



Vom Wesen der Wahrheit

Martin Heidegger , Ted Sadler (Translator)

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The Essence of Truth must count as one of Heidegger's most important works, for nowhere else does he give a comparably thorough explanation of what is arguably the most fundamental and abiding theme of his entire philosophy, namely the difference between truth as the "unhiddenness of beings" and truth as the "correctness of propositions." For Heidegger, it is by neglecting the former primordial concept of truth in favor of the latter derivative concept that Western philosophy, beginning already with Plato, took off on its "metaphysical" course towards the bankruptcy of the present day. This first ever translation into English consists of a lecture course delivered by Heidegger at the University of Freiburg in 1931-32. Part One of the course provides a detailed analysis of Plato's allegory of the cave in the Republic, while Part Two gives a detailed exegesis and interpretation of a central section of Plato's Theaetetus, and is essential for the full understanding of his later well-known essay Plato's Doctrine of Truth. As always with Heidegger's writings on the Greeks, the point of his interpretative method is to bring to light the original meaning of philosophical concepts, especially to free up these concepts to their intrinsic power.

Vom Wesen der Wahrheit Details

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From Reader Review Vom Wesen der Wahrheit for online ebook

Ryan Denson says

This is a splendid translation of two of Heidegger's exegetical lectures on Plato. It follows his characteristic style of philological methods for pursuing epistemology. In these two lectures, he seeks a deeper understanding of what truth is. The first begins by pondering the curious nature of how truth is portrayed in ancient Greek. The usual word for truth, ἀλήθεια, is curiously a linguistically negative term. It is more accurately translated as "unhiddenness." Considering this oddity, Heidegger embarks on a thorough reinterpretation of Plato's allegory of the cave. The second lecture focuses on a section of Plato's Theaetetus to inquire into the nature of untruth (or, in Greek, ψεῦδος, which bears no linguistic relation to ἀλήθεια).

Heidegger's ideas are tremendously insightful, though complex and, at times, difficult to comprehend. Understanding these arguments is aided by the clarity of this translation, thanks to the painstaking efforts of the translator, Ted Sadler. Knowing ancient Greek is not really required to read this in full. However, Heidegger refers to many ancient Greek terms constantly and, despite Sadler's helpful addition of a glossary for these and other German terms, it may be difficult to keep up with for some. Nevertheless, it is an excellent book to read, especially at a time that is so often proclaimed to be the "post-truth" era. Most of all, it reminds us that there is not merely a simple binary relationship between truth and falsity. Rather, there are frequently many shades of grey between the two or, at times, no relation between them at all.

Tony says

The best Heidegger book I've read! Excellent addition to the Platonic dialogues covered. He is right on with his definition of what is true and incorrect opinion. Will reread this one for sure.

Thomas Romer says

ONE OF MY FAVES

This is one of my favourite lecture courses by the German professor of philosophy Martin Heidegger.

His fastidious penetration of two of Plato's dialogues, including an outstanding unravelling of the parable of the cave from Book Ten of Republic, should be but pure delight for the spiritually-inclined among you.

A knowledge of Classical Greek – or, at the least, of its alphabet and pronunciation – is certainly recommended by this reviewer to appreciate the book's scope and spirit as Heidegger dissects Plato's language with razor-sharp precision.

I can't stress enough how beautiful this lecture is.

Thespian999 says

I've only read the Allegory of the Cave but I liked Plato's point of view. I enjoyed analyzing it.

majid says

talking about the essence of things without having a clear idea will not lead us to new knowledge. but in this book you can find a new meaning of truth digged out from an old greek concept that had known truth not as a correctness but as unhiddenness of realities, there is really a huge difference in between that can change our mind and influence our search toward reality and real truth.

Mavaddat says

This book makes a phenomenological engagement with two seminal texts in the founding of Western philosophy: Plato's cave allegory (Πολιτεῖα 514a–520a) and Plato's Theaetetus dialogue. It unfolds as a lecture, which means the whole discourse is very easy to follow and Heidegger is at his most lucid and straightforward here.

His main thesis is that we need to understand how appearance and “presenc-ing” but also concealment are inextricably linked to Being in the originary Greek conception of things, rather than appearance's being a kind of concession or failure to engage with the real things in themselves (as though their truth lay somehow behind the veil of mere appearance and phenomenon).

The Bloomsbury publishing version of this book was obviously OCR'ed from manuscripts of the translation, since there are numerous typos of ancient Greek (lambda is frequently confused for gamma, and vice versa). This won't be distracting for the non literate in Greek, since they'll probably be skipping over the Greek words but it's irritating for anyone who notices the mistakes.
