is the case in the truth of Being (Heidegger, 1993b, p. 195). At the same time, there happens a closing of Being.

To sum up, I have first interpreted the concept of truth as the movement of concealing and unconcealing. Secondly, I have explained the concept of Being as the basis on which beings are already understood. Thirdly, I have combined these two terms and described the truth of Being as the historical movement of the change of the basis on which beings are determined. This movement always occurs as unconcealing an understanding of Being while concealing Being itself (together with its other possible understandings). Fourthly, I have drawn attention to another core concept of Heidegger which is Beyng as the event of appropriation, and I have presented that Beyng designates the same occurring as the truth of Being. Finally, I have shown that

Heidegger's conception of the world refers to an unconcealed understanding of Being while the earth refers to the self-concealing and concealed Being. That is why there is always strife between the world and the earth, and this strife refers to the truth of Being. That is, the truth of Being is the strife between a world's opening and an earth's closing.

2.2.2. The Holy

Following the path of thinking envisaged by Heidegger, the concept of the holy should be possible to be traced in relation to the truth of Being. He writes:

The holy, which alone is the essential sphere of divinity, which in turn alone affords a dimension for the gods and for God, comes to radiate only when Being itself beforehand and after extensive preparation has been illuminated and is experienced in its truth (1993a, p. 242).

Then, the question is: what is "holy" and how does it come to be the sphere of divinity out of the truth of Being?

The concept of the holy is not a notion belonging to the sphere of beings but Being. That is, it is not ontic but ontological. As Joeri Schrijvers sets forth, "the holy is not something present: it is not before us as an object nor already facing us a simple being would. At best, the holy *presences*—it is a process rather than a product, a movement rather than a completed action" (2022, p. 120). So, the holy is not a present being in our world, which should be searched to be found. Rather, it is like "something" to be disclosed in the same way Being is disclosed itself in its truth. At the same time, taking a path from the truth of Being to the concept of the holy does not turn out to be going from Being to beings but staying in the truth of Being.

Specifically, when a new era or a new understanding of Being is disclosed, the fact that this understanding could be otherwise and how this understanding is revealed (namely, the truth of Being) is concealed and forgotten. Or in the strife between the world and the earth, the earth conceals itself, and the world surmounts the earth till the world shows itself as the ultimate world. Then, Being skins into oblivion. In such an era, "the evening of the world's age has been declining toward its night. The world's

night is spreading its darkness. The era is defined by the god's failure to arrive, by the 'default of God.'" (Heidegger, 2001e, p. 89). By the default of God, Heidegger means the situation in which gods fled and do not interfere with the strife between world and earth or namely, the truth of Being. So, they remain absent and do not draw near to the happening of the truth of Being. Heidegger calls this situation the dark night of an epoch of history, which is, in turn, called "the destitute time" (*dürftige Zeit*, Heidegger takes the expression from Hölderlin's poem, *Bread and Wine*). For in such a time, it does not even become possible to discern the fact that gods fled. In such a dark night of an era or "the destitute time," the absence of ground or abyss is exposed. If the destitute time continues long, this destitution is also forgotten in the same way Being is forgotten (Heidegger, 2001e, pp. 90-91).

Then, Heidegger talks about the ones who go deep into the abyss, reach it, and find out what the abyss marks. Those ones, for Heidegger, are mortals or human beings, especially poets, and the marks of the abyss that are found "are the traces of the fugitive gods." At the abyss⁷ and amidst the traces, there is "the site of the wedding feast of men and gods. Only within reach of this site, if anywhere, can traces of the fugitive gods still remain for god-less men" (Heidegger, 2001e, p. 91). When these traces are found, there becomes a possibility of a turn, namely the truth of Being, among mortals and the gods at the same time: "The gods who 'were once there,' 'return' only at the 'right time'—that is, when there has been a turn among men in the right place, in the right way" (Heidegger, 2001e, p. 90). That is, these traces provide a possibility for the truth of Being.

Poets are there, for Heidegger, to sing and name the holy by tracing the traces of fugitive gods and thus prepare human beings for the advent of the gods. For example, Heidegger indicates, "gods do appear in Hölderlin's poetry. The poet speaks of them" (1996, p. 32).

⁷ For Heidegger, abyss is not something behind or under the appearing world. Instead, it is all that appears. For when "presence conceals itself...it is itself already absence" (Heidegger, 2001e, p. 91). In the same way, abyss is the groundlessness in the sense that grounding of the ground is concealed.

All you faithful
friendly gods!
I wish you knew
how my soul loved you!

Naturally I couldn't call you
by name then, nor did you use
mine, as humans do, as if
they really knew each other.

But I was better acquainted with you
than I ever was with humans,
I knew the stillness of the Aether:
I never understood the words of men.
(Hölderlin, 2004, p. 22)

Thus, poets are the ones among people, who can sense the holy and prepare a way toward the truth of Being. Heidegger claims:

Poets are the mortals who...sense the trace of the fugitive gods, stay on the gods' tracks, and so trace for their kindred mortals the way toward the turning. The ether, however, in which alone the gods are gods, is their godhead. The element of this ether, however, that within which even the godhead itself is still present, is the holy. The element of the ether for the coming of the fugitive gods, the holy, is the track of the fugitive gods (2001e, p. 92).

Therefore, for Heidegger, the holy, as an element of gods, is the track of the fugitive gods that prepares a turn among mortals, namely the truth of Being. To make it clear, since finding and uttering the holy leads to the truth of Being, Heidegger seems to consider the holy to be the truth of Being. However, as Being by its truth is also self-concealing, the holy can also remain concealed: "Not only is the holy lost as the track toward the godhead; even the traces leading to that lost track are well-nigh obliterated" (Heidegger, 2001e, p. 92). In line with this, what else can be indicated about "the holy" as the element of "the ether" remaining lost and referred to by poets? In fact, the holy is about the revelation of Dasein's clinging to particular entities and what thereby leads her/him to experience beings as a whole (Cummings, 2013, p. 189). Otherwise, it would not be possible to name the holy in the plight of the forgetfulness of Being. However, this does not mean that the holy is the same as beings because as Owen T. Cumming indicates, "the whole...grants holiness. The whole in question is what is cleared or lighted by being as *Lichtung*" (2013, p. 189). Thus, it can also be indicated that the holy refers to a whole, namely a world or an openness. Since an opening of

openness is at the same time a closing by the “nature” of the truth of Being, the holy also designates this opening and closing character of an openness. That is to say again, for Heidegger, the holy refers to the truth of Being.

To conclude, it follows from what has been put forward that: Firstly, the holy is not an entity but an openness that can be experienced in the forgetful era of the history of Being. That is to say, the holy is an enlightened abode (an openness) where beings show themselves. However, it is forgotten among people along with Being itself. So, some mortal individuals are needed, who witness and name the holy. One of them is regarded as a poet because poets are the ones who stand between mortals and gods (Heidegger, 2000, p. 64). When they utter the name of the holy, this word sets up a world and sets forth the earth, i.e., it starts the strife between the world and the earth and so the truth of Being starts to occur. Then, secondly, the holy is not just an openness but also an opening as I have already shown that an openness contains in itself the movement of opening, i.e., openness is also an opening. Thus, the holy refers to the realization of beings as a whole (openness), so that there can be a change or an authentic projection in the course of the history of Being (opening). In addition, I have shown that this opening also includes a closing, so this holy opening also includes a closing. That is, in short, the holy refers to the truth of Being. That is why, thirdly, the holy is where the traces of fugitive gods are found. That means the holy, as the truth of Being, carries the sphere where gods can arrive. This point will be clearer in the following subsections. Moreover, in the second chapter, I will infer a possible reciprocal relation between the holy and the concept of anxiety of *Being and Time* from the fact that as the holy refers to the truth of Being.

Following the thought of Hölderlin, Heidegger claims that in dwelling poetically, individuals “divine a path by which, through what is thought differently, [they] come nearer to thinking the same as what the poet composes in his poem” (2001c, p. 217). In other words, when humans hear the holy that is named by the poet, they divine a path that should be taken to understand what the holy tells. At the same time, in such a dwelling, they are “allowed to look up, out of it, through it, toward the divinities” (Heidegger, 2001c, p. 218). Thus, divinities can show themselves through the sphere of the holy. Heidegger says that “the holy is not holy because it is divine; rather the

divine is divine because in its way it is ‘holy’” (2000, p. 82). That means, the holy does not need what is divine to occur, but divinities need the holy. Consequently, the holy refers to the truth of Being, and thus, the holy is an openness where the advent of gods or divinities is possible. So then, before gods, what are these divinities?

2.2.3. Divinity

On the way to gods and for their advent, even if humans are in a state of listening to the poems who name the holy, they cannot think directly about what gods mean but may come to know divinities. That is why even if the holy is the track of fugitive gods, it is only a beginning. I have explained the holy by referring to the truth of Being. Now, the concept of divinity will be considered in relation to the holy. Heidegger says that “the holy binds the divine. The divine draws the god near” (2001e, p. 138). In order to show how to proceed from the concept of the holy to the concept of divinity, Heidegger gives a clue by saying that the holy is “the essential sphere of divinity, which in turn alone affords a dimension for the gods and for God” (1993a, p. 242). I have shown that the holy that is named by the poets opens an area, and so in this holy area, divinities should be revealed.

Thus, I will first show that divinities are the signs which are sent by gods. Due to their origin, those signs become “beckoning messengers of gods.” Secondly, I will explain that these divinities can be found in “work and sacrifice, deed and thought.” That is why divinities are closer to human beings than physical or biological beings are to humans. However, people should wait for divinities in the similar way they wait for gods, and this awaiting will also designate the coming of gods. Finally, I will explain that divinities have a role in the truth of Being in the sense that divinities are godly guiding elements in the occurrence of Being. If the holy is the truth of Being, namely an openness where divinities are found, then divinities are the contributions to the happening of the truth of Being by gods.

First of all, Heidegger says that divinization, or namely forming and sending divinities belongs to the sphere of gods (2012, p. 6). That is why divinities are not something to be found alongside entities as another entity. Rather, the concept of divinity, like the

concept of the holy, is in strict relation to Being, which will be detailed at the end of this subsection. This relation is predictable from the fact that Heidegger draws a path of thinking from the truth of Being and the holy to the concept of divinity. Then, what exactly are these god-made divinities?

Heidegger claims that “the divinities are the beckoning messengers of the godhead. Out of the hidden sway of the divinities the god emerges as what he is, which removes him from any comparison with beings that are present” (2001d, p. 176). In other words, divinities are messages of gods, and these messages are not of the same kind as the entities within the world. In addition, Heidegger says that “beyng is the trembling of divinization (the trembling of the resonance that announces the decision of the gods about their god)” (2012, p. 189). We see here that Heidegger substitutes the word divinization with the expression “the resonance that announces the decision of the gods about their god.” So, it can be inferred that divinities beckon to gods’ decisions, and they are simply signs or hints⁸ of gods in the sense that divinization which constitutes them is the resonance of the decisions of gods. That is, gods beckon via divinities, and divinities beckon to gods (or gods’ decisions in particular) in return.

In fact, beckoning is the language of gods, and poets are the ones who are able to sense these hints and so poetize and deliver them to people because poets are the ones who stand “between the former—the gods—and the latter—the people” (Heidegger, 2000, pp. 63-64). In addition, poets are sayers or the ones who discourse, name, and sing

⁸ In the book, *Hölderlin's Hymns "Germania" and "The Rhine"*, Heidegger says that “a beckoning is something other than a sign, and to beckon means something other than to point to something, or to merely draw attention to something.” He tries to avoid the idea that by beckoning, gods become “something referred to or observable” in the sense that they are “standing at such and such a place and can be reached there.” He specifies the meaning of beckoning: “beckoning—for example, when departing—is the retaining of a proximity as the distance increases, and conversely, when arriving, is a making manifest the distance that still prevails in this felicitous proximity.” That means that even if gods arrive or depart, divinities, as beckoning messengers of gods, keep the essential distance between gods and human beings in the sense that even if gods flight or draw near, the distance between gods and human beings does not change, but to what beckonings beckon change regarding whether gods arrive or depart (Heidegger, 2014a, p. 31). So, even if gods fled, this does not mean that divinities cannot beckon to gods, and even if gods draw near, this does not mean that gods become observable. However, Nikola Mirkovic uses the words, beckoning, sign and hint interchangeably when he explains this issue. Mirkovic, N. (2021). Hint (*Wink*). In *The Cambridge Heidegger Lexicon*. So, from now on, I will follow the same stance with Mirkovic. Still, it would be wise to keep in mind the explanation I did for the meaning of beckoning.

while gods are the ones who can only beckon. Heidegger states that “human beings are...sayers...[This] distinguishes them from stones, plants, and animals, but also from the gods” (2014b, p. 90). It is not hard to guess how human beings differ from stones or animals because these entities lack language. But, how human beings differ from the gods is now understandable in the sense that people say, gods beckon.

The signs of gods are different from the signs that are constitutive for the worldhood of a world. In *Being and Time*, Heidegger claims that “*a sign is something ontically ready-to hand, which functions both as this definite equipment and as something indicative of [was . . . anzeigt] the ontological structure of readiness-to-hand, of referential totalities, and of worldhood*” (2001a, p. 114). That means a sign can be the sign of a particular ready-to-hand being, which, in turn, refers to a totality of beings, which, in turn, indicates the worldhood of the world, i.e., the understanding of Being by which beings are determined. For example, a hammer signifies hammering (ready-to-hand), which refers to all beings which are usable in relation to hammering, which, in turn, indicates a world constructed by the understanding of the Being of these beings. In the oblivion of Being or the state of fallenness to a particular meaning of Being, everything seems already known, common, and ordinary. However, since neither divinities as signs of gods nor gods themselves are ordinary entities within a world, their “appearance” or occurrence in the world implies that the hints of gods are extraordinary. That is why when they first show up, they show themselves very differently from the ordinary entities within the world. Since they are extraordinary, only some people like poets who stand between gods and humans are able to experience them.

Still, this should not mean that divinities are so far from human beings. On the contrary, Heidegger indicates that

the essence of divinity is closer to us than what is so alien in other living creatures, closer, namely, in an essential distance which, however distant, is nonetheless more familiar to our ek-sistent essence than is our scarcely conceivable, abysmal bodily kinship with the beast (1993a, p. 230).

Thus, to humans, divinities are closer than other physical or biological beings. This also indicates that when Heidegger talks about the holy, divinities, and gods, he does

not refer to “things” in the metaphysical afterworld but to the occurrence of the world under our noses. Then, where are these divinities found, that are so close to us?

The second issue with divinities is that, for Heidegger, they can show themselves on some special occasions. Surely, it will be where the holy dimension is opened. Martin Nitsche states:

A Divine being can also be invited into this dimension by indicating coordinates for an encounter. This usually happens symbolically or architecturally by building a temple, a statue, painting an image, performing a gesture, et cetera. A temple, a statue, an image, or a gesture marks the coordinates of an encounter for both humans and Divine, in the (opened) dimension between them (2017, p. 343).

In line with this list and in addition to that list, Heidegger states that a god “*pervades* being *with divinity* always only in work and sacrifice, deed and thought” (2012, p. 206). And, from *The Origin of the Work of Art*, it can be inferred that divinities can also be found in “founding a political state,” “the nearness of being that is most in being,” and “the thinker’s questioning” (Heidegger, 1993b, pp. 186-187).⁹ In short, Dasein can come across divinities “in work and sacrifice, deed and thought.” “Work” certainly refers to a work of art. “Thought” seems to refer to the thinker’s questioning. “Deed” can be any authentic action of Dasein, including founding a political state. Finally, an essential sacrifice may be one’s willingly ending his/her life. In sum, the divinization of gods occurs as sending signs in work, sacrifice, deed, and thought. These four cases can be practiced only in the opened sphere of the holy, and this means that they also keep the holy openness open.

Since the way to gods is through divinities, before gods and for gods, people should first await divinities:

Mortals dwell in that they await the divinities as divinities. In hope they hold up to the divinities what is un hoped for. They wait for intimations of their coming and do not mistake the signs of their absence. They do not make their gods for themselves and do not worship idols. In the very depth of misfortune they wait for the weal that has been withdrawn (Heidegger, 2001b, p. 148).

⁹ Apparently, they should not be regarded as a final list for divinities, but for simplicity's sake, from now on, they will be cited as “work, sacrifice, deed and thought.”

That means that waiting for gods is preceded by waiting for divinities. However, as it was shown, this waiting does not mean waiting inactively. Rather, human beings should wait for divinities always only through work, sacrifice, deed, and thought. It is not the case that divinities are in the holy area even if human beings do not care. On the contrary, it is a process of coming together of humans and gods in the sense that humans actively wait for divinities while at the same time gods divinize by giving signs which meet with people. If people hearing the holy do not start to wait actively for divinities, then the open realm of divinization is refused, and gods are left undecided (Heidegger, 2012, pp. 16-17).

In *The Question Concerning Technology*, Heidegger talks about artworks in ancient Greece and remarks: “They illuminated the presence [*Gegenwart*] of the gods and the dialogue of divine and human destinings” (1993c, p. 339). So, works of art signify three things: first, via the work of art in the holy sphere, there is a possibility of a dialogue between gods and humans because of the divinity contained in it. Second, in the work of art, the gods are present. Third, a work of art (all together with the human being, the holy, divinities, and gods) opens a world and sets forth the earth in the sense that in their strife, the truth of Being occurs. I will consider two examples of works of art that Heidegger gives in *The Origin of the Work of Art*. Firstly, Heidegger gives an example of a Greek temple:

A building, a Greek temple, portrays nothing. It simply stands there in the middle of the rock-cleft valley. The building encloses the figure of the god, and in this concealment lets it stand out into the holy precinct through the open portico. By means of the temple, the god is present in the temple. This presence of the god is in itself the extension and delimitation of the precinct as a holy precinct...The temple, in its standing there, first gives to things their look and to men their outlook on themselves. This view remains open as long as the work is a work, as long as the god has not fled from it (1993b, pp. 167-168).

In this example, Heidegger describes a Greek temple. This temple stands in the holy area since it portrays a figure of gods, and so gods become present in it. This shows the bond between the concept of the holy and gods. That is, the holy is possible with gods, and gods show themselves in the holy. In addition, since the temple, as an artwork, gives things their look and people their outlook, artworks open a world for Heidegger. In other words, an artwork in the holy area where gods are present leads to

the truth of Being. Now, we can turn our attention to the second example Heidegger gives:

The same holds for the linguistic work. In the tragedy nothing is staged or displayed theatrically, but the battle of the new gods against the old is being fought. The linguistic work, originating in the speech of the people, does not refer to this battle; it transforms the people's saying so that now every living word fights the battle and puts up for decision what is holy and what unholy, what great and what small, what brave and what cowardly, what lofty and what flighty, what master and what slave (1993b, pp. 168-169).

In this second example, we can see that linguistic works or the words of poets determine the intelligibility of things by transforming the speech of people. That is, these poems have the power to change the basis on which beings are determined. In addition, Heidegger claims that poets can name the holy because "poetizing is a passing on of these beckonings [or divinities] to the people." By way of poetizing, poets place "Dasein of the people into the realm of these beckonings [or divinities], that is, a showing, a pointing in which the gods become manifest" (Heidegger, 2014a, p. 31). Here, becoming manifest does not mean to be observable but appearing while being veiled by signs (Heidegger, 1992b, p. 37). To make it clear, for Heidegger, appearance "means...the announcing-itself by [von] something which does not show itself, but which announces itself through something which does show itself" (Heidegger, 1962, p. 52). For example, a disease does not show itself from itself but announces itself through a symptom that shows itself. So, gods' becoming present or their appearing does not mean that they are observable or referable. Rather, gods announce their presence through their signs or divinities.

In these examples of artworks, the third issue about divinities shows itself: divinities are at play in the truth of Being. In other words, they are god-made elements in the occurrence of Being. As it was shown, the holy is an openness which also means an act of opening, i.e., the holy is the truth of Being. Since the holy is also the sphere of divinities and the element of gods, and since divinities are godly signs, divinities are simply godly elements in the truth of Being. When poets name the holy, these holy names open a world. So, in this process of opening, there are guiding signs (or divinities) of gods which Dasein chose to follow or not. John Krummel says:

The holy as such is the background against which phenomena can meaningfully arise for man. In its awesomeness, overpowering us like *mana*, it allows things, in general, to show up but it can become concentrated or expressed in concrete sacred or holy objects and locales. And hence God or gods manifest on the basis of the holy (2022, pp. 8-9).

That means the holy, divinities, and gods are all at play in the truth of Being. Also, they result in an understanding of Being, on the basis of which beings become what they are.

In short, if the two examples of artwork above are considered, it can be realized that Heidegger claims that these artworks that contain divinities and so gods in the holy area determine beings around them and transform meaningful conventions and conversations among people. That means they are world openers. They first open the holy area. In this holy area, the movement of the truth of Being starts. Then, they let signs of gods to show up. Following these signs, the path of change in the course of the history of Being is taken by people. Finally, gods become present in the holy area through divinities. John Caputo states “The appearance of the gods is itself made possible only within the dimension of the divine, and the divine is itself made possible only within the dimension of the Holy” (1993, p. 183). Thus, gods are present via divinities just in the manner of beckoning (and so not observable), which are in the holy area of a work of art. And, if people refuse these divinities, then gods are left undecided.

Since a god is the one who “who *pervades beyng with divinity*,” (Heidegger, 2012, p. 206) Beyng or truth of Being turns out to be a divine occurring. That is why “Beyng is the trembling of this divinization” (Heidegger, 2012, p. 192). That means in all the history of Being or throughout different understandings of Being closing and unclosing, divinities of gods accompany. That is why the truth of Being or Beyng, as an appropriating event, is divine in the sense that Beyng is not the god, but gods are at play in Being with divinities. Therefore, it is not possible to think of Heidegger’s inquiry into Being and so the truth of Being without considering his understanding of the holy, divinity, and gods because these concepts refer to the essential components of the event of appropriation:

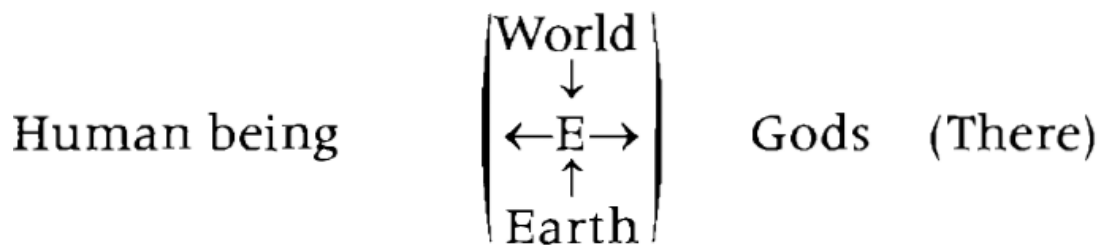


Figure 1: Heidegger's Formulation of the Event (2012, p. 246)

This drawing is made by Heidegger himself in *Contributions to Philosophy*. And as we can see, the truth of Being or Beyng as the event occurs as the strife between the world and the earth and between human beings and gods. However, the relationship between human beings and gods is not direct as in the case of the strife between the world and the earth. Humans hold sway of Beyng or the truth of Being while waiting for the advent and absconding of gods whereas gods need the truth of Being in order to hint and give signs to people. This issue will be elaborated on when explaining what gods signify for Heidegger. For now, it is enough to claim that Beyng is related to gods as well as human beings, and it is also divine occurring.

To sum up, firstly, it is claimed that divinities are formed by gods, and so, they are not ontic beings within the world but what is ontological. Divinities are interpreted as the signs of gods. In fact, signs or hints are the language of gods. As divinization of gods, these signs are what is extraordinary or unusual among usual and ordinary signs of the world. However, this unusualness or godly nature of divinities should not mean that they are far from human beings. On the contrary, because of their relation to the truth of Being, they are closer to humans than entities within the world.

Secondly, these divinities occur or are found in work, thought, deed, and sacrifice in the holy area. However, divinities do not always exist even when no human cares about them. Rather, there is a reciprocal relationship between human beings and gods in the sense that people should actively wait for gods while gods hint (divinize) to them at the same time. That is, people should wait for divinities for the arrival of gods, or gods arrive via divinities when people are actively waiting.

Thirdly, I have explained the world-opening characteristic of a work of art, and on that basis, I have shown that divinities are the god-made elements in the truth of Being. If the holy is the occurrence of Being, namely the truth of Being, then divinities are the guiding signs of gods that Dasein chooses to follow or not. Therefore, Beyng or the truth of Being is, in fact, a divine occurrence in the sense that it is neither an occurrence by itself nor by Dasein but the relationship between human beings and gods.

In the third chapter, I will interpret the functions and the language of divinities by likening them to the concept of the call of conscience of *Being and Time* by employing an analogy of Socrates' *daimonion*, which I will explain. This will also illuminate a possible relation between gods and humans in Heidegger's philosophy. However, before that, what does the word God signify for Heidegger?

2.2.4. What does the word god signify?

Before going to explain what god signifies for Heidegger, it is wise to summarize the points that have been made so far. I have shown that Heidegger's plural usage of the word god does not mean that he is a polytheist. Neither is he a monotheist. Only does this imply a sort of undecidedness regarding the being of gods. In addition, by god Heidegger does not refer to the God of Christianity or of any other religion. At the same time, Heidegger's god is not a god for whom one should offer sacrifices or prayers. Furthermore, this god is absolutely not the God of metaphysics. Moreover, Heidegger does not mean Being, Beyng or beings when he talks about god. Also, a god cannot be Dasein itself. Finally, Heidegger's god is not of a human making and is not an idol.

I have also shown that there are three stages to be grasped in order to understand what a god means for Heidegger. The first one is to understand the truth of Being. The truth of Being is the movement of the unconcealment and concealment of Being. That means while a particular understanding of Being reigns in humans' understanding of beings, other possible understandings of Being are concealed. This historical movement of concealing and unconcealing is also called Beyng as appropriating event. In addition, this movement is interpreted in terms of the strife between the world and the earth. The second stage is to understand the concept of the holy from the

perspective of the truth of Being. Most of the time, people live as forgetful of the truth of Being because Being conceals itself. Moreover, in such time, the fact that Being conceals itself is also concealed. In such decadence, some people, like poets, by reaching to the darkest bottom of that decadence, become able to sense and name the holy. That is, they can sense what is unusual in the usualness of the common world. A poem that contains the holy opens a world in the sense that the truth of Being occurs. So, the holy is to initiate the movement of opening a world, or, simply, the truth of Being. In the third stage, where the concept of divinity is to be understood out of the concept of the holy, the holy appears as a sphere where divinities, that is, the traces or signs of gods, might show themselves. For example, a Greek temple, as a work of art, stand in the sphere of the holy. Then, in such a work, gods show themselves through divinities. These divinities are beckoning messengers or signs of gods. At the same time, such an artwork that contains divinities and stands in the holy is a world-opener, i.e., it discloses an understanding of Being. Thus, whereas the holy is the truth of Being, divinities are god-made elements within the truth of Being.

Now, I will show what Heidegger means by gods by referring to what I have explained about divinities. Firstly, I will present that for Heidegger, a god signifies simply that which beckons (divinization). The second claim will be that since beckonings or signs of gods are unordinary signs among the ordinary web of signs in the average everyday world, a god means extraordinariness in the ordinary. Thirdly, I will exhibit that the signs (divinities) of gods are also traces of whether gods arrive or abscond. So, a god signifies that which arrives or absconds. Fourthly, since divinities are in strict relation to the occurrence of the truth of Being, a god is, in Heidegger's philosophy, what is in play in Beyng. Fifthly, even if the god pervades Beyng or the truth of Being with divinities, it is not a regulator of the truth of Being, but it is that which needs the truth of Being. Sixthly, for Heidegger, a god is in strict relation with human beings. Such a relation may acquire different manners in the course of the appropriating event. Finally, a god is the one who dies by witnessing the truth of Being. So, it gives "its place" to the last god.

First of all, it is possible to infer what Heidegger means by a god from what divinities are and by whom they are formed. I have shown divinities are signs or beckonings,

and they are formed or sent by gods (Heidegger, 2012, pp. 6, 189, 192). I have also shown that the language of gods is beckoning. Moreover, Heidegger says that “gods simply beckon...insofar as they are” (2014a, p. 31). Consequently, for Heidegger, a god firstly means that which beckons, and gods appear or are present through these beckoning or divinities. However, these divinities do not make gods observable. Rather, gods announce themselves through their divinities. Divinities of gods are guiding pointers that lead the path which Dasein either walks or not. That is why gods cannot be reduced to their divinities. As Laurence Paul Hemming claims:

Die Göttlichen [divinities] are then neither God, nor a substitute for God, nor gods. But their proximation to the emergence of God, as what gives the emergence in its coming about, and their non-objectivity, non-objectness, means they belong to God, but are not he...Not God, nor gods, but what in the worlding of world hints at God (1998a, pp. 415-416).

Secondly, I have shown that divinities or signs of gods must be different from the signs of the average everyday world. Thus, a god, for Heidegger, corresponds to that which is extraordinariness in the ordinary world. Andrew Mitchell states that, for Heidegger, “the God is foreign to the world that is familiar to us” (2015, p. 203). Or we, as fallen ones, are foreign to another possibility of an understanding of Being, i.e., other than the one which reigns in the current world. In such a destitute era (in the oblivion of Being), for fallen people or *das Man*, “the god [is] to be found in what is strange” (Heidegger, 2012, p. 358).

Thirdly, these hints or the divinities of gods are also indications of whether gods arrive or abscond, whether they are present or absent (fugitive), and whether they are near or remote. In all those situations, there are hints referring to them. For example, in the dark times of the forgetfulness of Being, gods flight and are fugitive (Heidegger, 2014b, pp. 42, 49). Even in gods’ being fugitive or absent, there is a hint that refers to their being absent. Otherwise, it would not be possible for poets to go down into fallenness and name the holy. Thus, an opening of openness, namely a world, would also not be possible. Heidegger states:

By the opening up of a world, all things gain their lingering and hastening, their remoteness and nearness, their scope and limits. In a world’s worlding is gathered that spaciousness out of which the protective grace of the gods is

granted or withheld. Even this doom, of the god remaining absent, is a way in which world worlds (1993b, p. 170).

That means that even when gods remain absent or abscond, they leave traces or divinities which are still world-openers. In addition to the hints of being absent and fugitive, gods beckon with divinities to the people who await their coming (Heidegger, 2012, p. 192). That is, gods also give signs of their advent, drawing near, and being present. Therefore, it is understood that a god, for Heidegger, signifies that which arrives or absconds; be present or absent (fugitive); be near or remote. Or as Jean Greisch puts it, “a god...is nothing but passing” (1996, p. 37).

Fourthly, a god means that which is in play in the truth of Being because, as I have already shown, the conditions for its appearance, namely the holy and divinities, are godly elements in the occurrence of Being. That is to say, the holy is the movement of unclosing and closing, namely the truth of Being. In other words, in the holy area, a world opens while the earth closes other possible worlds. Besides, I have exhibited that there are divinities or signs of gods in this holy openness. These divinities are godly elements that lead to the occurrence of Being. In other words, they are godly signs that Dasein chooses to follow or not in the truth of Being. In addition, as I have cited above, a god “*pervades Beyng with divinity*” (Heidegger, 2012, p. 206), and “*beyng is the trembling of divinization*” (Heidegger, 2012, p. 189). That is, Beyng, or the truth of Being, occurs by divinities of gods in the holy area. Moreover, Heidegger clearly indicates that “*beyng...lights up as the trace of the path of the last god*” (2012, p. 181) and that “*the essential occurrence of beyng... remains related to the passing by of the god*” (2012, p. 220). That is to say, Beyng or namely, the truth of Being is related to the divinities or signs of gods. So, it should be by now obvious that gods are the ones who participate in the course of the truth of Being. Therefore, Heidegger clearly claims that a god signifies what is in play in the truth of Being, and gods should be counted in thinking of Being itself.

For example, in his article *Heidegger, Revelation, and the Word of God*, Peter Hodgson constitutes a correspondence between Heidegger’s Being as “the event of

unconcealment” and “the word of God.”¹⁰ Reaching that conclusion, he departs from Christian faith: “according to Christian faith (to give it expression for the moment in a Heideggerian terminology), the word of God is a word by which the world is constituted” (Hodgson, 1969, p. 243). Disregarding the God of Christianity and its implications, such as being creator or ruler God, this example suits almost perfectly what has been explained so far. As I have cited before, Heidegger states that “poetizing is a passing on of...beckonings [or divinities of the gods] to the people” (2014a, p. 31). That is, poetizing that names the holy is conveying divinities of gods to people. Thus, such poems contain “words of gods,” and as artwork, they contribute to an opening of a world, namely the truth of Being. Then again, for Heidegger, a god means that which is at play in the truth of Being.

However, this does not mean gods dominate or reign or create or regulate Being. Rather, it is gods who need the truth of Being: “that which is needed by the gods and forgotten by humans...we call beyng” (Heidegger, 2012, p. 341). So, fifthly, for Heidegger, a god means that which needs the truth of Being. I have shown that gods are not a being or Being or Beyng (the truth of Being). Thus, a god stands wholly distinct from them (Heidegger, 2012, p. 189). In order to justify this, Heidegger claims that “‘the gods’ do not need beyng as their proper domain, in which they themselves find a place to stand. ‘The gods’ require beyng so that through beyng, which does not belong to them, they might indeed belong to themselves” (2012, p. 346). That is, gods’ needfulness or indigence of the truth of Being is a sign that Heidegger places gods out of Being but also makes room for them through their divinities in the truth of Being. To make it clear, Heidegger gives gods their undecidable “nature” by pushing them out of the sphere of Being. At the same time, Heidegger makes gods “knowable” or “something announcing itself” through their divinities since as I have shown, gods appear through divinities in the truth of Being just like an illness announces itself through a symptom. Consequently, for Heidegger, a god is not that which rules Being but one that needs the truth of Being. In this way, gods are freed from having Being, but they still find a way to announce themselves to people for the occurrence of Being.

¹⁰ Then, on the following pages, departing from the word of God, Hodgson goes too far and develops the idea that God is the event and so falls into an error.

Sixthly, gods are not only the ones who are at play in Beyng. Considering the drawing of Heidegger cited above, there is another element accompanying the event besides gods:

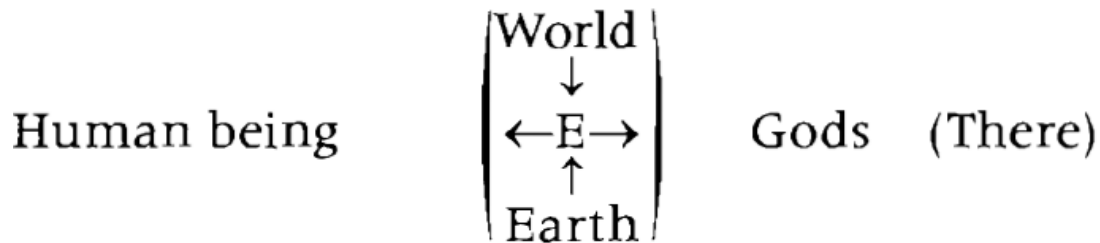


Figure 2: Heidegger's Formulation of the Event (2012, p. 246)

So far, the event of appropriation or the truth of Being has been one-sidedly explained, even though there have been some occasions in our explanation in which the human part in the event has been partially indicated without putting excessive emphasis on it. It is worth emphasizing that humans are also at play in the event of appropriation. Heidegger states that “beyng essentially occurs as the appropriation of the gods and humans to their en-counter. In the clearing of the concealment of the ‘between,’ a ‘between’ which arises out of, and with, the en-countering appropriation, there arises the strife of world and earth” (Heidegger, 2012, p. 375). So, in fact, Beyng, or namely, the truth of Being is in the middle of the relationship between human beings and gods. Then, what is the relationship between gods and human beings? First, it has already been shown that by naming or hearing the holy and sensing divinities, people actively await the advent and absconding of gods. Second, the nearness or remoteness of gods is always in relation to humans. That is, the distance gods “stand” is relative to their encountering humans. As I have indicated, if humans do not care for divinities, gods are left undecided. Third, while the truth of Being is what is needed by gods, it is forgotten or thought of by humans (Heidegger, 2012, p. 341). That is, their possible approaches to the truth of Being are different. In line with this, Heidegger says that the truth of Being is “the ‘between’ for the indigence of god and for the stewardship of the human being” (2012, p. 362). The stewardship of the human being does not mean that human beings decide, by themselves, “whether and how beings appear, whether and how God and the gods or history and nature come forward into the clearing of Being, come to presence and depart” (Heidegger, 1993a, p. 234). Rather, Heidegger indicates:

By fitting into the juncture of beyng we are *at the disposal of the gods*...for the use in the opening up of this open realm [of divinization]...At the 'disposal of the gods' means to stand far away and outside-i.e., outside the common way of understanding and interpreting 'beings'-and to belong to the most distant ones, those to whom the absconding of the gods in the gods' farthest withdrawal is what is closest (2012, pp. 16-17).

That means that in Beyng or in the truth of Being, human beings are in the use of gods. That is, people who sense unusual divinities of gods go out of the usual world or the usual understanding of Being. In this way, they become able to move toward a new understanding of Being. This is the meaning of the stewardship of human beings in the truth of Being. Gods need the truth of Being in order to beckon with their divinities (or signs) for the occurrence of Being while human beings actively wait for these signs of gods and steward the course of Beyng by following those signs. So, people, in fact, steward "the stillness of the passing by of the last god" (Heidegger, 2012, p. 16). That means, in turn, that humans are the shepherd of the traces of gods as well as Being. Fourth, in the betweenness of the truth of Being, by the encounter of human beings and gods, both sides "come to mutual recognition, i.e., decide about their mutual belonging" (Heidegger, 2012, p. 338). This mutual recognition is nothing other than the inventive thinking of Beyng, or namely the truth of Being. It designates the thinking which leads to gods pervading the truth of Being whereas people are displaced (Heidegger, 2012, pp. 365-366). So, the ordinariness becomes problematized. As a result, both sides contribute to the history of Being by mutual recognition.

The final issue of what a god means for Heidegger is that a god is that which can die. He says that "the most frightful jubilation must be the dying of a god. Only the human being 'has' the distinction of standing in front of death, because the human being is steadfastly in beyng: death [is] the highest testimony to beyng" (Heidegger, 2012, p. 181). That is, Heidegger thinks that the death of gods is different from the death of people. For Dasein, death is "the possibility of the impossibility of any existence at all" (Heidegger, 2001a, p. 307). Dasein always exists in front of and towards its death. However, dying of a god does not signify such a "possibility of the impossibility." Rather, it signifies that after the dying of a god, a new god may arrive with a new beginning in the truth of Being. This step taken by Heidegger shows itself as progress on the famous idea of Nietzsche, who declares that "God is dead." Nietzsche says:

The greatest recent event—that ‘God is dead,’ that the belief in the Christian god has become unbelievable—is already beginning to cast its first shadows over Europe...our old world must appear daily more like evening, more mistrustful, stranger, ‘older.’ But in the main one may say: The event itself is far too great, too distant, too remote from the multitude’s capacity for comprehension even for the tidings of it to be thought of as having *arrived* as yet (1974, p. 279).

Here, Nietzsche declares that God’s dying is an event, and by this event there is a closing of an old world and an opening of a new one, but the ones who can comprehend this event have not arrived yet. Similarly, Heidegger seems to experience the death of this God and gazes upon future events where a new god may arrive. That is why Heidegger interprets the words of Nietzsche as that “the proposition “God is dead” is no negation, rather the innermost yes to the coming” (as cited in Colony, 2011, p. 205).¹¹ By considering divine conditions for the coming of the gods, Tracy Colony inspiringly claims:

Heidegger framed his confrontation with Nietzsche within this context and traced the ultimate ambit of Nietzsche’s thought in terms of his experience of the death of God and his awareness of the need to think and create the conditions for a possible re-advent of god(s) (2011, p. 199).

Thus, Heidegger agrees with Nietzsche in the sense that a god can die but adds that a new god may arrive at the break of dawn.

On the first page of the chapter called *The Last God* in *Contributions to Philosophy*, Heidegger uses an expression, namely “the god wholly other than past ones and especially other than the Christian one” (2012, p. 319). That means the last god should be a new god in kind with respect to the older ones. Heidegger says that the adjective, last, does not mean that the last god will be the last of the gods in the sense of a cessation in the circulation of gods. Neither does it mean “a degradation of God...[that can be considered as] pure and simple blasphemy” (Heidegger, 2012, p. 322). Rather, the word “last” designates a new god with a new beginning in the history of Being (Heidegger, 2012, p. 321). Heidegger writes:

¹¹ Tracy Colony remarks that this statement that appears in the 191st footnote in *Nietzsche: Der Wille zur Macht als Kunst* (*Nietzsche: Will to Power as Art*) is later removed by Heidegger.

The last god is not the end; the last god is the other beginning of the immeasurable possibilities of our history. For the sake of this beginning, the previous history must not simply cease but must instead be brought to its end. The transfiguration of its essential basic positions has to be carried by us into the transition and the preparation (2012, p. 326).

Thus, the last god is a new god with a new beginning in the course of the truth of Being. It is the last, but there might be more to come. The last cannot mean the end because, for Heidegger, the end signifies “only where beings have torn loose from the truth of being and have denied every question-worthiness... The end never sees itself; instead, it considers itself the completion” (Heidegger, 2012, p. 329). That means that thinking that the last god is the end is, in fact, an inauthentic situation in which people live as fallen and destine themselves to a particular understanding of Being by which they come to know beings and forget the truth of Being. In addition, since a god can die, the death of this god is not an end but a trace or sign for a new or the last god and a new beginning.

To sum up, in Heidegger's philosophy, the concept of god signifies that which beckons. By these hints, a god also signifies what is unordinary in the ordinary. In addition, these hints or divinities show the advent and absconding of gods, so gods are the ones who pass by. Moreover, gods need the truth of Being to announce themselves to people for the occurrence of Being. With these four, gods are in play in the truth of Being and so in relation to the human being. Finally, a god can die in order to leave its place for the last god. The expression of the last god does not signify an end to gods but refers to a new god with a possibility of a new beginning with a new understanding of Being. Thus, if “God is dead,” then new gods start to beckon. Poets are there to spread these beckonings or divinities. If people are open to hearing them, a new world is opened, i.e., Being or the truth of Being occurs. That is, the extraordinary transforms the ordinary, and people shake themselves off and find new possible ways of Being.

My elaborations on Heidegger's gods will not end here. When I will establish a possible reciprocal relation between gods and anxiety as well as between the former and the call of conscience, I will interpret gods, divinities, and the holy from the perspective of the concepts and themes of *Being and Time* in the third chapter.

However, this interpretation will not negate what I have explained here. Rather, it will coincide with the descriptions in this chapter.

2.3. Conclusion of the Chapter

In conclusion, when Heidegger talks about gods, he does not mean theism or polytheism. Rather he defends the position that a being cannot be attributed to gods. Nor does he mean God of any religion or metaphysics. In addition, a god is not a being, Beyng or Being for Heidegger. It is what is other than them. God cannot be Dasein since Dasein is between humans and gods. Finally, Heidegger does not understand from gods an idol or a “something” human-made.

The truth of Being means the movement of opening and closing of an understanding of Being on the basis that beings are determined. Heidegger’s concepts like Beyng and the strife between the world and the earth designate the same movement. Beyng means the historical occurrence of Being. The world means an openness where beings show themselves while the earth means self-closing of other possible understandings of Being. The strife between the world and the earth designates the same occurrence of the truth of Being. That is, the world opens itself as an openness and tries to surmount everything while the earth shelters and conceals other possible worlds and resists this kind of opening of the world.

In destitute times, the traces of the holy are lost. However, there are ones, such as poets, who can sense the traces and name the holy. When the holy is named, this name as a work of art opens an openness or a world. That is why the holy means an openness. However, by the essence of truth, this holy openness has also the movement of opening and closing. Thus, the concept of the holy comes to mean nothing other than the truth of Being. The holy as an element of gods is the essential sphere in which divinities of gods can show themselves and so gods arrive.

Divinities are formed by gods and they are beckoning messengers of gods. Gods beckon through divinities, and divinities beckon to gods in return. They are signs or hints of gods. Divinities as signs are unusualness in the web of usual signs of the world.

Gods appear through these divinities. Divinities show themselves in work, deed, thought, and sacrifice in the holy sphere. Since there is an opening of a world in work, deed, thought, and sacrifice, and since divinities can be found in them, divinities turn out to be godly signs in the occurrence of the truth of Being. That is also to say that the truth of Being is a divine occurrence.

For Heidegger, a god means that which (1) beckons through its divinities in the holy area; (2) is unusualness in the usualness of the average everyday world; (3) arrives or absconds (passes by); (4) is at play in the truth of Being; (5) does not regulate or create but needs the truth of Being; (6) is in strict relationship with the human being; and (7) dies by witnessing the truth of Being to leave its place for the last god. The last god does not designate an end to gods but a new god with a new beginning in the history of Being.

Thus, Heidegger's statement, "only a god can save us," does not signify just a wordplay but the "play" (strife) between the world and the earth, namely the truth of Being. Heidegger gazes upon a new beginning with a new understanding of Being with his hope for the possibility of the arrival of a new god. However, his actively waiting for a new god does not declare the end of philosophy. On the contrary, gods "need philosophy. It is not as if *they themselves* had to philosophize for the sake of their own divinization; instead, it is because there must be philosophy *if* 'the gods' are once again to come into decision and if history is to attain its essential ground" (Heidegger, 2012, p. 364). That is to say, even if humans need a new god for a new beginning, they must not passively wait for gods. Rather, by thinking, poetizing, building a temple, or making an essential sacrifice, they prepare the ways for themselves and for all humans to become ready for the arrival of a new god.

How do humans become ready for the arrival of a new god? What exactly happens on the side of humans when gods draw near? Conversely, in what sense do gods draw near to a person who is lost in the turmoil of life? What exactly is the relationship between gods and humans in the truth of Being? How exactly do divinities of gods guide Dasein? How does Dasein dwell in nearness to gods? These will be some of the questions to which the next chapter will attempt to answer. With these answers, the

concept of holy, divinity and god will be interpreted from the perspective of *Being and Time*.



CHAPTER 3

“BY EXISTENCE, HEIDEGGER MEANT THE SEARCH FOR GOD”

“Trees were my teachers
Melodious trees
And I learned to love
Among flowers.

I grew up in the arms of the gods.”
(Hölderlin, 1996, p. 13)

“By existence, Heidegger meant the search for God. He was a seeker of God his entire life,” says Hans-Georg Gadamer, a student of Heidegger, in one of his conversations with Riccardo Dottori (Gadamer, 2006, p. 122). He says this because Dottori asks whether Heidegger and Karl Jaspers attribute similar meaning to the concept of existence. Gadamer rejects the similarity between Heidegger and Jaspers and seems to be certain that Heidegger prepares a way to gods even in his famous book *Being and Time*. In line with this, in *Letter on Humanism*, Heidegger says:

With the existential determination of the essence of man, therefore, nothing is decided about the ‘existence of God’ or his ‘nonbeing,’ no more than about the possibility or impossibility of gods. Thus it is not only rash but also an error in procedure to maintain that the interpretation of the essence of man from the relation of his essence to the truth of Being is atheism. And what is more, this arbitrary classification betrays a lack of careful reading. No one bothers to notice that in my essay ‘On the Essence of Ground’ the following appears: ‘Through the ontological interpretation of Dasein as being-in-the-world no decision, whether positive or negative, is made concerning a possible being toward God. It is, however, the case that through an illumination of transcendence we first achieve an adequate concept of Dasein, with respect to which it can now be asked how the relationship of Dasein to God is ontologically ordered’ (1993a, pp. 252-253).

As is seen, Heidegger says that the interpretation of the essence of man in relation to the truth of Being does not eliminate a possible Being towards gods in the analysis of Dasein. In fact, as Peter Hodgson points out, the ontological interpretation of Dasein

in *Being and Time* is only a “preparatory analysis” that must be addressed before a possible Being toward gods (1969, p. 239). In addition, Heidegger maintains that this possibility can be searched by first examining the revealing of transcendence in Dasein.

In the second chapter, in order to grasp the idea of gods in Heidegger’s philosophy, the path from the truth of Being to gods (which passes through the essence of the holy and the essence of divinity) has been taken. In this third chapter, a different path will be taken, namely a path from the essence of man to the truth of Being. Then, the truth of Being, namely the holy, will show us a possible Being towards gods. However, before that, I want to briefly refer to the case of Socrates that, I believe, matches well with the explanations in the second chapter regarding Heidegger’s understanding of gods and hopefully prepares us to the topic of this chapter, namely the relation between gods and Dasein of the human being or, more specifically, gods and the mood of anxiety (*Angst*) in Dasein as well as between the former and the call of conscience.

Therefore, in this chapter, I will first make an analogy between the *daimonion* of Socrates and Heidegger’s concepts of anxiety and the call of conscience. In order to do this, I will show that Heidegger translates Greek *daimons* as gods. Also, Heidegger considers *daimonion* as the ground of uncanniness. Then, I will demonstrate that the *daimonion* of Socrates can be a guiding analogy for the purpose of our chapter in the sense that the *daimonion* (a god) does not give Socrates positive orders but calls out to him and annihilates his everyday concerns. Thus, the *daimonion* leaves Socrates with the freedom to choose what to do. This is very akin to the function of anxiety and the call of conscience in *Being and Time*. However, this will not be anything more than a simple analogy. Secondly, I will explain some concepts of the Heidegger of *Being and Time* such as thrownness, Being-with, and fallenness. These concepts will provide us with background knowledge to understand anxiety and the call of conscience.

Thirdly, I will explain the concept of anxiety on the basis of *Being and Time*. I will show how anxiety leads Dasein to the truth of Being. Since I have shown in the second chapter that the truth of Being is the holy, I will claim that there is a possible reciprocal relation between anxiety and the holy. That is, when people hear the holy, they are

transformed into anxious Dasein. In the same way, when Dasein is anxious, it stands in the holy area and waits for the arrival of gods. As the holy is named by the poets who sense divinities of gods, the reciprocal relation between anxiety and the holy can also be regarded as a possible reciprocal relation between anxiety and gods.

Finally, I will explain the call of conscience. I will exhibit that the reticence that the conscience creates is nearness to gods. So, Dasein who hears the call dwells in nearness to gods. In addition, I will not claim that the caller is god. Rather, I will point out the similarities between the call of conscience and divinities of gods. Specifically, I will show that there are six direct similarities between the two. By using the *daimonion* of Socrates, I will assert four more similarities. By uncovering these similarities, I will claim that there is a possible reciprocal relation between the call of conscience and divinities of gods. This claim and the claim that concerns the possible relation between gods and anxiety will have three consequences for the readings of Heidegger. First, a possible Being toward gods on the basis of *Being and Time* can be built on the concepts of anxiety and the call of conscience. Second, I will interpret Heidegger's concepts of divinities and gods on the basis of *Being and Time*, and thus, they will acquire new meanings. Third, I will claim that there is a continuity between the thoughts of the late Heidegger and the Heidegger of *Being and Time*.

3.1. Heidegger and *Daimonion*

In *Letter on Humanism*, Heidegger discusses the Greek notion of *ethos* and elaborates on a fragment of Heraclitus:

The saying of Heraclitus (Fragment 119) goes: *êthos anthrôpôi daimôn*. This is usually translated, 'A man's character is his daimon.' This translation thinks in a modern way, not a Greek one. *Ethos* means abode, dwelling place. The word names the open region in which man dwells. The open region of his abode allows what pertains to man's essence, and what in thus arriving resides in nearness to him, to appear. The abode of man contains and preserves the advent of what belongs to man in his essence. According to Heraclitus's phrase this is *daimon*, the god. The fragment says: Man dwells, insofar as he is man, in the nearness of god (1993a, p. 256).

Firstly, it is clearly seen that Heidegger comprehends *daimon* as a god. Secondly, he considers gods as the ones who pertain to the essence of humans. However, as it has

been pointed out in the second chapter, this does not mean that gods are humans' making. Instead, humans steward the truth of Being thanks to gods who send divinities to them. That is, gods and humans belong together in the truth of Being. Thirdly, *ethos* means "the open region in which man dwells." In other words, it designates an openness where human beings exist as Dasein. As it has been shown in the second chapter, this openness is also an opening, and this opening (the truth of Being) is characterized by the relationship between human beings and gods in the sense that gods draw near to human beings for a possible encounter. Thus, Heidegger translates Heraclitus' fragment "*êthos anthrôpôi daimôn*" as that "man dwells, insofar as he is man, in the nearness of god [*daimon*]."

In the eleventh section of *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic*, Heidegger discusses the problem of the transcendence of Dasein. In the ninth footnote of this section, he says:

The idea of being as a superior power can only be understood out of the essence of 'being' and transcendence, only in and from the full dispersal belonging to the essence of transcendence...and not by an interpretation referring to an absolute Other [*Du*], nor to the *bonum* [the good] as value or as the Eternal. (Still remaining for consideration is being and [*daimonion*], the understanding of being and [*daimonion*]. Being qua ground! Being and nothingness-Angst.) (1992a, p. 165).

In this quotation, while Heidegger avoids and rejects the otherworldly (in the sense of "absolute Other, the goodness, or the Eternal) explanations of transcendence, he leaves the question of the relationship between understanding of Being and *daimonion* unanswered. He leaves the issue for possible considerations by giving some hints: "Being and *daimonion*...Being and nothingness-Angst." Thus, he sees a relation between these three terms. If we substitute the term *daimonion* with the term god as Heidegger translates *daimonion* as a god, then the relation shows itself as a relation between Being, gods, and *Angst*, namely anxiety. As I have already shown the relation between Being and gods in the second chapter, this chapter shows the relation between Being and anxiety as well as the relation between anxiety and gods.

In addition, in his lecture course on *Parmenides*, Heidegger elaborates on the relation between anxiety and *daimonion*. He claims that "[the *daimonion*] is the essence and

essential ground of the uncanny. It is what presents itself in the ordinary and takes up its abode therein” (Heidegger, 1992b, p. 102). That is, *daimonion* or gods appear in the midst of the ordinariness as “something” unordinary. In this way, they become the ground of the uncanny, i.e., they trigger uncanniness. As the ground of the uncanny, gods are also uncanny or the extraordinary in the ordinary (Heidegger, 1992b, p. 101). Heidegger states that “in anxiety one feels ‘uncanny’” (2001a, p. 233). If anxiety addresses Dasein to uncanniness, and if gods are the ground of the uncanny, then this gives us a preparatory clue for a possible relation between anxiety and gods in Heidegger. Moreover, Heidegger states:

[The *daimonion*] is what shows itself in pointing at what is ordinary and in a certain way therefore what is also present everywhere as the perfectly ordinary, though nevertheless never the merely ordinary...The uncanny appears ‘only’ in the form of the ordinary (1992b, p. 102).

That is, gods beckon in the ordinary and towards the ordinary as an extraordinariness in the ordinary. That is why people who experience the holy or divinities (beckonings) do not experience an outer world but experience extraordinariness in the ordinary beings. Thus, ordinariness becomes obtrusive for someone who is invaded by the extraordinary. Heidegger says that “thunderstorms and lightning [beckonings] are the language of the gods” (2014a, pp. 30-31). So, hints of *daimonion* or gods (divinities) are not ordinary beings but extraordinariness in the ordinary beings, and as an extraordinariness, they make the ordinariness stand out. That is, ordinariness makes itself felt, and uncanny or anxious Dasein bears this burden and becomes obliged to deal with it. For an allegorical example, a person discerns “the anger” (a fallen kind of understanding of hints) of gods (extraordinary) in a thunderstorm (ordinary), and with this uncanniness or anxiety, s/he authentically turns towards the ordinary world. Hints of gods are not beyond the world, they are in the ordinary, under our noses, or even in our veins.

At the end of this chapter, the paragraph above that shows the relation between gods and anxiety will be clear. Before showing these relations, I will pick up an example of a *daimon* that functions similarly with the anxiety of Dasein as well as with the call of conscience. This *daimon* is the *daimonion* of Socrates. I will not claim that the *daimonion* of Socrates is the god of Heidegger, nor that whatever Heidegger claims on

daimon, in general, can be held for his idea of gods. Rather, I will put forward this example as a good analogy for preparing us for the issue of Dasein's relation to gods. So, in the next subsection, I will briefly introduce the *daimonion* of Socrates. Whenever *daimonion* calls Socrates, it breaks the flow of Socrates' everyday concerns but never tells him what to do, just like anxiety and the call of conscience in Heidegger's Dasein.

3.1.1. The *Daimonion* of Socrates

The Greek word *daimon* is obviously unfamiliar to the English-speaking world. Etymologically, it has been called by different names, such as demon, genius, attendant spirit, and evil spirit (Hoad, 1996, p. 118). As these names commonly suggest, different values, such as good and bad (evil), are attributed to it. However, Heidegger claims that "such conceptions of the 'demonic' will never touch the essence or the essential compass of the Greek [*daimonion*]" (1992b, p. 100). In the ancient Greek, the word *daimon* is used by different poets and philosophers with different meanings. However, explaining them goes beyond the purpose of the thesis. Thus, I will directly explain the case of the *daimonion* of Socrates that will guide this chapter.

There are passages of Plato that articulate a theory of *daimon*¹² which does not directly refer to Socrates' *daimonion*.¹³ Since they can be regarded in the metaphysical tradition, they will not be addressed. I will directly explain the descriptions of how Socrates experiences or encounters his own *daimonion*. In this way, it can be possible to grasp how the *daimonion* or a god shows or announces itself to an individual and what happens on the side of this individual in such an encounter. In *Apology*, Socrates famously indicates:

something divine and spiritual [*daimonion*] comes to me, the very thing which Meletus ridiculed in his indictment. I have had this from my childhood; it is a sort of voice that comes to me, and when it comes it always holds me back from what I am thinking of doing, but never urges me forward (Plato, 2005, p. 115/31d).

¹² For some of them, see *Symposium* (202d), *Republic* (617e), *Laws* (713d), and *Timaeus* (90a).

¹³ When Plato specifically refers to the *daimon* of Socrates, he uses the term *daimonion*.

This famous passage indicates first that the *daimonion* arrives to Socrates. That is, the *daimonion* is not something Socrates has control over. Second, Socrates experiences the *daimonion* as a voice, and he believes that this voice is divine or corresponds to a sign of gods. Socrates does not seem to consider this sign equal to the *daimonion*. Thirdly, Socrates claims that when he hears the voice (or sign) of the *daimonion*, it keeps Socrates back from what he is about to do but never encourages him to do anything else. It can be interpreted as that it annihilates Socrates' everyday concerns and leaves him face to face with his freedom to choose one possibility over another. Due to these characteristics, I will establish an analogy between the *daimonion* of Socrates and anxiety as well as between the former and the call of conscience in Heidegger. This will help us to show a possible relation between Heidegger's gods, anxiety, and the call of conscience.

However, with this analogy, I do not claim that Heidegger articulates his understanding of gods in modeling the *daimonion* of Socrates. In addition, I do not claim that Heidegger proposes a metaphysical or ethical understanding like that of Plato or Socrates. Moreover, I do not assert that Socrates and Plato are, in fact, existentialist philosophers. Furthermore, I do not suggest that Heidegger's philosophy is in the same line as that of Socrates or Plato. I am aware of the differences between philosophies of Socrates and Heidegger. For example, Socrates talks about a sensation of a voice while Heidegger talks about the ontological constitution of Dasein when presenting the call of conscience. That is, the call in Dasein "comes from" the Being of Dasein, not from an alien power as a sensation. In addition, while the *daimonion* gives negative orders, the call of conscience only reveals nothingness. Thus, I do not read the *daimonion* of Socrates from the perspective of *Being and Time*. Rather, acknowledging the differences between them, I will just establish an analogy between the *daimonion* of Socrates and such concepts of *Being and Time* as anxiety and the call of conscience. Regarding the fact that Heidegger translates *daimonion* as a god, I believe that this analogy will help to show a relation between gods and anxiety as well as between the former and the call of conscience.

To conclude, I have briefly exemplified Socrates' experience of his *daimonion*. As I will elaborate below, we can liken the sign of Socrates' *daimonion* with the mood of anxiety and the call of conscience in *Being and Time*. All of them annihilate one's everyday familiar concerns but never tell what to do. Rather, they leave her/his to confront her/his own freedom.

3.2. The relation between gods and Angst

For Heidegger, *Angst* or anxiety is a distinctive state of mind, namely a mood which discloses Dasein's Being as being-in-the-world in a peculiar way (2001a, p. 228). Heidegger states that "a state-of-mind always has its understanding...[and] understanding always has its mood" (2001a, p. 182). To make it clear, Heidegger rejects the idea that there is an isolated subject or *res cogitans* that is free from his/her mood and has an unconditioned understanding of the world, himself/herself, and the things around him/her. On the contrary, Heidegger claims that every understanding is accompanied by a mood, and particular moods disclose Dasein in particular ways. For example, in the mood of fear, we encounter and understand a particular thing in a definite place as fearsome, threatening, and detrimental, and Dasein discloses itself as a threatened being. It is worth noting that fear is always directed towards an entity (Heidegger, 2001a, pp. 179-180).

However, in the mood of anxiety, there is no entity in the face of which Dasein is anxious. That is, anxiety, unlike fear, lacks a determinate object that is located in a determinate place. Since anxious Dasein can tell nothing about what it is anxious about, "'it is nothing and nowhere' [that] becomes manifest" (Heidegger, 2001a, p. 231). Or in short, "anxiety reveals the nothing" (Heidegger, 1993d, p. 101). That is, anxiety reveals nothingness and places Dasein in the midst of nothingness (Heidegger, 1993d, p. 100). However, this nothingness is not a purely abstract or metaphysical concept but one that is always "encountered at one with beings as a whole" (Heidegger, 1993d, p. 102). In other words, in anxiety, beings as a whole become superfluous and slip away. Thus, anxiety lacks a determinate object, and Dasein cannot cling to this or that entity within the world. In addition, entities in the world become irrelevant to

Dasein, and the world and Dasein's self in this world lose their significance. Heidegger explains:

In anxiety, we say, 'one feels ill at ease [*es ist einem unheimlich*].' ...All things and we ourselves sink into indifference...We can get no hold on things...We 'hover' in anxiety. More precisely, anxiety leaves us hanging because it induces the slipping away of beings as a whole. This implies that we ourselves—we humans who are in being—in the midst of beings slip away from ourselves. At bottom therefore it is not as though 'you' or 'I' feel ill at ease; rather, it is this way for some 'one.' In the altogether unsettling experience of this hovering where there is nothing to hold onto, pure Da-sein is all that is still there (1993d, p. 101).

That is to say, the public world and self of a historical community in which Dasein falls becomes nothingness in the mood of anxiety. In order to make this clearer and at the same time to comprehend anxiety deeper, Heidegger's concepts such as thrownness, Being-with (*the they*, or *das Man*), and fallenness will be exhibited below. At the same time, how these concepts construct the inauthentic self and world of Dasein will be laid bare. Secondly, the function of anxiety will be restated again as the mood that nihilates the world and self of *das Man*, just like Socrates' *daimonion* interrupts his everyday concerns or, in a way, annihilates them. It will be argued that there is a possible reciprocal relation between gods and anxiety. Finally, the call of conscience that is attuned by anxiety will be explained as being not the call or voice of gods like in the case of Socrates but the one that will give Dasein reticence by which it will stand in nearness to gods. However, the similarities between the call of conscience and divinities of gods will be shown by using the *daimonion* of Socrates as a mediator.

3.2.1. Thrownness, Being-with, Fallenness

Firstly, Heidegger uses the term thrownness to connote the "that-it-is" or "there" of Dasein, i.e., "Da"¹⁴ of Dasein (Heidegger, 2001a, p. 174). "There" signifies that Dasein is given to a situation that is contingent, and this situation could be otherwise. That is, Dasein as being in the world is always already thrown into a particular life-world that Dasein did not choose but has to accept with its historical background (Reynolds, 2006, p. 32). If Dasein was thrown into a different lifeworld, it would be

¹⁴ *Da* means there, *Sein* means Being. Da-sein literally means there-Being, namely Being-there.

in a different state, in a different identity, or in a different gender. That's why thrownness also designates that Dasein does not own or have control over its situatedness as well as its own past (having-been-ness) (Gorner, 2007, p. 73). If there was a different understanding of Being, then the world into which Dasein was thrown would be opened by this different understanding of Being, i.e., the world would be formed by a different web of significance. In addition, since Dasein does not have control over or own the possibilities that the world offers, Heidegger also uses the concept of thrownness to designate that Dasein is a thrown projection (2001a, p. 185). Consequently, thrownness signifies that Dasein is thrown into a historical world that it does not have control over but has to accept the possibilities it offers and exists by appropriating them.

Secondly, Heidegger claims that Dasein is always *Being-with* (*Mitsein*). That means that there can be no isolated self who can meaningfully exist without the contributions of others (2001a, p. 152). In addition, "Being-with is an existential characteristic of Dasein even when factually no Other is present-at-hand or perceived. Even Dasein's Being-alone is Being-with in the world" (Heidegger, 2001a, pp. 156-157). Even if Dasein lives in seclusion, there is no chance for it to build its self only by itself as if Dasein creates its self out of nothing. Dasein has to define its self on the basis of the possibilities or the understanding that are supplied by the others. Charles Guignon states that for Heidegger, "the individual worlds of our personal involvements are therefore always interwoven into a shared we-world which is already more or less coherent and articulate" (1983, p. 107). Moreover, it is mostly the case that the distance between the self of a community and the self of an individual in that community is dissolved, so the understanding of Being that belongs to that community shows itself to be ultimate and necessary. That is, it becomes public, familiar, and obvious to everyone (Heidegger, 2001a, p. 164). Heidegger describes this situation thus:

In utilizing public means of transport and in making use of information services such as the newspaper, every Other is like the next. This Being-with-one-another dissolves one's own Dasein completely into the kind of Being of 'the Others', in such a way, indeed, that the Others, as distinguishable and explicit, vanish more and more. In this inconspicuousness and unascertainability, the real dictatorship of the 'they' is unfolded. We take pleasure and enjoy ourselves as *they* [*man*] take pleasure; we read, see, and judge about literature and art as *they* see and judge; likewise we shrink back from the 'great mass' as they shrink back; we find 'shocking' what they find shocking (2001a, p. 164).

That is, the self of Dasein becomes the self of others, namely *the they* (*das Man*). In other words, “the question of who we are in everydayness is fully answered in terms of the public possibilities exemplified in our agency” (Guignon, 1983, p. 108). By becoming the self of the they, Dasein also becomes “no one” (Heidegger, 2001a, p. 165). In other words, everyone becomes like the other one, “and no one is himself. The ‘they’, which supplies the answer to the question of the ‘who’ of everyday Dasein, is the ‘nobody’ to whom every Dasein has already surrendered itself in Being-among-one-other” (Heidegger, 2001a, pp. 165-166). Thus, Dasein is thrown into an understanding of Being that is interpreted by the others, and usually, no other choice is left for Dasein rather than to define its self that is based on this understanding. Dasein falls into the self of the other and becomes everyone else.

Heidegger states that “Dasein’s...understanding of Being already implies the understanding of Others” (2001a, p. 161) because “the ‘they’ itself prescribes that way of interpreting the world” (2001a, p. 167). This leads us to another element, right along with the self, that Being-with shapes: the world of Dasein. The world of Dasein is “always the one that [Dasein] share[s] with Others. [It] is a *with-world* [*Mitwelt*]” (Heidegger, 2001a, p. 155). That is, Dasein as being in the world is thrown into a world that is already the world of the others, namely the world that is already interpreted by the others. In that world, Dasein understands beings in the way others understand; it does what others do; it even hopes as others hope. In other words, “human existence is mimetic and the only way that I can come to myself [in fact, *they-self*] is by absorbing and inhabiting, both consciously and unconsciously, these ways of others” (Stapleton, 2010, p. 55). That’s why the entities with the average everyday world of the they appear to Dasein as inconspicuous, obvious, familiar, and accessible (Heidegger, 2001a, pp. 158, 165). Dasein, as Being-with, lives by the world and self of others, i.e., in *they-world* and *they-self*. Since this Being-with (*Mitsein*) is in the very constitution of Dasein, it cannot escape its worldly and intersubjective existence but is still capable of undertaking authentic or inauthentic comportment towards them.

Before the mood of anxiety, which makes authenticity possible, we, lastly, need to consider Heidegger's conception of fallenness that designates the howness of inauthenticity. Heidegger states:

[Fallenness] has mostly the character of Being-lost in the publicness of the 'they'. Dasein has, in the first instance, fallen away [abgefallen] from itself as an authentic potentiality for Being its Self, and has fallen into the 'world'. 'Fallenness' into the 'world' means an absorption in Being-with-one-another (2001a, p. 220).

That is, in fallenness, Dasein flees in the face of its authenticity, i.e., it turns away from its potential for Being its self, and it flees toward beings in the world and into the soothing "at-home-ness" of their public interpretation (Heidegger, 2001a, pp. 230, 234). To make this clearer, in its falling state, Dasein forgets that it is thrown into the world of the they; it also forgets that the understanding of Being that discloses this world is neither necessary nor natural but historically contingent; Dasein even forgets that entities within the world are determined by Being, so Dasein abandons itself to the self-assurance of the average everydayness of public world and thinks that its Self and beings naturally come into existence, i.e., Dasein falls into a world, a Self, an understanding of Being that is publicly interpreted by the they. In this they-world, Dasein thinks that it has already understood, seen, and experienced everything (Heidegger, 2001a, p. 222). Dasein forgets Being and lives in the *they-self* in the *they-world*.

However, fallenness is not a negative side of Dasein. It is not a fall from heaven or "purer and primal status." People mostly live in a state of fallenness. This designates that they are absorbed and engaged in their practices in life, and they do not cut loose from their concerns. They continue to be the way they are. Their functioning in the world, which is proper to the they, works and is unbroken (Heidegger, 2001a, p. 220). The situation in which Socrates follows the flow of his life in Athens when he does not hear the voice of his *daimonion* can be interpreted in this way. That is, Socrates can be regarded as living in his everyday public self until the call reaches him.¹⁵ In

¹⁵ However, we need to keep in mind that this is just an analogy. I do not attempt to interpret Socrates as a fallen self or *das Man*. I just point at the fact that Socrates uninterruptedly does what he believes he should do until his *daimonion* warns him. When he is warned, his everyday actions, concerns or practices are suspended.

addition, when Dasein turns to be authentic, it does not abandon its everydayness but modifies it (Heidegger, 2001a, p. 224). However, in the world where everything is usual, Dasein still remains alien to its own self (Heidegger, 2001a, p. 222). In sum, Dasein mostly turns away from its potential for authenticity and falls into the world of the others, into which Dasein is thrown. In this world, Dasein interprets itself in the same way everyone else interprets, it follows the they blindly, and, thus, it becomes everyone else. *They-world* and *they-self* tranquilize Dasein in the sense that everything seems to be ordinary, usual, natural, and as it should be. In fact, they soothe the anxiety of Dasein (Blattner, 2006, p. 131). Dasein forgets Being, its own self, and its own thrownness. Dasein is alienated from itself and stays inauthentic in its state of fallenness.

The state of fallenness of Dasein that has been just described according to *Being and Time* corresponds to the state that has been explained in different terms in the second chapter: forgetfulness of Being, destitute time, and the plight of the dark era. We have called forgetfulness or destitute time in which Being itself and the truth of Being are forgotten, i.e., Dasein forgets that beings are determined by an understanding of Being and also that this understanding of Being is not necessary in the sense that there could be different understandings of Being, or Dasein could be thrown into a different understanding of Being. As is seen, this situation is nothing other than the fact that Dasein falls into a world, is absorbed in it, and forgets that the world could be interpreted otherwise. In the same manner, Dasein also forgets and becomes alien to the possibility of Being its authentic self besides inauthentically believing that the self of the others is its own self. Thus, I have shown that in this fallenness or the dark night of forgetfulness, some people like poets can name and utter the holy that is the truth of Being. When poets name the holy, there are some people like Socrates who are open to hearing such a call and contribute to the truth of Being. This hearing is always possible even in destitute times because anxiety is always latent in Dasein as being in the world (Heidegger, 2001a, p. 234). When Socrates hears the call of his *daimonion*, he seems to have anxiety which annihilates his everyday concerns. After explaining thrownness, Being-with, and fallenness, we can now reach a broader understanding of anxiety and properly ask whether there is a relation between anxiety and gods.

3.2.2. Anxiety (*Angst*)

Fallenness is fleeing in the face of something. When Dasein thus flees, it flees towards another entity. For instance, since the mood of fear corresponds to fearing in the face of something, Dasein flees from itself towards that entity (Heidegger, 2001a, p. 230). In such moods that are inauthentic, there is no possibility for Dasein to shrink back in the face of the world, i.e., Dasein cannot escape from his absorption into the world because it clings to an entity while shrinking back from another. So, Dasein is not able to properly realize its being in the world as a whole and project itself upon it. Moreover, William Large adds:

[even] the phenomenon of the world remains invisible to [Dasein]. Not the world, as a collection of events and happenings, which of course it is obsessed and consumed by precisely because it has so fallen, but the worldhood of the world, what makes it possible, as part of its own Being, that there is a world for it to be absorbed by in the first place (2008, p. 70).

However, as I have indicated at the beginning of section 3.2, Heidegger talks about one peculiar mood which reveals nothingness and so annihilates Dasein's absorption into the concerns of the public world and so takes away the inauthenticity of Dasein. Heidegger calls this mood *Angst* or anxiety. Since anxiety has no definite object, anxious Dasein has nothing in the face of which it flees. Since this nothingness is not an abstract comprehension but "encountered at one with beings as a whole" in anxiety, anxious Dasein also has nothing towards which it flees (Heidegger, 1993d, p. 102). That is why all the things into which Dasein falls turn out to be nothing in the sense that they become unimportant, insignificant, and even irrelevant (Heidegger, 2001a, p. 231). Anxiety, which is an obtrusive, oppressive, and uncanny experience (Heidegger, 2001a, pp. 231-233), "takes away from Dasein the possibility of understanding itself, as it falls, in terms of the 'world' and the way things have been publicly interpreted" (Heidegger, 2001a, p. 232). That is, anxious Dasein cannot find a proper public ground on which it interprets itself and its world since they-self and they-world sink into indifference, i.e., they become nothing. Anxious Dasein feels that it is "not-at-home" in the world of the others and that it is itself, not the other (Heidegger, 2001a, p. 233).

They-world and they-self into which Dasein falls and so forgets Being, namely the forgetfulness of Being in the state of fallenness, are annihilated in the mood of anxiety. That is why the situation that anxiety reveals is very similar to the situation of a poet's naming the holy. In both cases, the soothing understanding of Being, namely the familiar world of people is disturbed by an openness (the holy) that is opened by the extraordinary, so the truth of Being finds a possibility to occur. That is, the world we are acquainted with loses its function when we are anxious as well as when we hear the holy from a poet, i.e., when extraordinariness occurs in the ordinary world. Thus, this shows us that Heidegger constructs the idea of anxiety and the case of hearing the holy similarly. First, both reveal extraordinariness in the ordinary. Second, this extraordinariness disturbs or annihilates the ordinariness. In addition, I have indicated in the second chapter that the holy is not an entity within the world, and so it is not a being facing us. Thus, the third similarity is that anxiety and the holy lack a determinate object in the world.

Stephen Mulhall states that unlike fallen kinds of moods such as fear, "anxiety is thus responsive to, and hence revelatory of, the world as such – that is, to the worldhood of the world" (2013, p. 115). That is, since the familiar world is annihilated in anxiety, the worldhood of the world is revealed to Dasein. In other words, when familiar world ceases to function properly, its howness becomes visible and even obtrusive for us. Thus, anxious Dasein finds itself in this openness where it can authentically project its Being. So far, the function of anxiety resembles the situation when Socrates hears the divine voice of his *daimonion*. That is, the functioning of the everyday flow of life is broken. After hearing the voice that annihilates this flow, Socrates is thrown into the freedom to choose or project what to do, namely whom to become. Thus, how does this projection of Being become possible in anxiety?

First of all, Dasein flees "in the face of itself in falling" (Heidegger, 2001a, p. 230). Micheal E. Zimmerman describes this fleeing thus: "the mood of anxiety is so disturbing because it reveals that 'at bottom' we are nothingness, that our existence is ultimately groundless...In the face of such disclosures, little wonder that most people flee from the mood of anxiety" (1993, p. 245). So, in falling, Dasein, in fact, flees from obtrusive and alienating anxiety. When Dasein is anxious, the everyday familiarity of

the world collapses, and it faces itself, namely its naked and contingent being in the world. That is, since anxious Dasein is free from being determined by the they, anxiety discloses Dasein as Being-possible, namely as authentic potentiality for Being in the world. In this way, “anxiety individualizes Dasein” (Heidegger, 2001a, p. 232). To make it clear, since Dasein cannot hold on to any entity or any way of existence that is determined by the understanding of others, Dasein is thrown into a situation where anxiety signifies that Dasein does not necessarily belong to the they and is alone by itself, especially in determining what to do with itself. At this moment, Dasein becomes free for the freedom of choosing itself or not (Heidegger, 2001a, p. 236). That is to say, Dasein either chooses to be authentic or inauthentic (Heidegger, 2001a, p. 232). Dasein either chooses to flee in the face of extra-worldly anxiety, and so, it falls again into the they-world. That is, it inauthentically interprets itself in the way the they interprets the self. To make it clear, Dasein chooses the self that the they supplies, without considering its contingency and having a lack of a proper ground. Alternatively, Dasein chooses to authentically project itself upon the possibilities of Being. This does not amount to saying that Dasein lives no more in the world of the they and finds a possibility of Being outside of the world. Rather, since the worldhood of the world is opened to Dasein, Dasein sees the world as a whole and has a chance to modify its relationship with the possibilities that the world offers. Authentic Dasein chooses a possibility with an awareness that this possibility does not belong to it in the sense that it is not of Dasein’s own making/creation and that it has no essential ground for not choosing or closing other possibilities. This issue will be clearer in the section of the call of conscience.

As is seen, to anxious Dasein, the world as a whole is opened where it can authentically project its self. In other words, an openness is opened to Dasein. I have shown in the second chapter that this openness contains the movement of opening and closing. Thus, the movement of this openness is in fact the truth of Being. I have also shown that the truth of Being is the holy. Following this flow of thought, I argue, fourthly, that there is another similarity between anxiety and the holy. Both anxiety and the holy reveal an openness where Dasein projects a possibility of Being. Thus, I can argue that there is a reciprocal relation between anxiety and the holy. That is, anxious Dasein is ready for hearing the holy and projects a possibility of Being. At the same time, when

people hear the holy, they are transformed into anxious Dasein who projects a possibility of Being.

Besides, poets can name the holy because “poetizing is a passing on of these beckonings [namely, divinities of gods] to the people.” By poetizing, poets place “Dasein of the people into the realm of these beckonings, that is, a showing, a pointing in which the gods become manifest” (Heidegger, 2014a, p. 31). In other words, the holy comes from divinities that come from gods. Thus, the reciprocal relationship between anxiety and the holy can be extended into divinities and gods. That is, there is also a possible reciprocal relation between anxiety and divinities as well as between the former and gods.

Before ending this subsection with the claim that there is a possible reciprocal relation between anxiety and gods, I will give three more proofs for this claim. In fact, all these proofs will be stating the same issue with different concepts and from different points of view. Heidegger claims that “we actively complete the transformation of man into his Da-sein that every instance of anxiety occasions in us” (1993d, p. 102). This concludes what we have explained so far: humans are mostly the they or *das Man* in their fallen state. However, when anxiety rarely occasions in them or in one of them (Heidegger, 2001a, p. 234), they are transformed into Dasein, and Dasein is always anxious in the very depth of its Being. Heidegger also claims that anxious “Da-sein is the between: between humans (as grounding of history) and the gods (in their history)” (2012, p. 247). This is another proof for the relation between anxiety and gods. Anxiety unconceals an openness where humans and gods draw near to each other. Or, when gods and humans prepare themselves to a possible encounter, anxiety occurs in Dasein. In addition, Heidegger asserts:

Da-sein means: being held out into the nothing.
Holding itself out into the nothing, Dasein is in each case already beyond beings as a whole. This being beyond beings we call ‘transcendence.’ If in the ground of its essence Dasein were not transcending, which now means, if it were not in advance holding itself out into the nothing, then it could never be related to beings nor even to itself.
Without the original revelation of the nothing, no selfhood and no freedom (Heidegger, 1993d, p. 103).

As is seen, Heidegger thinks that anxiety which repels and shrinks back by unconcealing the nothing in beings as a whole gives Dasein its transcendence. That is, since anxious Dasein goes beyond beings as a whole, i.e. Dasein transcends the world, it gets the possibility of authentically interpreting the world and itself, i.e., it becomes free to choose itself. At the beginning of this chapter, we have indicated that for Heidegger, “through an illumination of transcendence we first achieve an adequate concept of Dasein, with respect to which it can now be asked how the relationship of Dasein to God is ontologically ordered” (Heidegger, 1993a, pp. 252-253). Since the illumination of transcendence is possible due to the mood of anxiety, a possible relation between Dasein and gods can be stated with respect to anxiety. This is another proof for the relationship between gods and anxiety. Dasein has to be in the mood of anxiety in order to hear the holy, to think the truth of Being, and to realize divinities that are signs of gods’ “presence.” Or gods appear with their divinities, poets bring these divinities to people (i.e., name and sing the holy), and fallen people who sense the holy are transformed into Dasein that always apparently or latently is in the mood of anxiety. In other words, when gods draw near, fallen people who realize this drawing near are transformed into anxious Dasein. In reverse, anxiety is the condition for the possibility of experiencing gods’ arrival, i.e. gods need anxiety in order for Dasein to exist toward them. That is also to say, on the basis of *Being and Time*, a Being towards gods is possible first due to anxiety.

Moreover, besides stating that anxiety reveals nothingness, Heidegger also claims that Hegel’s proposition, “*Pure being and pure nothing are therefore the same*,” is true (Hegel, 2010, p. 59; Heidegger, 1993d, p. 108). Heidegger explains this as that:

Being and the nothing do belong together, not because both—from the point of view of the Hegelian concept of thought—agree in their indeterminateness and immediacy, but rather because Being itself is essentially finite and reveals itself only in the transcendence of Dasein which is held out into the nothing (1993d, p. 108)

As is seen, nothingness is, in fact, Being. If anxiety reveals nothingness, then it reveals Being as well. In the second chapter, I have shown that the revelation of Being, the revelation of both its concealing and unconcealing has been associated with the truth of Being, namely the holy. In other words, Being manifest itself in the truth of Being.

Thus, this is also another proof that there is a reciprocal relation between gods and anxiety (*Angst*). Anxious Dasein stands in the holy area. Dasein which is held into nothingness in the mood of anxiety transcends the world that is interpreted by the others and becomes able to think of the truth of Being (the holy) as a thinker or to name the holy (the truth of Being) as a poet (Heidegger, 1998b, p. 237). At the same time, Heidegger claims “Beyng [namely, the truth of Being]: the hearth-fire in the midst of the lodging of the gods, a lodging which at the same time is the estrangement of the human being” (2012, p. 383). That is to say, where gods appear, there (in the truth of Being) Dasein is alienated or anxious. Therefore, as anxious Dasein is the shepherd of Being, it is also the shepherd of nothingness as well as the traces of gods.

To conclude, anxiety is a mood that lacks an object to be directed. That is why when Dasein is anxious, all beings in the world lost their significance. They-self and they-world thereby become nothingness. When they become nothingness, anxious Dasein is given a choice to be inauthentic or to be authentic. That is, Dasein either chooses to project itself upon the possibilities that they offer with an inauthentic belief that these possibilities are ultimate. Alternatively, Dasein chooses to authentically project itself by modifying its relation with the they-world with an awareness that its existence is contingent. After showing the general characteristics of anxiety, I have exhibited similarities between anxiety and the holy. Both (1) reveal extraordinariness in the ordinary, (2) annihilate ordinariness, (3) do not have a determinate object, and (4) disclose an openness (the truth of Being). Based on these similarities, I have claimed that there is a possible reciprocal relation between gods and anxiety. In order to support this reading, I have given three more proofs. Specifically, fallen humans are transformed into Dasein when they have anxiety, and anxious Dasein is between humans and gods. Thus, anxiety carries humans to gods, or humans have anxiety when gods send signs to them. In addition, Heidegger says that Being towards gods is possible with the illumination of transcendence. Since transcendence is possible thanks to anxiety, the way to gods is also possible thanks to anxiety. On the other hand, as gods need the truth of Being in order to appear, they also need anxiety in order for Dasein to exist toward them. Also, the relation between nothingness, Being, and anxiety leads us to the truth of Being which, in turn, leads us to the holy. Since the holy is named by sensing divinities of gods, there is a relation between gods and

anxiety. Consequently, anxiety carries Dasein to the holy area where gods arrive with their divinities. At the same time, when gods arrive, there opens a possibility for fallen humans to be transformed into Dasein that is always anxious.

3.2.3. The Call of Conscience

If we think of the *daimonion* of Socrates which gives divine signs in the shape of a “voice” and annihilates the everyday concerns of Socrates (discloses anxiety), could the Heideggerian call of conscience be interpreted as a divine sign? If not, then can similarities between them be established? Moreover, can any positive conclusion be inferred by these similarities? Heidegger claims that “nearness to the last god is reticence” (2012, p. 12). That is, people who stand near to gods do not let themselves be lost in the idle talk of the they. When people are not absorbed into the public and the usual language in the usual world, they become able to hear the unusualness (gods). In the second chapter, I have claimed that divinities are beckoning messengers of whether gods are drawing near or absconding. It follows, that the statement of Heidegger, “nearness to the last god is reticence,” can be reformulated as that dwelling in the face of divinities of gods is reticence. Then, how does this reticence occur in humans, so that they draw near to gods?

It has been shown that Heidegger claims that people are thrown into a world and mostly live as fallen in that world. That means that people forget that their understanding of the world is not a necessary one but the one that is contingently interpreted by the they. This everyday public world of the they determines every possible way of Being for the self of every individual in a historical community. That is, a person, as a fallen one, already “knows” which way of Being is valuable or which way of Being is preferable for herself/himself. This knowledge is granted to her/him by the they. So, s/he is not the one who really chooses oneself. Rather, s/he inauthentically chooses what the others choose for herself/himself since s/he always listens the idle talk of the they and never herself/himself. In this way, this person becomes like everybody else.

Heidegger asserts that the call of conscience reaches the they-self of such a person in the form of a “voice¹⁶” (2001a, pp. 313, 317). When the call reaches, the person’s continuous listening to the others is interrupted, and there arises “another kind of hearing.” In other words, Dasein becomes ready to hear the call of conscience. Heidegger indicates that “we take calling as a mode of discourse. Discourse articulates intelligibility” (2001a, p. 316). That is, “since discourse articulates the intelligibility things have for us, the discursive call must give us something to understand” (Crowell, 2021, p. 176). Thus, the call that reaches the they-self is discursive, i.e., it says “something” and gives “something” to Dasein to understand. Then, what does the call say, and what kind of understanding does it give?

Heidegger answers: “taken strictly, nothing. The call asserts nothing, gives no information about world-events, has nothing to tell” (2001a, p. 318). Since the call does not come from the everyday world but from the ontological Being of Dasein, it tells nothing in a worldly manner. By telling nothing, it annihilates every kind of everyday talk and “*discourses solely and constantly in the mode of keeping silent*” (Heidegger, 2001a, p. 318). That is, conscience forces Dasein to stand in reticence. To hear the call of conscience robs Dasein of speech and makes it silent or reticent. Thus, nearness to gods is hearing the call of conscience or that hearing the call of conscience is dwelling in the face of divinities. At this point, two further questions arise for our inquiry: first, how is it like to be near to gods or what happens when Dasein hears the call of conscience that says nothing; second, who is the caller, gods?

We have interpreted that when Socrates hears the voice of his *daimonion*, his everyday concern is annihilated, and he is thrown into his freedom to choose himself, namely in Heidegger’s terminology, his potentiality for Being his self. In the same way, when Dasein hears the call of conscience, its self that is interpreted by the they collapses and is pushed into insignificance (Heidegger, 2001a, p. 317). In other words, Dasein is thrown into the mood of anxiety which annihilates the world of the they (Heidegger, 2001a, p. 322). Thus, when the they-self turns out to be nothing in hearing the call of

¹⁶ In fact, the call of conscience is interpreted as a voice in average everyday manner. That is why it is a voice for the they-self, but it is termed as a call in Heidegger’s ontology.

conscience, Dasein is called to its own self, namely “its own most potentiality for Being” (Heidegger, 2001a, pp. 317-318, 325).

Annihilation of the they-self by the call of conscience addresses Dasein as guilty (Heidegger, 2001a, p. 326). Being guilty means that Dasein does not have control over its own past as it is thrown and that the possibility upon which it projects itself is not essential and necessarily excludes other possibilities (Polt, 1999, p. 89). To make it clear, Dasein does not own the world into which it is thrown, and it cannot choose all the possibilities at once that its world offers. In addition, Aret Karademir describes:

Dasein is, *always already*, guilty because it is, *always already*, alienated from itself. For Dasein becomes what it is thanks to the discretion of *what is outside of itself*. That is to say, Dasein acquires its identity by being socialized into an historically contingent world and by being initiated into the terms, conventions, norms, and roles *that are not of its own making* (2013, p. 16).

Being obliged to choose a possibility that one does not own and is contingent, namely a non-intrinsic possibility, addresses Dasein as being guilty and alienated. Since Dasein does not have another choice than a contingent existence, guilty Dasein is a null basis and a null projection (Heidegger, 2001a, pp. 329, 331). In other words, Dasein has no natural and necessary basis. At the same time, Dasein has no necessary essence which guides it to project itself upon any social possibility. In either way, Dasein is groundless. There is no ground for choosing a possibility over another. Thus, authentic Dasein embraces one of the possibilities that the world offers and projects itself upon it without forgetting its guilty, alienated, and groundless Being. Hearing the call of conscience in such a projection is therefore an attestation of Dasein’s authentic potentiality for Being (Heidegger, 2001a, p. 334).

Thus, as an answer to the former question of how it is to be near to gods, Dasein is resolute in nearness to gods. The term resoluteness gathers all together what Heidegger describes in the silent call of conscience. Resoluteness means “*reticent self-projection up on one’s ownmost Being-guilty, in which one is ready for anxiety*” (Heidegger, 2001a, p. 343). That is, resolute Dasein chooses a possibility of Being and insists on existing accordingly, and this existence is not a loud way of *das Man* but reticence holding into the nothing of anxiety with an awareness of being a null projection of a

nullity. That is, anxious Dasein that hears the call resolutely or insistently projects itself by embracing a possibility that it does not own and with an awareness that this possibility is not the ultimate one or has any essential priority with respect to others. Resoluteness does not mean, in turn, stubbornness. Rather, Dasein can change the possibility into which it exists as long as it is in the mood of anxiety (Polt, 1999, p. 91). Therefore, when Dasein dwells in the nearness of gods, Dasein, reticent and uncanny, projects its Being. In other words, to be in nearness to gods is to be resolute. By being resolute, humans steward the truth of Being, namely Beyng (Heidegger, 2012, p. 362). I have shown in the second chapter that it is not only gods who contribute to the truth of Being, but also humans are at play. Now, I can interpret that the human part is possible due to their being resolute. That is, Dasein does not turn its back on to the world but authentically embraces and project one of its possibilities, so Dasein does its due in the course of the occurring of Being. In other words, gods hint in order for Dasein to resolutely project itself in the truth of Being.

So far, I have shown that hearing the call of conscience and being reticent, guilty, and resolute are ways to dwell in nearness to gods. When Dasein exists in this way, it exists towards gods in the manner of actively waiting. That is, Dasein authentically performs its projection in work, deed, thought, and sacrifice, where gods beckon through divinities. Now, we can turn to the question, “does this mean that the callers are gods (the second question)?” While in the case of Socrates, the caller is a god (*daimonion*), Heidegger rejects any explanations of conscience that are theological or scientific. He says that ontological analyses of conscience “lies outside of any biological ‘explanation’ ...[as well as] a theological exegesis of conscience or any employment of this phenomenon for proofs of God or for establishing an ‘immediate’ consciousness of God” (Heidegger, 2001a, p. 313). That is why, for Heidegger, the call of conscience cannot be an alien power like the God of metaphysics that dominates Dasein or a biological trait that is a part of the ontic side of Dasein, because both ways are analyzing such voice as a present-at-hand entity (Heidegger, 2001a, p. 320). This is also a result of Heidegger’s endeavor to overcome metaphysics in the sense of constructing an analysis of Dasein which is carried in Dasein itself, namely without appealing to any kind of “outside/external” explanation: “Thinking does not overcome metaphysics by climbing still higher, surmounting it, transcending it somehow or

other; thinking overcomes metaphysics by climbing back down into the nearness of the nearest” (Heidegger, 1993a, p. 254).

When discussing the call of conscience in *Being and Time*, Heidegger explicitly asks the question of who the caller is in the call of conscience. Firstly, he answers that the caller is indefinite (Heidegger, 2001a, p. 319). Apparently, this is because “in its ‘who’, the caller is definable in a ‘worldly’ way by nothing at all” (Heidegger, 2001a, p. 321). That is to say, the caller cannot be genuinely known by the they-self. Heidegger says that the call does not come from someone else but “*from me and yet from beyond me*” (2001a, p. 320). In other words, the call does not come from the they-self of mine but beyond the they-self, namely a transcendent potentiality for Being an authentic self that is revealed by anxiety. Heidegger claims:

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 and been thrown into the ‘nothing’ (2001a, pp. 321-322).

That is, anxious Dasein is the caller, and this call reaches the they-self and discourses nothing. So, the they-self is annihilated, and Dasein’s authentic self, namely the authentic potentiality for Being itself, is unconcealed. In other words, Dasein calls itself. Dasein is the caller and the one who is called in the call of conscience (Heidegger, 2001a, p. 322). Thus, the caller is not a god of Heidegger but Dasein itself. Anxious Dasein calls itself. The call reaches they-self to become Dasein, i.e., “to consider its own possibilities, rather than the menu offered by the They, and to choose for itself what to do” (Inwood, 1999, p. 38). Dasein who hears the call of conscience stands silently in front of its possibilities of Being in the truth of Being, namely in the holy area.

Thus, does our plan turn out to be nothing? I will not cross the line that Heidegger draws, by claiming that the caller is a god. Claiming this might mean making Dasein a god because Heidegger particularly claims that the caller is no one but Dasein. We have already rejected the possibility of Dasein’s being a god in the second chapter. That is why, instead of claiming that the caller is a god, I will just liken the call of

conscience to the divinities of gods, especially by setting an analogy between Socrates' *daimonion* and the call of conscience. However, this will not be a free-floating approximation but have three positive consequences for the literature on Heidegger's gods, anxiety, and the relation between the thoughts of *Being and Time* and the later Heidegger.

Before likening, let us remind the *daimonion* of Socrates, divinities of Heidegger's gods, and the call of conscience. First of all, if we recall the *daimonion* of Socrates, it appears as a divine voice or a sign. This sign is not a worldly sign but an unordinary sign among the ordinary signs of the world. It calls out to Socrates, who is absorbed in his everyday concerns. It says nothing and so suspends these daily concerns but never gives positive orders to Socrates. Thus, Socrates is thrown into the freedom to choose what to do. Second, if we recall divinities of gods in the second chapter, they are signs that are formed by gods. They are extraordinary signs among the web of ordinary signs of the world. In addition, they are world-opener signs in the holy, namely in the truth of Being. I have described them as guiding signs that Dasein chooses to follow or not. Third, the call of conscience presents itself to the they-self as "a voice" that can be called a sign. It reaches the they-self and says nothing in a worldly manner. Since it does not refer to any ordinary and determinate object, it makes itself felt as unordinary. Thus, it annihilates the daily concerns of they-self and makes Dasein face its potentiality for Being itself. In other words, it does not give any positive orders but throws Dasein into its freedom to choose itself in the truth of Being. As is seen, there are apparent similarities between the *daimonion* of Socrates, divinities of Heidegger's gods, and the call of conscience. My purpose here is first to liken the call of conscience to divinities of gods directly. Then, I will also show indirect similarities between them with the help of the analogy between the call of conscience and the *daimonion* of Socrates.

Without any contribution from our analogy, it seems that there are some similarities between the divinities of gods and the sign of conscience. First, both show themselves as a sign. Second, none of them is encountered as a being, namely an entity within the world. In line with this, third, none of them comes from the public world of *das Man*. That is, these signs are not shaped by ordinary talks or the practice of the they. Fourth,

both the call of conscience and divinities of gods emerge in midst of the ordinary world or everyday concerns. For example, divinities show themselves in the ordinary actions and places like in an ordinary bolt of lightning in just the same way that the conscience calls Dasein right in the middle of ordinary everyday life. Fifth, both the call of conscience and divinities of gods are extraordinariness in the ordinary world. Sixth, both of them lead to the truth of Being. That is, divinities of gods are godly guiding elements that lead to the truth of Being while the call of conscience reaches the they-self of people and transforms them into anxious Dasein that stands in the truth of Being by projecting a possibility of Being. Consequently, there are six direct similarities between divinities of gods and the call of conscience in Heidegger. I believe, this is a proof that Heidegger establishes a common structure between these concepts.

These similarities together with the aforementioned similarities between anxiety and the holy show that the door that Heidegger leaves open in *Being and Time* and defines as Being toward gods is possible thanks to the call of conscience and anxiety. Just as anxiety leads Dasein to stand in the holy area and wait for the arrival of gods, the call of conscience also leads Dasein to dwell in the nearness to gods, i.e., Dasein draws so close to the abode where gods pass by. In addition, in the section on anxiety, I have not claimed that anxiety and the holy are the same but established a possible reciprocal relation between them. That is, when Dasein is anxious, gods draw near to Dasein. Conversely, when gods draw near to Dasein, Dasein becomes anxious. In the same way, I claim that there is a possible reciprocal relation between the call of conscience and divinities of gods. Dasein who senses divinities of gods becomes open to hearing the call of conscience and, in fact, hears it. In the same way, when Dasein does not turn away from the call of conscience, it reticently dwells in nearness to gods and is able to sense divinities of gods.

Thus, the first contribution of my claim to the readings of Heidegger is that if there is a possibility of Being toward gods in *Being and Time*, then it is possible on the basis of the concept of anxiety and the call of conscience. Heidegger portrays a godless existence in *Being and Time* but does not prevent a possible Being toward gods. On the contrary, Heidegger establishes this godless possibility of existence in order not to

destroy everything divine and to be more open to the true “nature” of gods (Heidegger, 1969, p. 72; 2012, p. 345). After all, Heidegger states:

If I were yet to write a theology-to which I sometimes feel inclined-then the word *Being* would not occur in it...I believe that Being can never be thought as the ground and essence of God, but that nevertheless the experience of God and of his manifestedness, to the extent that the latter can indeed meet man, flashes in the dimension of Being, which in no way signifies that Being might be regarded as a possible predicate for God. On this point one would have to establish completely new distinctions and delimitations (as cited in Marion, 2012, pp. 61-62).

As is seen, Heidegger clearly discerns gods from Being or existence. However, he accepts that the encounter between gods and human existence is possible in the dimension of Being. As I have shown, this encounter is possible thanks to divinities of gods in the holy area and the anxiety and the call of conscience in Dasein. This passage of Heidegger also shows that our interpretation of Heidegger’s gods, which refuses any interpretation that reduces gods to the realm of Being and which considers gods as what announces itself to people through divinities in the truth of Being is on the right track. Moreover, it legitimates our avoidance of making godly elements (the holy and divinities) and the constitution of Being of Dasein (in particular, anxiety and the call of conscience) the same. Up to now, we have only shown that there are similarities between them. Considering these similarities, there is a possible reciprocal relation between gods and the call of conscience as well as between the former and anxiety. As the first consequence of this relation, an encounter between humans and gods, namely a possible Being towards gods can be established on the basis of anxiety and the call of conscience.

Now, we can consider indirect similarities between divinities of gods and the call of conscience, which is mediated by the analogy that contains the *daimonion* of Socrates. When Socrates hears the voice or “senses the sign,” he immediately discerns the *daimonion* behind the sign. He does not claim that he sees the *daimonion* but notices it via a sign. This *daimonion* calls out to the everyday self of Socrates, just like the call of conscience reaches the they-self. In addition, both the sign of the *daimonion* and the call of conscience discourse nothing in a worldly manner, i.e., they do not convey any positive commands. Since both lack a determinate object in the world, they annihilate

the public everydayness of a person or people. Lastly, both the sign of the *daimonion* and the call of conscience leave one with the freedom to choose himself/herself.

In light of the fact that Heidegger translates *daimonion* as a god, I believe that the similarities between the *daimonion* of Socrates and the call of conscience can be thought of in the same way as the similarities between divinities of gods and the call of conscience.¹⁷ That is, we can interpret divinities of gods with similar characteristics between the *daimonion* of Socrates and the call of conscience. As a result of this interpretation, divinities of gods become negative signs for someone who is lost in the they-self and in the they-world.¹⁸ In addition, divinities of gods become the ones who discourse nothing to the they-self and so, annihilate the they-self and the they-world. People who sense divinities are repelled from their lostness in the they-world and transformed into anxious Dasein. Thanks to the negative guidance of divinities of gods, anxious Dasein stands in the truth of Being. That is, they grant Dasein the freedom to choose a possibility of Being.

In other words, gods awaken humans who are lost in the soothing turmoil of public life by sending negative signs. In this way, gods remind humans about the freedom that humans have in the course of the history of Being, so humans can take responsibility for their projection in the truth of Being. In addition, Heidegger's gods need the truth of Being to announce their "existence" to people. When they announce, humans who sense this announcing are transformed into anxious Dasein that stands in the truth of Being. That is, by signs of gods, Dasein stewards the truth of Being.

Moreover, I have shown that the call of conscience addresses Dasein as guilty. Guilty Dasein becomes alienated by the call of conscience and understands that its self is groundless and contingent, i.e., Dasein understands that it is a null basis of a null projection. Thus, we can also interpret divinities with these concepts. That is, divinities

¹⁷ To repeat, this is just an analogy. It is not to say that Heidegger's gods are *daimonion*, or we can interpret Socrates in terms of Heidegger's philosophy.

¹⁸ At least, some of divinities are negative signs. Since I do not have a clue for positive signs yet in Heidegger's philosophy, especially in *Being and Time*, I will not make a distinction. However, in any way, I think that any godly "nature" should be in a negative manner to someone who is lost in the they, and my claim just stresses on this.

of gods are the ones that awaken Dasein to the awareness that it does not own the self that is determined by the public world, namely a historically contingent understanding of Being. In itself, Dasein is nothing. Since divinities of gods declare to fallen people that they are nothing in themselves, humans become able to wake up from their lostness in the soothing public world of others and to contribute to the truth of Being. That is, since humans who sense divinities realize that they do not have a pre-determined, intrinsic, natural, or necessary essence but one that is determined by the they and historically contingent, they gain the power to resolutely project themselves and participate in the truth of Being. Conversely, Dasein that does not suppress its guilt becomes able to sense divinities of gods, so it resolutely projects a possibility of Being.

As is seen, indirect similarities between divinities of gods and the call of conscience support my claim on the possible reciprocal relation between gods and the call of conscience. In addition, they supply a second contribution to the readings of Heidegger. That is, it is possible to interpret apparently mystical, metaphorical or even poetical concepts of the late Heidegger such as gods, divinity, and the holy on the basis of the explicit concepts of *Being and Time*. To repeat, under the light of the concepts of *Being and Time*, divinities of gods are interpreted as negative guiding signs in the public world, which annihilate the they-self by discoursing nothing in a worldly manner. They remind fallen people that their public self is not natural but null, i.e., they address people that they are guilty. Thus, divinities of gods annihilate the they-self and transform people into anxious Dasein that stands in the holy area or the truth of Being, i.e., they remind Dasein of its freedom to choose a possibility of Being.

Finally, my claim on the similarities and a possible reciprocal relation between divinities of gods and the call of conscience as well as a possible reciprocal relation between gods and anxiety has a third contribution to the readings of Heidegger. That is, even if the focus of Heidegger is mostly considered to be changed from *Being and Time* to his late periods, there exists a common structure or way of thinking that encompasses his philosophy. For example, even if Heidegger focuses on the investigation of Dasein that projects its self in *Being and Time*, he does not completely close any possible contributions to this projection, that may come from gods. Similarly, even if Heidegger focuses on the contributions of gods to the truth of Being

more than the contributions of humans in *Contributions to Philosophy*, he does not eliminate or ignore humans' part or Dasein's part that plays in the truth of Being. More importantly, these sides, namely the human side and the side of gods are encountered in the truth of Being. And this encounter is possible thanks to the similarities between Heidegger's formulation of gods, divinity, holy, anxiety, and the call of conscience. Consequently, my claim in this thesis shows a possible line of continuity between the concepts of late Heidegger and the Heidegger of *Being and Time*. This is the third contribution of my claim to the readings of Heidegger.

To sum up, when the conscience calls Dasein, this call reaches Dasein's fallen they-self. By calling, the they-self and the-they world are annihilated. In other words, the public everyday world loses its significance. Dasein understands its guilt that its past does not belong to him and any possibility of Being is not essential for its Self. That is, the world into which Dasein is thrown is contingent, and the possibilities it offers do not have an intrinsic value to supply a meaning for choosing one while leaving the other. Thus, Dasein is a null projection of a nullity. By the call of conscience, Dasein becomes resolute in the sense that it reticently and perseveringly projects itself upon a possibility of the world that Dasein authentically embraces, knowing that it is not a product of its own making. Heidegger claims that reticence is nearness to gods. Thus, to hear the call of conscience is to be silently standing near to gods. In other words, resolute Dasein actively awaits the arrival of gods, namely their divinities or signs. So, I have asked whether the caller in conscience is a god. Heidegger explicitly avoids any interpretation of the caller as a god. This also means that the call is not a godly sign. Heidegger claims that the caller is Dasein, and the one who is called is also Dasein. In short, Dasein calls itself. When this call reaches the they-self, it is annihilated, and Dasein is returned to itself.

Even if the caller is not a god, this does not cover the apparent similarities between the call of conscience and divinities (signs) of gods. Showing these similarities has positive consequences for the literature on Heidegger's anxiety, gods, and the relation between the ideas of *Being and Time* and his late ideas. I have followed two ways to show the similarities. One is direct likening the call of conscience to divinities of gods. The other one is mediated by the analogy that refers to the *daimonion* of Socrates. As

a result of the direct likening, I have detected six similarities between the call of conscience and divinities of gods. Specifically, both are (1) signs in the shape of a voice or a divinity; (2) not a being or entity in the world; (3) do not come from the they-self or the they-world; (4) show themselves in the ordinary; (5) refer to extraordinariness; and (6) contribute to the truth of Being. This likening shows that a Being towards gods on the basis of *Being and Time* is possible thanks to the call of conscience as well as anxiety. In other words, only authentic Dasein can exist in relation to gods. This likening also shows that there is a possible reciprocal relation between the call of conscience and divinities of gods. That is, when gods arrive via divinities, Dasein becomes anxious and hears the call. Conversely, when Dasein hears the call of conscience, it becomes able to sense divinities of gods.

I have claimed another four similarities between the call of conscience and divinities of gods by making an analogy between the *daimonion* of Socrates and the call of conscience. The *daimonion* reaches (7) the everyday self of Socrates, (8) discourses nothing in a worldly manner, (9) annihilates his everyday concerns, and then (10) leaves him with the freedom to choose himself. These four elements that suit well with the call of conscience can be held also for divinities of gods. I have interpreted divinities on the basis of these four elements, which, I believe, has positive results for the literature on Heidegger's understanding of gods. We know that divinities show themselves in the ordinary, so it is not a surprise that gods send them into the they-world. However, our claim in the second chapter that divinities are guiding elements in the truth of Being now acquires a new meaning. Divinities of gods are negative signs to the they-self. By discoursing nothing in a worldly manner, they annihilate Dasein's absorption into the they-world. In addition, divinities of gods transform fallen people into anxious Dasein, and so, Dasein has the freedom to choose or not to authentically project itself upon a possibility of Being. I have also added that divinities remind Dasein that it is guilty. That is, divinities of gods give Dasein to understand that it is the groundless nullity of a null projection.

Lastly, I have shown that our likening the call of conscience to divinities of gods as well as a possible relation between gods and the call of conscience as well as between the former and anxiety have positive results for the literature about the relation

between the thoughts of the late Heidegger and the Heidegger of *Being and Time*. On the one hand, we have dealt with such concepts of the Heidegger of *Being and Time* as anxiety, and the call of conscience (together with thrownness, being-with, and fallenness). On the other hand, we have analyzed the concepts of the late Heidegger such as gods, divinity, and holy (together with the truth of Being, Beyng, the strife between world and earth, and forgetfulness). Their direct or indirect similarities and their harmony with each other without spoiling the meanings or leveling down the importance of each other show that there is a possible line of continuity between the two Heideggers. The two Heideggers use a common structure or way of thinking, so it is possible to establish a relation between them. This thesis has tried to establish an understanding of gods in *Being and Time* without damaging Dasein's non-metaphysical constitution. In the same way, it has tried to explain some of the themes of the late Heidegger such as gods, divinity, and the holy on the basis of *Being and Time*. In other words, it has interpreted the poetical, metaphorical, and for some, mystical language of the late Heidegger by the language of *Being and Time*.

3.3. Conclusion of the Chapter

After showing the contributions of gods in the truth of Being in the second chapter, this chapter has focused on the contribution of humans and the relation between gods and humans in the truth of Being. For that, it begins with Heidegger's statement that he leaves open a possible Being towards gods in *Being and Time*. The book, *Being and Time*, is devoted to analyzing an existence that is called Dasein. Gadamer asserts that by analyzing this existence, Heidegger is indeed on the search for gods.

As a transition to the issue of the relation between gods and Dasein (anxiety in particular), I have chosen to establish an analogy that includes the Greek concept, *daimonion*, of which Heidegger is cognizant. Heidegger sees a relation between *daimonion*, Being, and anxiety, and he translates Greek *daimonion* as a god. Then, I have inferred that Heidegger apparently thinks of a relation between gods and anxiety. So, I have taken an example of *daimonion* that accompanies Socrates. This example has served as a good analogy for the relation between gods and anxiety as well as between the former and the call of conscience because whenever Socrates hears the

call of his *daimonion*, the *daimonion* discourses nothing. Thus, in Heidegger's terms, it annihilates Socrates' every concern but does not tell him what to do, i.e., Socrates is thrown to his freedom to choose himself.

Thus, I have switched our attention to the explanation of the mood of anxiety in order to elaborate on the relation between gods and humans. For that, I have first explained Heidegger's concepts such as thrownness, Being-with, and fallenness. Thrownness signifies that Dasein is thrown into an understanding of Being which it neither chooses nor owns. Being-with designates that Dasein is never alone but always being with others. That is why Dasein, in its everydayness, interprets itself and beings in the world in the way they-self (*das Man*) interprets them. Fallenness stands for that Dasein mostly forgets that itself and the world are determined by a contingent understanding of Being that belongs to the they-self. So, Dasein falls into they-world and they-self and stays in an inauthentic state.

Heidegger claims that anxiety is a very peculiar mood that annihilates the everydayness of Dasein, namely they-self and they-world and leaves Dasein face to face with its own freedom like the voice of the *daimonion* does to Socrates. Since anxiety does not have a determinate object in the world, everything in the world loses its significance for anxious Dasein. That is, Dasein cannot cling to beings in the world. Rather, Dasein transcends the world, i.e., beings as a whole are opened to anxious Dasein. Thus, Dasein understands that it is Being-possible, namely its potentiality for Being its authentic self. That is, in anxiety, Dasein can choose a possibility of Being, projects it in an openness, and so, stands in the truth of Being. Since the truth of Being is the holy, anxious Dasein stands in the holy area, or Dasein is anxious when it encounters the holy. Thus, there seem to be similarities between the holy and anxiety. (1) Both unconceal extraordinariness; (2) are not being in the world; (3) annihilate ordinariness; and (4) disclose the truth of Being. Therefore, there is a possible reciprocal relation between anxiety and the holy. Since the holy is the area where gods come with divinities, there is also a possible reciprocal relation between anxiety and gods. That is, anxious Dasein stands in an abode where gods may arrive. Similarly, when poets convey gods' arrival to people by naming the holy, people who are open to hearing gods' arrival are transformed into anxious Dasein.

Following the analogy that includes the call of Socrates' *daimonion*, I have inquired whether the call of conscience that is attuned by anxiety is the call of gods. It has turned out that the caller is not a god but Dasein itself. With the call of conscience, Dasein calls itself. Both the one who is called and the caller are Dasein. That is, the call of conscience, which is always in Dasein though latently, reaches the fallen they-self. Since the they-self is the one who turns away from hearing what is ontological, the call of conscience reaches the they-self in the sense of nothing. The call says nothing and thus annihilates they-self. Thus, the call robs Dasein of speech. Dasein that hears the call of conscience becomes reticent in hearing the call. In addition, by the call, Dasein understands its guilt in the sense that Dasein does not own the past, and none of its possibilities is essential. At this point, Dasein can choose to be inauthentic, forget about the call and its anxiety, and project itself in a fallen way in the manner of forgetting Being. Alternatively, Dasein can choose to be authentic, give ear to the call, be anxious and resolutely project itself upon one of the possibilities of Being. In this way, Dasein reticently exists. Heidegger claims that reticence is nearness to gods. Here, even if the caller is not a god, hearing the call of conscience, feeling the guilt, and becoming resolute are the ways by which Dasein dwells in the nearness to gods. Or it is the other way around; when gods appear through their divinities in the holy openness, Dasein hears the call, feels the guilt, and becomes resolute in projecting.

Even if the caller is not a god, there are direct and indirect (by the mediation of our analogy) similarities between the call of conscience and divinities of gods. I have detected six direct similarities. Both the call of conscience and divinities are (1) signs; (2) non-beings; (3) do not originate from the they-world and the they-self; (4) stand out in ordinariness; (5) manifest themselves as extraordinariness; and (6) lead to the truth of Being. I have asserted four more similarities, which I call "indirect similarities," by an appeal to the *daimonion* of Socrates as a mediator. Socrates' *daimonion* gives him a divine sign which reaches the everyday self of Socrates, discourses nothing, annihilates Socrates' everyday activities, and leaves him with the freedom to choose his actions. As is seen, Socrates' divine sign seems to have similar functions to that of the call of conscience. Due to the fact that Heidegger considers

daimonion as a god, I have also likened divinities of gods to these functions of the call of conscience. Thus, both the call of conscience and divinities of gods (7) reach the they-self; (8) discourse nothing in a worldly manner; (9) annihilate the they-self; (10) leave one with the freedom to choose oneself.

With the aid of all those similarities, I have claimed that there is a possible reciprocal relation between gods and anxiety (*Angst*) as well as between the former and the call of conscience. Thus, Being toward gods on the basis of *Being and Time* is possible thanks to the concepts of anxiety and the call of conscience. In other words, only an authentic Dasein exists toward gods in the manner of actively awaiting. Secondly, I have interpreted divinities of gods via the similarities that they share with the concept of anxiety and the call of conscience. Accordingly, divinities show themselves in the they-world in a negative manner, namely that they discourse nothing to someone who is lost in the they-self. Thus, they annihilate this soothing public self and transform this public personality into anxious Dasein who becomes aware of its inevitable freedom to choose itself. Since gods announce their “existence” through divinities, they appear to someone who is lost in they-world in a negative manner. Thus, they awaken this person to taking responsibility for his/her existence in the course of the history of Being. Finally, our likening such concepts of *Being and Time* as anxiety and the call of conscience to such concepts of the late Heidegger as holy, divinity, and god, shows that there can be a possible line of continuity between the two Heideggers since there is a common structure between these concepts, and they can be read together without spoiling the meanings of each other.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION

As a result, in this thesis, I claim that there is a possible reciprocal relation between gods and anxiety (*Angst*) in Heidegger's philosophy. Since Heidegger's anxiety and the call of conscience belong together, I also claim that there is a possible reciprocal relation between gods and the call of conscience.

In order to support this claim, I have first shown what Heidegger means by a god. For Heidegger, a god is not "something or someone" that we can observe or refer to. A god is not "something" that shows itself in the world in the same way that a rock, an animal, and a person show themselves. Moreover, we cannot attribute a being to Heidegger's gods. Heidegger regards or "shelters" gods in their undecidable "nature." Heidegger thinks that attributing being to gods or designating them as a first cause, a regulator of the world, or supreme power is not suitable for the true "nature" of gods. That is why Heidegger gives a formulation that does not reduce gods to a being but still claims that people can "know" or "sense" gods. That is, gods appear through their signs in the world, namely divinities. Appearing in this sense signifies the same situation that an illness announces itself, not by itself but through its symptoms. If we can properly detect what these symptoms beckon to, we may realize the illness behind them. In the same way, people can "know" gods by experiencing their signs.

These signs do not "exist" out of the world. They show themselves in the ordinary things, in the ordinary stream of events, or in the ordinary world. However, they show themselves as extraordinariness in the midst of this ordinariness. This does not mean that in the usual flow of everyday life, an astonishing or terrible thing happens like a war or an epidemic. Rather, signs of gods may appear in ordinary things or events to someone who is ready to experience them. For an allegorical example, a shipmaster

may sense extraordinariness or a godly sign in the air and feel distressed about her/his route. Thus, s/he may regard changing the route. Accordingly, godly signs show themselves as guiding signs in the course of the events. Heidegger formulates this as that these signs or divinities are godly guiding elements in the happening of Being, in other words in the truth of Being.

Thus, signs or divinities of gods show themselves in the truth of Being, which Heidegger also calls the holy. That is, in the history of Being, there are godly contributions according to Heidegger. To make it clear, when gods pervade the truth of Being with their divinities, a world opens while other possible worlds remain concealed, i.e., the truth of Being occurs. This happening is called the holy. In this holy openness, gods arrive and abscond. That is, as gods pervade the truth of Being, a new god, or what Heidegger terms as the last god, arrives with an understanding of Being while an old god dies, and the familiar world goes with it. In addition, not only gods but humans are also at play in the truth of Being. That is why gods are in strict relation with human beings. This is almost all Heidegger says about gods. Even if it may sound mystical, I argue that it is not. All happen in the sphere of Being, and in relation to humans.

In order to grasp this relation between gods and humans, I have examined Heidegger's *Being and Time*, in which he analyzes the essence of human beings, namely an existence called Dasein. This examination has yielded good consequences for interpreting Heidegger's seemingly mystical language on gods on the basis of the existence of human beings. Throughout this interpretation, an analogy has accompanied us, namely the analogy between the *daimonion* of Socrates and such concepts of *Being and time* as anxiety and the call of conscience. Greek *daimonion* is the term that Heidegger translates as a god. This translation arouses interest in whether there can be a contribution from Socrates' *daimonion* to Heidegger's gods. Especially, knowing the fact that Socrates' *daimonion* functions in similar way as anxiety and the call of conscience in Dasein increases the possibility of likening late Heidegger's ideas on gods to the concepts of the Heidegger of *Being and Time*.

The *daimonion* of Socrates does not give Socrates positive orders. Rather, at a time when Socrates is absorbed or lost in his daily practices, the *daimonion* calls him and suspends his actions. At this moment, since it does not give directions to Socrates, Socrates is left with the freedom to choose what to do. This situation is similar to the situation in which Dasein hears the call of conscience and becomes anxious in *Being and Time*. Like Socrates, Dasein mostly exists as absorbed in the practices of the everyday or public life of a historical community. That is, Dasein does what others do, enjoys what others enjoy, or even dreams what others dream. In such an inauthentic and fallen situation, the call of conscience reaches Dasein who is lost in the they-world but says nothing. Since it says nothing, nothing concerns Dasein who hears the call. In other words, the world loses its significance and becomes nothing for Dasein. Thus, Dasein feels uncanny or has anxiety in such a world of nothingness. However, in this way, the world is opened to Dasein as a whole where Dasein can choose to inauthentically or authentically project itself.

As is seen, an analogy can be established between the function of the call of Socrates' *daimonion* and the call of conscience in Dasein. Since the call of Socrates' god is a divine sign, i.e. a sign of a god, I have likened signs or divinities of Heidegger's gods to the call of conscience. I have termed the results of such a likening as indirect similarities because it has been mediated by the analogy. Thus, I have asserted that divinities of gods are negative signs which do not give positive orders to someone who is lost in the public world, i.e. discourse nothing in a worldly manner. By discoursing nothing, divinities of gods annihilate the they-self of Dasein and make it regain the freedom to choose its self. That is, signs of gods recover people from their inauthentic lostness and fallenness into a contingent world that they do not own. Thus, Heidegger's seemingly mystic gods appear as the ones who remind fallen people that they are always free and responsible for their actions. In this way, Heidegger's notions of divinities and gods gain more concrete interpretations from the perspective of *Being and Time*.

As for direct similarities between the call of conscience and divinities of gods, both of them show themselves as unusual signs in the usual world, and both lead one to the truth of Being. Due to these direct and indirect (mediated by our analogy) similarities,

I have claimed that even if Heidegger prevents interpreting the caller in conscience as a god, there is a possible reciprocal relation between gods and the call of conscience. That is, Dasein who hears the call of conscience becomes ready for the arrival of gods; or when gods appear through their divinities, people who witness these divinities are transformed into anxious Dasein that hears the call. In short, hearing the call or becoming reticent by such a call is dwelling in nearness to gods, or vice versa.

When the everyday ordinary self of people is annihilated by the signs, Dasein feels anxious or uncanny. That is, the everyday familiar world does not matter to Dasein anymore. Thus, anxious Dasein has nothing or nobody to lean on. That is why Dasein finds itself free to choose itself, namely a possibility of Being. That is, anxious Dasein stands in an openness where it can resolutely project itself. Since this openness has the movement of opening and closing, Dasein stands in the truth of Being, namely the holy sphere. In other words, anxious Dasein stands in the holy area. Reversely, when poets name the holy, people who hear the holy are transformed into anxious Dasein that stands in the truth of Being. As is seen, there is also a possible reciprocal relation between the holy and anxiety. That is, anxious Dasein stands in the holy area where gods arrive with divinities. On the other hand, when gods arrive by their divinities in the holy area, poets who sense these divinities convey them to people, and people who are open to hearing the holy are transformed into anxious Dasein who steward the truth of Being. Thus, there is a reciprocal relation between anxiety and the holy as well as between the former and gods.

After showing this possible reciprocal relation between gods and anxiety as well as between the former and the call of conscience, I have indicated two other consequences along with the consequences for the interpretation of Heidegger's gods. One is that a Being towards gods is possible thanks to anxiety and the call of conscience on the basis of *Being and Time*. That is, only an authentic existence can be in relation to gods. The other one is that there is a common structure between the concepts of the late Heidegger such as holy, divinity, and gods and the concepts of the Heidegger of *Being and Time* such as anxiety and the call of conscience. Thus, there is a possible line of continuity between the two Heideggers.

As a final word, if I may re-formulate the statement of Hans-Georg Gadamer who says “by existence, Heidegger meant the search for God. He was a seeker of God his entire life,” I would say “Heidegger searched for the ways to gods for a godless thinking.” For he believes that “god-less thinking is more open to Him than onto-theo-logic would like to admit” due to the death of the God of metaphysics.



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APPENDICES

A. TURKISH SUMMARY / TRKE ZET

Bu tezde Heidegger'in tanrılar ve kaygı (*Angst*) kavramları arasında karşılıklı bir ilişki olabileceğini iddia etmekteyim. Ayrıca Heidegger'de vicdanın çağrısına kaygı hali eşlik ettiğinden dolayı benzer bir ilişkinin tanrılar ve vicdanın çağrısı arasında da geçerli olduğunu savunmaktayım. Bu iddiamın Heidegger okumaları adına üç temel sonucu vardır. Bu sonuçlardan birincisi, Heidegger'in herhangi bir tanrı anlayışı öne sürmediği eseri *Varlık ve Zaman*'da, tanrılara doğru Olmaklığın, kaygı ve vicdanın çağrısı mefhumları üzerine inşa edilebileceğini göstermektedir. İkincisi, Heidegger'in "geç dönem" eserlerindeki kavramları arasında yer alan kutsal (holy, *das Heilige*), tanrısal (divinity, *die Göttlichen*) ve tanrılar kavramlarının Heidegger'in *Varlık ve Zaman*'daki kavramları -özellikle kaygı ve vicdanın çağrısı kavramları- ile birlikte okunabileceğini, böylece bu kavramların *Varlık ve Zaman* temelinde yorumlanabileceğini göstermektedir. Sonuncusu ise, birlikte okuduğum bu kavramlar bağlamında, *Varlık ve Zaman*'daki Heidegger ile geç dönem Heidegger arasında olası bir devamlılık olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır.

Heidegger'in tanrılar ve kaygı kavramları arasında karşılıklı bir ilişki olabileceğine dair iddiamı gösterebilmek adına bu çalışma, giriş ve sonuç bölümleri ile birlikte dört bölümden oluşmaktadır. İkinci bölümde, Heidegger'in tanrılar ile neyi kastettiğini tartışmaktayım. Üçüncü bölümde ise, Sokrates'in *daimonioun*'u ile Heidegger'in kaygı ve vicdanın çağrısı kavramları arasında bir analogi kurarak, Heidegger'de tanrılar ve kaygı arasında karşılıklı bir ilişki olabileceğini öne sürmekteyim.

Heidegger'in tanrılar ile neyi kastettiği konusu üzerine farklı yorumlar getirilmiştir. İkinci bölüme, bu yorumları kısaca özetleyip, bu yorumların yanlışlığını göstererek

başlamaktayım. Daha sonra, Heidegger'in tanrı derken neyi kastettiğini bulmak için, onun *Hümanizm Üzerine* adlı eserinde işaret ettiği, tanrılara giden yolu araştırmaktayım. Bu yol, Varlığın hakikatinden kutsal olanın özüne, kutsal olanın özünden tanrısal olanın özüne, tanrısal olanın özünden ise tanrılara giden bir yoldur. Bu yüzden, bu bölümde Heidegger'de tanrılar kavramının anlamını Varlığın hakikati, kutsal ve tanrısal kavramları üzerinden ortaya koymaktayım.

Yukarıda da bahsettiğim gibi Heidegger'de tanrıların ne olduğu konusu tartışıla gelmiştir. Bazı yorumcular Heidegger'in Varlık derken Tanrı'yı kastettiğini, bazıları Dasein'in Tanrı olduğunu, bazıları ise geç dönem Heidegger'in bir kavramı olan *Seyn*¹⁹'ın Tanrı olduğunu öne sürmüştür. Bu yorumların yanı sıra, Heidegger'in felsefesinin ateistik veya teistik bir felsefe olup olmadığı da tartışıla gelmiştir. Heideggerin felsefesinin teistik bir felsefe olduğunu düşünenler arasında, bu felsefenin tektanrı, çoktanrı, panteist veya panenteist olup olmadığı da tartışılmıştır. Ancak Heidegger, birçok eserinde, Varlık, Dasein veya *Seyn* derken Tanrı'yı kastetmediğini belirtmiştir. Öte yandan, *Zeminin Özü Üzerine*²⁰ adlı eserinde özellikle *Varlık ve Zaman*'da bir insan veya insanlık portresi ortaya koyarken herhangi bir tanrı anlayışı öne sürmemesinin, felsefesinin ateist bir felsefe olarak değerlendirilebileceği anlamına gelmediğini ve bu eserde tanrılara doğru Olmaklığın imkanını açık bıraktığını da belirtmiştir. Aynı zamanda, tanrıları Varlık alanının dışına ittiği için, tanrılar kelimesinin çoğul kullanımının tanrıların Varlığına dair zorunlu karasızlığın bir işareti olduğunu belirterek, tektanrıcılık, çoktanrıcılık gibi metafiziksel kavramların kendi tanrı anlayışına uymadığını da ifade etmiştir.

O halde Heidegger tanrılar derken neyi kastetmektedir? Yukarıda da bahsettiğim gibi, bu soruya bir cevap vermek adına öncelikle Heidegger'in Varlığın hakikati, kutsal ve tanrısal kavramları ile neyi kastettiğini göstermekteyim. Heidegger Varlığın hakikati derken, Varlığın tarihsel olarak açılma ve kapanma hareketini kastetmektedir. Bu, Varlığın belirli bir dönemde kendini belirli bir anlayışla açarken, bu anlayışı açan

¹⁹ Heidegger, Almanca *Sein* (Varlık) kavramındaki “i” harfini “y” harfi ile değiştirip, *Seyn* kavramını türetmiştir.

²⁰ *Hümanizm Üzerine* adlı eserinde de ilgili açıklamasına atıfta bulunmaktadır.

açılma hareketinin kendisini ve diğer mümkün Varlık anlayışlarını kapattığı anlamına gelir. Diğer bir deyişle, varolanlar belirli bir Varlık anlayışı ile belirlenirken, bu belirlenimin kendisi ve bu belirlenimin sorumlusu Varlık gizlenmektedir. *Sanat Eserinin Kökeni* adlı eserinde Heidegger'in ortaya koymuş olduğu dünyanın kendini açması ve yeryüzünün ise kendini kapatması ve bundan dolayı dünya ile yeryüzü arasındaki mücadele de Varlığın hakikatinin farklı bir biçimde ifade edilmesidir. Aynı doğrultuda Heidegger, *Felsefeye Katkılar (Contributions to Philosophy, Beiträge zur Philosophie)* adlı eserlerinde, *Seyn* ile yine Varlığın hakikatinin tarihsel açılma ve kapanma hareketini kastetmektedir.

Heidegger'in kutsal kavramından ne anladığına bakıldığında ise, Heidegger'in şairlere çok sık atıflarda bulunduğu görülür. Heidegger için şairler; tanrılar ve insanlar arasında bulunan, tanrısal olanı duyumsayıp, bunları insanlara aktaran kişilerdir. Bu aktarımda kutsal olan isimlendirilmektedir. Başka bir deyişle, şairler kutsal olanı ortaya koymaktadırlar. İnsanlar kutsal olanı duyduklarında ise, insanlar ve tanrılar arasında bir hareket başlamaktadır. Bu hareket, dünya açıcı bir harekettir. Ancak bu dünya açıcı hareket, kapanma hareketini de beraberinde getirmektedir. Böylece, Heidegger'e göre kutsal olan, Varlık tarihindeki açılma kapanma hareketidir. Yani, Heidegger için Varlığın hakikati kutsal olandır.

Bu kutsal açılmayı ya da açıklığı, Heidegger'in tanrıları tanrısal olanlarla işgal eder. Heidegger'in tanrısal olandan kastettiği şey, Varlık alanındaki tanrı yapımı işaretlerdir. Bu işaretler tanrılara gönderme yaparlar ve böylece tanrılar bu işaretler arayıcılığıyla kendilerini bildirirler. Bu işaretler kendilerini, dünyaya ait sıradan işaretler ağında sıra dışı işaretler olarak gösterirler. Heidegger'e göre tanrısal şeyler, bir eserde, edimde, düşüncede ya da feda etmede ortaya çıkarlar. Bu şu anlama gelir: Varlığın hakikatinde, insanlar bu tür "işlerle" tanrısalların kendilerini göstermesini beklerler. Anlaşılabacağı üzere, bu bekleyiş, pasif değil, aktif bir bekleyiştir. Son olarak, tanrısalların kutsal Varlığın hakikatinde kendini göstermelerinin nedeni, Varlığın hakikatine tanrısal bir katkı sunmalarıdır. Böylece Heidegger'de Varlığın hareketi tanrısal bir harekettir.

Son olarak bu bölümde, Varlığın hakikati, kutsal ve tanrısal kavramlarından yola çıkarak, Heidegger'in tanrılardan neyi kastettiğini ortaya koymaktayım. Heidegger için tanrılar (1) işaret (tanrısal) gönderen “şeyler”dir; (2) bu işaretler sıra dışı oldukları için, tanrılar da sıradan dünyada sıra dışı olan “şeyler”dir; (3) tanrılara işaret eden işaretler, tanrılarının geldiklerini ya da göçtüklerini işaret ettikleri için, Heidegger'in tanrıları geçip-giden “şeyler”dir; (4) Varlık alanında bulunan işaretlerle kendilerini insanlara bildirdikleri için Varlığın hakikatine ihtiyaç duyan “şeyler”dir; (5) gönderdikleri tanrısal işaretlerle Varlığın kutsal hareketinde katkıları olan “şeyler”dir; (6) Varlığın hareketinde insanların da payı olduğu için, Heidegger'in tanrıları insanlarla sıkı ilişkide olan “şeyler”dir; ve (7) Heidegger'in tanrıları ölen “şeyler”dir ve böylece yerlerini yeni bir tanrıya ya da Heidegger'in deyişiyle son tanrıya bırakırlar. Bu, Heidegger'in düşüncesinde, eski tanrının göçüp giderken, eski dünyayı da kendisiyle birlikte götürdüğü anlamına gelmektedir. Bu düşüncede son tanrı ise yeni bir Varlık anlayışıyla gelir.

Tezin üçüncü bölümünde, Heidegger'in insanlar ve tanrılar arasında kurduğu ilişkiyi irdelemekteyim. Bunu, ikinci bölümde ele almış olduğum Varlığın hakikati, tanrısal ve kutsal kavramları ile *Varlık ve Zaman*'daki kaygı ve vicdanın çağrısı kavramları arasındaki ilişkiyi soruşturarak yapmaktayım. Bu kavramlar arasındaki ilişkiye dair bir bağlantı verebilmek, bu ilişkiyi daha anlaşılır kılabilmek ve yine bu ilişkiyi zengin bir biçimde kurabilmek için ise, bu bölüme Sokrates'in *daimonion* 'unu içeren bir analogi eşlik etmektedir. Tüm bunların sonucunda, Heidegger'de tanrılar ile kaygı arasında karşılıklı bir ilişki olabileceğini öne sürmekteyim. Aynı ilişkiyi kaygının eşlik ettiği vicdanın çağrısı ile tanrılar arasında da kurmaktayım. Bu iddiamın ise *Varlık ve Zaman* okumalarına, Heidegger'in tanrı anlayışına ve Heidegger'in sözde iki dönemi (geç ve erken dönem²¹) arasındaki tartışmaya dair sonuçları vardır.

Sokrates'in Savunması'nda, Platon'un bize aktardığına göre, bir *daimonion* Sokrates'e eşlik etmektedir. Ne zaman bu *daimonion* Sokrates'e seslenmiş olsa, Sokrates'in yapmakta olduğu şey sekteye uğramaktadır. Ancak, *daimonion* Sokrates'e hiçbir zaman ne yapması gerektiğini öğütlemeyip, onu kendi özgürlüğüne terk

²¹ Bu tezden erken dönemden kastım 1930'lar öncesi Heidegger metinleridir. Geç dönemden kastım ise, 1930 ve sonrası Heidegger metinleridir.

etmektedir. Bu durum, her günkü varoluşunda kendini yaptığı işlerde kaybetmiş Dasein'ın kaygı haline girdiğinde yaşadığı duruma benzemektedir. Kaygı duyan Dasein'ın sıradan hayat akışı, yani yapmakta olduğu işler sekteye uğrar ve Dasein kendini seçebilme özgürlüğüne fırlatılır. Heidegger'in birçok pasajında *daimonion* kavramını tanrı olarak tercüme etmesi ise, Heidegger'de tanrılar ve kaygı kavramları arasında bir ilişki kurulabileceği fikrini güçlendirir. Üstelik başka pasajlarında Heidegger, *daimonion* kavramı ile kaygı kavramı arasında ilişki olduğunu belirtmiştir. Bunlara ek olarak, *daimonion*'un seslenişi tanrısal bir işaret olduğu için, Heidegger'de tanrısal kavramı ile “vicdanın sesi” (vicdanın çağrısı) arasında bir ilişki kurulabileceği düşüncesi güçlenmektedir. Sonuç olarak, bu tezde, Sokrates'in *daimonion*'u ile Heidegger'in kaygı ve vicdanın çağrısı kavramları arasında bir analogi kurarak, bu analogi ile Heidegger'de tanrılar ile hem kaygı hem de vicdanın çağrısı kavramları arasındaki ilişkiyi göstermeye çalışmaktayım. Bu analogiden kasıt Heidegger'in tanrıların *daimonion* olduklarını göstermek ya da Sokrates'i Heidegger'in kavramları ile yorumlamak değildir. Ayrıca, Sokrates'in *daimonion*'unun bir duyuya hitap etmesinin etik ve metafizik imalarının olabileceğini göz ardı ederek, bunları Heidegger felsefesi ile özdeşleştirmemekteyim. Kısacası bu tezde Sokrates'in *daimonion*'nunu Heidegger'deki bağıntıları göstermek için yalnızca bir analogi olarak kullanmaktayım.

Heidegger'de kaygı ile tanrılar arasında bir ilişki olabileceğini göstermek için, önce kaygı kavramını açıklamaktayım. Bu kavramı açıklayabilmek için ise, fırlatılmışlık, birlikte-olma ve düşmüşlük kavramlarını incelemekteyim. En yalın ifadeyle fırlatılmışlık, Dasein'ın sahip olmadığı ve seçmediği bir Varlık anlayışında ya da dünyada kendini bulması anlamına gelmektedir. Birlikte-olma ise, Dasein'ın hiçbir zaman yalnız olmayışı ve her zaman başkalarıyla birlikte var olduğunu belirtmektedir. Bu yüzden Dasein kendini ve dünyadaki varolanları hep başkalarının yorumladığı gibi yorumlar. Başka bir deyişle, Dasein herkes benliği taşır. Düşmüşlük ise, Dasein'ın fırlatılmış olduğu bu Varlık anlayışının olumsal ve tarihsel olarak değişebilir olduğunu unutup, onun doğal, zaruri ve nihai olduğunu sanmasıdır. Böylece Dasein herkes benliğini kendi gerçek benliği sanmaktadır. Heidegger, Dasein'ın çoğu zaman herkes benliğinde yaşadığını söyler.

Çok nadir anlarda ise, Dasein kaygı yaşamaktadır. Dünya dahilinde belirli bir nesnesi olmadığı için kaygı, hiçliği ifşa etmektedir. Ancak buradaki hiçlik metafiziksel ya da soyut bir kavram değildir. Hiçlik, her zaman varolanlarla bir arada anlaşılır. Bu yüzden, kaygı halindeki Dasein’ın herkes benliği ve herkes dünyası hiçlenir. Yani, dünyadaki her şey Dasein için önemini yitirir. Diğer bir ifadeyle, Dasein’ın her günkü yaşam akışı, Sokrates’in *daimonion*’unu duyduğu zamanki gibi sekteye uğrar. Böylece, Dasein ile dünya arasına bir mesafe girer. Bu mesafeyi Heidegger aşkınlık olarak adlandırmaktadır. Aşkınlığına kavuşan Dasein, varolanları bir bütün halinde görür. Kısacası, dünyanın dünyasallığı Dasein’a açılır. Bu noktada, kaygılı Dasein’ın olanaklı-Olmaklığı açığa çıkar. Dasein, Varlığın bir olanağını projelendireceği bir açıklıkta bulunur. Böylece kaygılı Dasein Varlığın hakikatinde yerini alır. Varlığın hakikati kutsal olduğu için, kaygılı Dasein aslında, tanrıların işaretlerini göndermekte olduğu kutsal alanda ikamet eder. Bu şekilde kaygılı Dasein tanrısal olanı “duyumsayacak” halde bulunur. Ancak kutsal kavramını açıklarken anlatılanlar göz önüne alınırsa, bu mesele tersten de anlatılabilir. Yani, tanrısalları duyumsayarak kutsal olanı işaret eden şairlerin şiirlerini duyan insanlar kaygılı Dasein’lara dönüşürler. Başka bir deyişle, Heidegger’in tanrıları düşmüş insanları kaygıyla uyandırmaktadır. Bu yorum doğrultusunda, Heidegger’de tanrılar ve kaygı kavramı arasında karşılıklı bir ilişki olabileceğini öne sürmek mümkündür.

Devamında, Sokrates’in *daimonion*’unun tanrısal bir işaret vermesinden ve bu işaretin işlevinin Dasein’daki vicdanın çağrısına benzemesinden, ayrıca Heidegger’in *daimonion*’u tanrı olarak tercüme etmesinden yola çıkarak, Heidegger’de vicdanın çağrısı ve tanrıların işaretleri (tanrısallar) arasında benzerlik ve ilişki kurmaya çalışmaktayım. Heidegger’in tanrıları ve vicdanının çağrısı arasında altı adet doğrudan, dört adet Sokrates analogisi kullanılarak ortaya konmuş dolaylı benzerlik öne sürmekteyim. Ancak bu tezde, Dasein’da bulunan vicdanın çağrısının tanrısal bir çağrı olduğunu iddia etmemekteyim. Aksine, Dasein’ın kendinde varlığını koruyarak, onda Heidegger’in geç döneminde öne sürdüğü tanrılar anlayışına giden yolları göstermekteyim ve Heidegger’in tanrılarla ilişkili kullandığı kavramların vicdanın çağrısı ile yapısal ortaklıklara sahip olduğunu ileri sürmekteyim.

Vicdanın çağrısı Dasein'ın düşmüş veya herkes benliğine seslenir. Bu ontolojik çağrı, her günkü sırdan dünyanın hiçbir işaretine benzemediği için herkes benliğindeki Dasein'a bir hiçlik biçiminde ulaşır. Başka bir deyişle, vicdanın çağrısı Dasein'a hiçbir şey söylemez veya "hiç"i dile getirir. Dasein vicdanın "hiç"i dile getiren çağrısına maruz kaldığında, dünya dahilindeki hiçbir varolan Dasein'ı ilgilendirmez. Kısacası, Dasein, dünyadaki her şeyle birlikte hiçlenir. Böylece Dasein kaygı durumuna girer ve her günkü varoluşu sekteye uğrar. Bu çağrı günlük sıradan konuşmaların hiçbirine benzemediği için de hiçlikle muhatap olan Dasein suskunlaşır. Heidegger bu tür bir suskunluğun tanrılara yakınlık olduğunu ifade eder. O halde bu ifade şu şekilde yeniden formüle edilebilir: vicdanın çağrısını duyan Dasein tanrıların yakınında ikamet eder. Tam tersi bir şekilde ifade edilecek olursa, tanrılar işaretleriyle insanlara yaklaştıklarında, bu işaretleri algılayan insanlar vicdanının çağrısını duyan Dasein'lara dönüşür. Bu noktada, Heidegger'de vicdanın çağrısı ile tanrılar arasındaki olası karşılıklı ilişki açığa çıkmaktadır. Aynı zamanda bu ilişki, bu ikisi arasındaki benzerlik ortaya konulduğunda da tekrarlanacaktır. Ancak öncelikle vicdanın çağrısının açığa vurduğu diğer mefhumları ortaya koyup, tanrıların yakınında ikamet etmenin nasıl bir şey olduğunu biraz daha irdelemekte fayda var.

Vicdanın çağrısı, Dasein'a suçlu olduğunu hatırlatır. Dasein'ın suçluluğu, şu anlama gelmektedir; Dasein fırlatıldığı dünyanın ve bu dünyanın ona bahsettiği özün doğal bir parçası değildir. Başka bir deyişle, Dasein geçmişinin/tarihinin maliki değildir. Aynı zamanda, içinde bulunduğu dünyanın ona sunduğu olanaklardan hiçbirinin kendinde bir değeri yoktur. Yani, Dasein için bir ihtimali diğerine seçmenin kendinde anlamlı bir sebebi bulunmamaktadır. Buna karşın Dasein her seçeneği aynı anda seçemez de. Bu yüzden, suçlu Dasein temelsizdir. Ancak dünyasının ve kendinin hiçliğini fark etmiş Dasein kendi Varlığını projelendirebilmektedir. Yani, suçlu Dasein Varlığını kararlı bir şekilde projelendirebileceği bir açıklıkta bulunur. Bu açıklık, kendinde açılma ve kapanma hareketini bulundurduğundan, aslında vicdanının çağrısını duyan suçlu ve kaygılı Dasein, Varlığın hakikatinde kararlı bir biçimde projesini yürütmektedir. Varlığın hakikatini tanrıların tanrısallıkla işgal ettiği kutsal bir alan olarak yorumladığımız için, Dasein aslında tanrısallıkları "duyumsayabilecek" kutsal bir alanda ikamet etmektedir. Sonuç olarak, Heidegger için, tanrıların yakınlığında ikamet etmek demek, vicdanın çağrısına kulak vererek, hiçliğine tutunmuş, suçlu ve

kaygılı bir varoluşun (Dasein) kendini, kutsal ve tanrısal Varlığın hakikatinde kararlı bir biçimde projelendirmesi demektir.

Tüm bunlardan sonra tanrısallar (tanrıların işaretleri) ile vicdanın çağrısı arasındaki doğrudan benzerlikleri göstermek için kısaca tanrısalların ne olduğunu hatırlatmak gerekir. Tanrısallar dünya içindeki varolanlar değildir ve bu yüzden onlardan türemezler. Tanrısallar kendilerini sıradanlıkta gösteren tanrı yapımı sıra dışı işaretlerdir. Onlar kutsal alana, yani Varlığın hakikatine tanrısal katkılardır. Bu açıklamalardan sonra vicdanın çağrısı ile Heidegger'in tanrısalları arasındaki benzerlikler şu şekilde dile getirilebilir; (1) her ikisi de birer işaretir. Tanrısalların bir işaret olarak yorumlanabileceği yukarıdaki pasajlarda belirtilmişti. Vicdanın çağrısı ise herkes benliğinde bir "ses" olarak anlaşıldığı için, onu da benzer şekilde bir işaret olarak yorumlamak mümkündür. (2) Her ikisi de varolan değildir. Yani ontolojik alana aittirler. Bu yüzden (3) herkes benliğinden ve herkes dünyasından kaynaklanmazlar. (4) Her ikisi de sıradanlıkta kendilerini gösterirler. (5) Her ikisi de bu sıradanlıkta birer sıra dışılıktır. Son olarak (6) her ikisi de Dasein'ı Varlığın hakikatine yöneltirler. Bu iki kavram arasındaki benzerlikler, Heidegger'de tanrılar ile vicdanın çağrısı arasında karşılıklı bir ilişki olduğu ihtimalini güçlendirmektedir. Vicdanının çağrısına kulak veren Dasein, tanrıların işaretlerini duyumsayabilir hale gelmektedir. Aksi bir şekilde ifade edilecek olursa, tanrıların işaretleri insanlara ulaştıklarında, bunları algılayan insanlar vicdanının çağrısını duyan Dasein'lara dönüşür. Ayrıca bu benzerliklerin ve karşılıklı ilişkinin, kaygı ile tanrılar arasındaki karşılıklı ilişki de göz önüne alındığında, Heidegger okumalarına dair ilk sonucu şu olacaktır: Heidegger'in *Varlık ve Zaman*'da açık bir biçimde kurmadığı ancak imkanını açık bıraktığı tanrılara doğru Olma imkanı, vicdanın çağrısı ve kaygı kavramları ile mümkündür. Yalnızca vicdanının çağrısını duyan, kaygılı ve böylece otantik (sahih) Dasein tanrılara doğru var olabilir.

Tanrısallar ile vicdanın çağrısı arasındaki dolaylı benzerliklere gelecek olursak, bu noktada Sokrates'in *daimonioun*'unun seslenişi ile vicdanın çağrısı arasındaki benzerlikleri, Heidegger'de tanrısallar ile vicdanın çağrısı arasındaki benzerlikler olarak öne sürmekteyim. Diğer bir deyişle, tanrısallar (tanrının işaretleri) ile vicdanın çağrısı arasında, Sokrates'in *daimonion*'unun yardımıyla, dört adet daha benzerlik öne

sürmekteyim. Bu benzerliklere “dolaylı benzerlikler” adını vermekteyim: (7) Hem tanrısallar hem de vicdanın çağrısı her günkülüğün sıradan herkes benliğine hitap eder. (8) Her ikisi de sıradan dünya bağlamında hiçbir şey ifade etmezler. Yani negatif işaretlerdir. Böylece, (9) herkes benliğini, herkes dünyasını hiçlerler. Son olarak ise, (10) ikisi de kişiyi kendi özgürlüğüyle baş başa bırakırlar. Bu benzetmelerle birlikte, vicdanın çağrısı ile tanrılar arasında karşılıklı bir ilişki olabileceğine dair iddiam daha da güçlenmektedir. Bu iddia, tanrılar ve kaygı arasındaki karşılıklı bir ilişki olabileceğini savunan iddiam ile birlikte,²² Heidegger okumalarına dair ayrıca şu şekilde ikinci bir sonuç daha vermektedir: Heidegger’in geç döneminde metaforik, şiirsel ve hatta mistik bulunan kutsal, tanrısallık ve tanrı gibi kavramları, *Varlık ve Zaman*’ın daha anlaşılır ve açık olduğu düşünülen kavramlarıyla yorumlanabilir. Yani, Heidegger’de kutsal, Dasein’in kendini projelendirdiği açıklıktır. Tanrılar ise, herkes (kamusal, sıradan ve olağan) benliklerinde yaşayan insanlara negatif işaretler (tanrısallar) göndererek, onları düşmüşlüklerinden uyandırıp, kendilerini seçme özgürlükleriyle baş başa bırakan “şeyler” olarak yorumlanabilir. Görüldüğü gibi bu yorumlama, Heidegger’in geç dönemindeki kutsal, tanrısallık ve tanrılar gibi kavramlarının içeriğiyle çelişmemekte, onlara *Varlık ve Zaman*’ın kavramlarıyla (özellikle kaygı ve vicdanın çağrısı ile) yeni ve uygun anlamlar katmaktadır.

Son olarak, bütün bu okuma bize Heidegger literatürü için üçüncü bir sonuç verir. Çoğunlukla Heidegger’in felsefesi erken dönem ve geç dönem olarak iki ayrılmaktadır. Ancak bu tez iki döneme ayrılan Heidegger’i birlikte okumanın mümkün olduğunu göstermektedir. *Varlık ve Zaman*’daki kaygı ve vicdanın çağrısı gibi kavramlar ile geç dönem Heidegger’deki kutsal, tanrısallık ve tanrılar gibi kavramlar arasında benzerlikler veya ortak bir yapı ve düşünme biçimi vardır. Başka bir deyişle, bu tezdeki iddiam *Varlık ve Zaman*’daki Heidegger ile geç dönem Heidegger arasında bize, olası bir devamlılık çizgisi sunmuştur.

²² Aslında, Heidegger’de vicdanın çağrısına her zaman kaygı eşlik ettiği için, bu iki iddia tezde birbirinden ayrılmaz. Tezin temelinde tek iddiası vardır; Heidegger’de tanrılar ile kaygı arasında karşılıklı olası bir ilişki vardır.

Sonu olarak, Heidegger’de kaygı ve tanrılar arasında olası karřılıklı bir iliřki bulunmaktadır. Bu trden bir iliřki, kaygının her zaman eřlik ettięi vicdanın aęrısı ile tanrılar arasında da geerlidir.



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