Al-Kindī and Heidegger about *truth* and *God*

Differences and similarities

Master Thesis Religion and Pluralism, Ancient & Modern

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Chapter one
Introduction

A murder case remained unresolved after many years. The perpetrator has not been caught yet and put behind the bars. The local government deployed two seasoned detectives. They both get a last chance to finally put the truth into the open. These two detectives both want the murderer into striped. After extensive individually research these two detectives present their results in court. Remarkably, the two detectives designate a different perpetrator. It seems obvious that they cannot both be right. Their truths seem not to be in agreement, although their inquiry was aimed for the very same truth: to finally cuff the murderer.

Another case: after the United States Presidential elections of 2016, the elected president was inaugurated on the 20th of January 2017 in Washington D.C. The days after, a debate emerged about the number of attendees who visited this ceremony. On the one hand 'camp Trump' claimed that his inauguration was the most visited of all inaugurations that took place in the past. On the other hand 'camp journalists' claimed that this was certainly not true. Their proclamation that 'camp Trump' was distorting facts, led to the reaction of Trump that the claims of other camp was fake news. It seems obvious that they cannot both be right. Their truths seem not to be in agreement, although the same sources were available for both camps.

These two examples show that truth is not always in agreement. The United States presidential elections of 2016 enriched the vocabulary of many people around the world by a new combination of words: 'fake news'. By this attention on fakeness, truth again is placed under a magnifying glass. Not only when it comes to journalistic items or political statements, but also in education, juridical processes and in personal relations is truth frequently considered to be worth pursuing. But this does not yet clarify what 'truth' means. The question about truth is not: what is truth according to him or her, assuming that they both have the same concept of truth, but, the question that questions that assumption is important: what does is mean for him and for her to call something 'truth': what does *truth* mean? In the first case the two detectives have a corresponding conception of truth. When they start their task to put truth into the open, it is clear for them both what this 'truth' means: to apprehend the murderer. In the second case, the same resources are available for both parties. The gap between their truths is not based on a corresponding concept of truth. Even though both camps use the same word 'truth' for their conclusions, and they both agreed that the others are false. The only reason why these two camps are not in agreement about the truth, is because their concept of truth does not match.

Just as *falseness* and *truth* are important concepts nowadays,[1] truth has been an important concept over centuries. In philosophy and theology, truth is a concept with which many thinkers have wrestled. This word has an equivalent in almost every language. Ancient Greek philosophers Plato and Aristotle wrote about truth already in the fourth century B.C.E.[2] After Aristotle, many thinkers from all directions wrote about truth, regardless of the meaning attributed to 'truth'. In this thesis, the works of

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[1] As exemplified by the 'fake news debate'. See for an overview: https://firstdraftnews.org/key-moments-fake-news-debate/ (last visited on 6 July 2018)

[2] See for example Plato's *Parmenides* section 128b, available via: http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0174%3Atext%3DParm.%3Asection%3D128b (last visited on 6 July 2018) and Aristotle's *Metaphysics* book 4, section 1011b [25], available via: http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0052%3Abook%3D4%3Asection%3D1011b (last visited on 6 July 2018).

two of these thinkers play a central role. Tenth century Arabian al-Kindī on the one hand and nineteenth continental German philosopher Martin Heidegger on the other. In certain of their works, 'truth' plays a key role in their arguments. This essay will show remarkable differences and similarities between the treatises of these two thinkers, as well as their shared roots. Al-Kindī fulfilled a defining role in the development of tenth century systematic Islamic theology. Heidegger played a defining role too. But his contribution to western philosophy and in particular indirectly to Christian theology may have been underestimated. These two influential thinkers are rarely compared in their use and analysis of truth and how these conceptions are related to the way they writes about God. In this essay I will therefore compare these two thinkers on their concepts of truth as well on their concepts of God.

Although both thinkers are generally considered as philosophers, their works – sometimes more and sometimes less explicitly – do have theological implications.[3] I will argue that in fact, al-Kindī should not only be read as a philosopher. He is a theologian. I will show that al-Kindī tries to serve faith with his work in searching for rational grounding. Theology is in this case the ''science of faith, of existing faithfully, of existing historically as a [believer].''[4] Theology, thus, can be conceived quite literally. Although theology can nowadays be understood as a scientific discipline, the word theology has its origins in the Greek contraction of θεος (*theos - God*) and λογος (*logos – word*), which together can be translated as 'speaking about God'. ''[Theology] does not make faith easier, but harder, because it does not give faith a rational grounding but shows rather that that is exactly what theology cannot do.''[5] Philosophy and theology are entwined in al-Kindī's work. I will argue that this also is the case in Heidegger's work.

The investigation and presentation of the results of this essay take place in the philosophical part of the theological arc. Although Al-Kindī needs to be understood as a theologian, he presents himself as philosopher more than Heidegger does in his writings.[6] This essay is written on the tension of the intersection between philosophy and theology. The separation between theology and philosophy has not always been as clear as it is now, if it is clear at all.[7] In the time of al-Kindī, this distinction was even harder to make.[8] Al-Kindī wrote in a complex web in which some believers were embracing philosophical methods in order to write about God, while others were just turning against these forms of interference: ''There is the attitude of those who represent what is known as the '*kalām*' (literally 'discourse'), that is to say, Islamic scholasticism. […] Opposing them were the Hellenizing philosophers (the *falāsifa*), whose theories were based, for the most part, on false premises.''[9] I will show that al-Kindī was also one of the *falāsifa*, and I will reveal the false premises made by him. The research question which is central to this essay is related to these two ways of thinking: both philosophically and theologically. Not for a confessional purpose, but to clarify usage of different concepts and to stimulate the ongoing conversation about *truth* and *God*, rather than choosing own paths like the people did in Babel. In Babel led confusion of tongues to dispersion, rather than dialogue and discussion.

The multi-disciplinary character of this thesis will not perfectly suit one single method. The method of this essay is partly philological-hermeneutical and partly historical, with particular attention to reception history. By using different methods, justification of these methods and presented results is

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[3] Philosophy and theology have not always been separated disciplines, as mentioned by MacCulloch (2010: 148, 790).
[4] Caputo 2007: 332.
[5] Idem.
[6] In *On First Philosophy*, al-Kindī argues that ''[the philosopher] should achieve the truth'' (Adamson 2012: 10) and he himself is one of them who seeks for the truth: ''We do not find the truth that we seek without [finding] a cause.''
[7] Western universities, for example, have different faculties for theology and philosophy.
[8] ''It is difficult to trace the exact boundaries between *falsafah* (philosophy) and *ḥikmat ilāhīyah* (theosophy).'' See Corbin 1993: 153.
[9] Corbin 1993: 256.

required. Not because it would be the most objective way, but because it allows us to convey most transparently the content of our inquiry to others.[10] Arguing for transparency, however, does not solve every problem: ''Every choice we make about diction, phrasing, and sentence construction, or about what to include and exclude, reflects our bias and perspective.''[11] The presenter of inquiry (i.e. the author of an article or essay) needs to be aware of this bias and perspective. But, even though one is aware of his presupposition, the only way to disseminate it, is by using words: ''Without language […] we can't have sense and non-sense as such. [We] can't get behind or beyond language.''[12] The problems which arise when using this inevitable tool of language, will be discussed later in this introduction.[13] What is noteworthy here, is the linguistic nature of this essay, which is partially forced by the way al-Kindī and Heidegger use and analyse their concepts of truth on a philological level. In the next two sections al-Kindī and Heidegger will be introduced further.

Al-Kindī

Not many things are known for certain about the personal life of al-Kindī.[14] However many scholars mention that al-Kindī was born around 800 C.E.[15] in Baṣra,[16] a place in current Iraq nearby the Euphrates' delta. During the period of al-Kindī's childhood, a number of ancient Greek philosophical works were translated into Arabic and introduced into Islamic thought. ''Al-Kindī himself was part of these translation efforts.''[17] Several caliphs in the first part of the ninth century supported this massive translation project by which many important works of ancient Greek philosophy were translated into Arabic. Before al-Kindī, Aristotle's philosophical ideas were known in the Arabic world, but these ideas play a marginal role in formative Islamic theology. After the first translation effort, an encyclopaedia on Greek philosophical thoughts was introduced and elaborated. ''It was al-Kindī who pursued this aim and who may therefore rightly be called the first Muslim philosopher.''[18] In his early thirties al-Kindī went to Baghdad where he held various influential positions.[19]

Translating and introducing Greek philosophy into Arabic was not his only interest: ''al-Kindī tries to present Greek philosophy as capable of solving problems of his own time, including problems prompted by Islamic theological concerns.''[20] In this perspective, besides al-Kindī's efforts to achieve translations of ancient Greek philosophical works, he wrote many philosophical works himself. One of the surviving books is *On First Philosophy*.[21] In this book al-Kindī is dealing with philosophical concepts like reality (*ḥaqīqa*) eternity, finiteness, causality and human perception (*wuǧūd*)[22]. He also writes about God (*Allāh*). The characterization of this God is related to al-Kindī's philosophical concepts

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[10] See Mason 2016, 83.

[11] Idem.

[12] Frank 1996: 613.

[13] This problem of language – as inevitable yet necessary tool – has become one of Heidegger's philosophical priorities and major reason for having introduced a great amount of new words.

[14] Hamarneh 1965: 328.

[15] See Cerami 2007: 298; Jolivet 2002: 129; Corbin 1993: 154.

[16] Corbin (1993: 154) mentions that al-Kindī was born in Kūfah, a city in current Iraq, about one hundred seventy kilometres south of Baghdad and about four hundred kilometres north-west of Baṣra. Corbin mentions that al-Kindī went to Baṣra to spent his early youth and his first education before he went to Baghdad. See also Collinson 1994: 16.

[17] Jolivet 2002: 129.

[18] Nasr 1996: 165. Notice that 'Arabs' and 'Muslims' are sometimes used as exchangeable terms regarding the group by which al-Kindī was characterized as 'the philosopher'.

[19] See Corbin 1993: 154-156 for a general introduction to al-Kindī's life and a brief indication to his literary inheritance.

[20] Adamson 2006: 46.

[21] In an English translation available in Adamson 2012: 10-56.

[22] This word *wuǧūd* can also mean 'existence' in ancient Arabic philosophy. But since it root has something to do with finding or perceiving, Adamson (2012: 81) argues for a translation 'human perception'.

as mentioned above. As the first Muslim philosopher, al-Kindī set the tone for *falsafa* of next generations.[23]

Heidegger

Martin Heidegger (1889- 1976) is the other thinker who plays a major role in this thesis. Heidegger was a German philosopher who contribute many works on philosophical concepts like self-determination, truth, time, aesthetics, and the conditions for communication between human beings. Heidegger distances himself from the Kantian idea that a transcending genius (God, according to Kant) created a mysterious harmony in nature. This Kantian natural order is elevated above human subjectivism. But since Heidegger distances himself from this gap between subjectivism and a divine fixed natural order, the aesthetic experiences of nature take place in the domain of the individual. The foundation for the aesthetical vision in German idealism – roughly from Kant to Hegel – was set by Immanuel Kant. During this period, idealistic aesthetics developed to the idea in which pieces of art can give insight in *the Absolute*, while it is not possible to dedicate words to it.[24] After the period of German Idealism continental philosophy was in a crisis. During this crisis, possibilities arose for asking philosophical questions about life and the meaning of being.[25] In his main work, *Sein und Zeit* – published in 1927 and Heidegger's most famous work, ''Heidegger argues that the study of ourselves, or *Dasein* ('there-being'), is the key to the question of the meaning of Being.''[26]

Heidegger's work, which is selected for this thesis, also broaches big questions about the meanings of life, but in a less abstract manner. Although Heidegger starts his academic career in theology, and God ended-up at the end of his career in a religious-mystical way, the period in between – during the decades around the Second World War – Heidegger was a proclaimed atheist. In the nineteen thirties – the period towards atheism – Heidegger gave these lectures about art which are bundled together in *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes*.[27] In essays about aesthetics, creation and truth, Heidegger's position in twentieth century European philosophy became clear.

In *Sein und Zeit* Heidegger asks the question that for him is the most important philosophical question that could be asked: What is the essence of being? In other words: What does existing mean? According to Heidegger, the only certainty about humanity is that their existence is temporal. Therefore, in *Sein und Zeit*, Heidegger argues that being need to be understood as time. For now, to explain his entire argument will be unnecessary and even impossible. What is enough here, is to show Heidegger's major philosophical questions and to emphasize that it is the limitedness of time, as he writes, as the only condition that makes it both possible and necessary to ask the question about the essence of being. After *Sein und Zeit*, almost a decade later, Heidegger gave his lectures about the essence of the artwork. In these series the question about the meaning and essence of being again plays a significant role.

Research question

This is what makes a comparison between these two thinkers exciting: These two thinkers were both intrigued by Aristotle's ancient Greek philosophy, but their social, intellectual, geographical and historical worlds are fundamentally different to each other. This makes the similarities between their literal corpora all the more remarkable. Comparative research begins with a research question that will be presented in this section.

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[23] See Adamson 2006: 48.
[24] *The Absolute* is not to be specified concept which is referring to the coherence of individual things, 'the big picture' so to say. This consistency was thought impossible to put into words. Art, however, could show glimpses of 'the big picture' and thus can give insight in *the Absolute*.
[25] See Bowler 2008: 1-2. The philosophical movement in which these questions are asked is called existentialism.
[26] Hughes-Warrington 2008: 156.
[27] See Caputo 2007: 332-341.

Al-Kindī is traditionally introduced as 'the philosopher of the Arabs'.[28] What is meant by this characterization will briefly be explained here. When writing about al-Kindī, there are a couple of problems that need to be discussed. To many scholars nowadays, it is not entirely clear how certain terms of group identity in the formative centuries of what is now called *Islam* need to be interpreted. Islam itself, as participated in a category of 'Abrahamic religions', is one of these terms. Others are for example Muslims (*muslimūn*) or believers (*mu'minūn*[29] or *muhājirūn*[30]). In most cases, it is not clear how these typologies are related to each other and how scholars here and now can talk about these social and political entities. This shows immediately how difficult it is to discuss ancient times in contemporary language. Even though it is difficult to write in contemporary language about these groups and group identity markers, it is the only way to write about it in the current time. Therefore, despite all mentioned and to mentioned objections, I will try to work with this kind of terminology while also paying attention to the objections, marginal or not.

Scientific inquiry cannot be done without formulating a research question or having a concrete problem. The question is the compass of the investigation. Without a clearly defined question, it is not possible to do structured and directed research. Therefore, asking a question is essential at the start of inquiry. Only in the context of investigation, sources *become* evidence if they are deemed to be relevant to the research question.[31] Since only a clearly delineated question can make potential evidence relevant, I will present the research question here, and I will argue why investigating this question and searching for evidence in this respect is scientifically relevant. The central problem is formulated as follow: How is Heidegger's conception of *truth* related to his concept of *God* in *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes*, how is al-Kindī's conception of *truth* related to his concept of *God* in *On First Philosophy* and how are these relations different and similar to each other? This research question contains several elements that need to be explained further.

When an author uses a word or concept, the author had an intention of the meaning of that particular word or concept. The author chooses to use that word and not another. It is possible that the author was entirely aware of this intention. But it is also possible that the author uses words or concepts while being completely or partially unwittingly about its use. In both cases the reader of a text has to be aware that an interpretation or a particular thought is always written in language in a particular time and place.

The concept of *truth* is one of the elements that needs to be understood in this way. What is meant here by one's *conception of truth*, is every aspect that is relevant to come to know the intention of the author, aware or unwittingly. The word *truth* is used in a particular language, in a particular time, and in a specific place. All these elements together form the context. But since the reader of a text has his own language, his own time and his own place, there may arise a gap between the context of the text and the context of the reader. In the next section I will discuss different methods to handle this supposed gap. Another element that needs to be explained further is *God*. The hypothesis suggests that a specific conception of *truth* is related to the concept of God, for both al-Kindī and Heidegger. How are their conceptions of *truth* related to the way they speak and think about God? The research question also assumes that the relation between using particular concepts of *truth* and *God* is different from al-Kindī to Heidegger, and that a comparison between them is possible.

The matter of comparison between conceptual thoughts of two thinkers is complex. Answering the research question will therefore be done in seven steps. In every step one element of the question is asked: (1) What is al-Kindī's use of the concept of *truth* in *On First Philosophy*? (2) What is al-Kindī's use of the concept of *God* in *On First Philosophy*? (3) How is al-Kindī's conception of *truth* related to

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[28] See Groff 2004: 139; Hamarneh 1965: 328; Nasr 1996: 165; Corbin 1993: 154.
[29] A term more frequently used by Arabic self-definition.
[30] A designation used by others than Arabs to define believers. See Lindstedt 2015, 68.
[31] See Mason 2016: 78.

his concept of *God* in *On First Philosophy*? (4) What is Heidegger's use of the concept of *truth* in *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes*? (5) What is Heidegger's use of the concept of *God* in *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes*? (6) How is Heidegger's conception of *truth* related to his concept of *God* in *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes*? (7) In the seventh and last step is asked what the differences and similarities are between al-Kindī and Heidegger based on the questions asked above. The first three steps will be answered in chapter two. The next three steps will be answered in chapter three. The last step will provide an answer on the research question and will be formulated in the last and fourth chapter.

The answers to sub-questions will provide insight in the context of particular works of al-Kindī and Heidegger on the use and implications of the concepts of *truth* and *God*. But the meaning of a text will also provide insight in the context in which it is written. Context and meaning cannot be separated completely. On the contrary they are closely related to each other. The answer of the research question will provide an overview of similarities and dissimilarities between al-Kindī and Heidegger on *truth* and its relation with their concept of *God*. The conclusion, therefore, will provide insight in the relation between these two thinkers and the reception history of their selected works.

Methodology

The central question and the sub-questions have been asked. It is clear now which kind of answers can be expected. The process of investigation will be continued by the following steps: (i) gathering potential evidence and (ii) interpreting and explaining this potential evidence. At the start, evidence is potential: the material used by the investigator was surely not created to be evidence when answering this particular research question. ''Since our questions are our own, we do not expect to find evidence pre-packaged and self-revealing, or even declaring itself to *be* evidence. It was not created for that purpose.''[32] The methods used in this essay will be discussed in this section. As mentioned earlier, not one single method will be used to provide answers to the questions. The methods of this essay will be historical as far as *history* means *inquiry* (*historia*).[33] Although different methods will be used, over all, the research will be done in a literary way.[34]

Two primary sources – al-Kindī's *On First Philosophy* and Heidegger's *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes* – plays a central role in the inquiry of this essay. The first one is originally written in Arabic, a language which is not my own. It is written in a corner of the world where I myself have never been. It is written in a century more than thousand years ago. In other words: this text has its origins far away from me in every aspect. But this does not result in the fact that assigning meaning to this text would be impossible. The discipline that deals with questions about the meaning and interpretation of a text is called hermeneutics. Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900-2002) is commonly known for his method in which the gap between reader on the one hand and the text and intention of the author on the other is bridged. Not while the two slope sides of the gap are still there, but according to Gadamer a coalescences occurs in which both slopes together forms a new horizon. That is exactly what is happening in this thesis: there are different texts out of different contexts. These texts are read, analysed and interpreted with the research question in mind. While reading these texts through glasses of a particular topic and aim, they will get a particular meaning in the horizon of this thesis. And therefore, explaining their arguments will not be done without any perspective, but through the eyes of the research question.

The contexts in which *On First Philosophy* and *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes* finds their origins, must be investigated. The question that in this respect needs an answer is: Why is the text written in the time and place it is? Another question that needs an answer is: What is the interpretation and impact of the text over time? This question involves the reception history of a text. In this thesis I assume that the 'journey' of the text through times, interpretations and places contributes to my own reading of

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[32] Mason 2016: 77.
[33] See for a brief justification of the origins of this terminology: Mason 2016: 10-11.
[34] No interviews nor sociological observations will be used in order to answer any questions in this essay at all.

the text nowadays. It is therefore essential to pay attention to the reception history of a text instead of reading it alone. But since al-Kindī as well as Heidegger selected their words thoughtfully, their intention must not be underestimated. This brings us back to the philological analysis as mentioned earlier. I assume that the meaning of the text at least partially lies in the chosen words. This philological focus is complicated by the language in which the selected works initially are written: Arabic and German, two languages which are not my mother tongue. Although it would be preferable to read them both in the language they were originally written, an excellent translation of al-Kindī's *On First Philosophy* will make it possible to do the investigation nevertheless. I will read Heidegger's *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes* in German, assisted by competent translations. Quotations from Heidegger will be translated into English, but always justified by German original in footnotes, since he wrote his work in that language. Translation of Heidegger's peculiar use of German probably will be accompanied with at least nuanced translation errors. Therefore this extra justification is necessary. Of course, quotes from al-Kindī are preferable in the language he wrote his works. But although using an English translation of al-Kindī's work will also lead to nuanced translation errors, since I do not write Arabic very well, I will only use German and English quotations.

In the next chapter I will investigate al-Kindī's *On First Philosophy* about his concepts of *truth* and *God* and the relation between these concepts. In chapter three this inquiry will be applied on Heidegger's *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes*. These two chapters will form the major body of this thesis. In the final and fourth chapter I will investigate the similarities and differences between al-Kindī and Heidegger on the basis of these two chapters. After this final chapter it will be clear to what extent al-Kindī and Heidegger writes about both 'truth' and 'God', how these conceptions of *truth* and *God* are related to each other, and what the differences and similarities are between these two thinkers regarding the way they write about respectively *truth* and *God*.

Chapter two
Al-Kindī

When reading an English translation of al-Kindī's *On First Philosophy (Fī al-falsafa al-ūlā)*, the word 'truth' appears several times. The Arabic word – used by al-Kindī – that is translated as 'truth' has something to do with the combination of root letters ḥqq. The way words are structured in Arabic, is different to many European languages. What is noteworthy here, is that words (verbs, nouns, and adverbs) are almost always appearing in a conjugation of a root. Many roots are made up of three root-characters. The Arabic characters are by scholars transliterated into Latin letters.[35] This transliteration enables scholars to discuss Arabic on a scientific level. Since almost every language has an equivalent of the word *truth*, everybody can use this word. But that does not mean that every time that word is used, the same meaning is attributed to it, whether this meaning is explicit or underlying. There are three central questions in this chapter: (1) What is al-Kindī's use of *ḥqq*-root related words in *On First Philosophy*? (2) What is al-Kindī's conception of *God* in *On First Philosophy*? And (3) how is al-Kindī's use of the concept of *truth* related to his concept of *God* in *On First Philosophy*?

Providing an answer to the question about al-Kindī's use of the concept of truth will not only provide insight in the context of al-Kindī's *On First Philosophy*, insight in the context will also help us to understand the selected texts.[36] Since it is not possible to segregate text and context completely, I will demonstrate al-Kindī's argument in *On First Philosophy* as far as it is required to show his path from truth to God.[37] When necessary, I will deal with questions which are related to the world in which al-Kindī could write the things he did. These questions are for example focussed on the lives of his contemporaries and which elements could have influenced al-Kindī: How was his thought influenced by his geographical locations? What was written about truth before al-Kindī, which might have influenced his way of thinking about truth or God in *On First Philosophy*? What is the political, social and religious setting in which al-Kindī made his considerations and incited him to write certain phrases in *On First Philosophy*? Al-Kindī, for example, writes about the ''outstanding philosophers before us, who did not speak our language.''[38] Who were these philosophers that are not specified by name?

Al-Kindī about *truth* in *On First Philosophy*
There are two ways in which al-Kindī approaches *truth* in *On First Philosophy*. The first one is *truth as cause*. The second one is *truth as principle.* The following paragraphs will explain what al-Kindī means by these two definitions. It will be clarified how these two approaches are related to each other and how these approaches are related to al-Kindī's concept of God.

Al-Kindī begins his work with the denomination of Philosophy as the *noblest of all arts* ''which is defined as the knowledge of things as they really are (*bi-ḥaqā'iqihā*)''.[39] This is the first time that a variant of the *ḥqq-root* is mentioned by the author. He adds to this ''insofar as this is possible for man''.[40] This immediately shows that truth according to al-Kindī is related to *reality*, and reality, or to what

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[35] See for an overview of this transliteration diagram: Adamson 2012: xvi and Nasr 2006: x.

[36] It is not easy, if it is not impossible, to determine the tension between the context and the meaning of a written text. What is noteworthy here is that this tension is observed and that conclusions that follows in the setting of this tension must be drawn and taken carefully. See for a thorough discussion about the tension and interaction between meaning and context Gibbard 2012, and Tully 1988.

[37] This path not necessarily is focussed on one-way traffic.

[38] Adamson 2012: 11.

[39] Adamson 2012: 10.

[40] Idem.

extent 'things as they really are' are accessible for human capacity. Truth is, according to al-Kindī, achievable and worth pursuing for the philosopher, i.e. the ones who are searching for the knowledge of things as they really are. Al-Kindī calls these philosophers the *students of truth*. This truth can be achieved by acting truthfully. This truthful (human) activity will come to an end when the truth is finally achieved. Al-Kindī argues that one cannot find or achieve the truth without finding a *cause*. Notice that in both ways al-Kindī uses a verb which is active and goal aiming. This contribution of 'cause' to al-Kindī's argument will be striking. According to al-Kindī, everything that has existence, has come to existence in a moment of time, everything has a starting point. And it is this cause – which leads to the existence of things – that is by al-Kindī called *truth*. Therefore, since the existence of things, there is also truth. And since the cause of things ensures that everything has being (*'annīya*), beings have existence and truth exists. On first sight, it seems that al-Kindī uses here the argumentative fallacy of *circular reasoning*,[41] by arguing that the truth necessarily exist, because every existence of things has a cause and this cause is the truth, on the one hand, and arguing on the other, that – since the truth necessarily exist – arguing that every thing or being has existence. But this exactly clarifies al-Kindī's first approach of truth: truth must be understood as *the cause of the existence of things*.

Another way in which al-Kindī speaks about truth is *truth as principle*. Truth can be attained by doing study. Everybody who has done study in the past and shared the fruits of their study with others, helped, according to al-Kindī, to pave the path to the truth. Truth has therefore to do with principles of thoughts. These principles can be discovered (or attained) by intense and corporative study. This means that truth in this second approach is something that *is*, before it is discovered. So, al-Kindī can argue that there are things both true, but hidden.[42] This aspect about *the truth that could be hidden*, is important to mention in relation with Heidegger's conception of truth that will be discussed in the next chapter.

An important difference between the first and this second approach of truth, is the discoverable character of truth. *Truth as cause* can only be found after well done research. The results of this research are different from something that is discovered. If one finds something, he or she has to search first. Searching (or *doing research*) is always goal orientated: the one who is searching, is searching for something. Active *searching* is different from *discovering*. Inscriptions, pottery and coins can be discovered. But research will lead to another form of knowledge: ''It is only when an investigator comes along with a question […] that they become evidence and begin to yield up their secrets. The investigator gets nowhere by staring at the stones [potteries and coins] and waiting for them to speak.''[43] The second approach of truth (as principle) also requires research. Yet these principles can also be hidden. What is hidden can be revealed or discovered. Truth as cause cannot be discovered, while truth as principle can. This distinction between discovering and revealing on the one hand and research results on the other is important to make clear how al-Kindī's concept of truth is different from Heidegger's approach of truth in the next chapter.

Al-Kindī writes about himself as if he were a philosopher. The following quotation shows how al-Kindī places himself as a *student of truth* (a philosopher) in relation to other students of truth:

> We must not be ashamed to admire the truth or to acquire it, from wherever it comes. Even if it should come from far-flung nations and foreign peoples, there is for the student of truth nothing more important than the truth, nor is the truth demeaned or diminished by the one who states or conveys it; no one is demeaned by the truth, rather all are ennobled by it.[44]

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[41] In Latin: *petitio principii*.
[42] See Adamson 2012: 11.
[43] Mason 2011: 188.
[44] Adamson 2012: 12.

This not only is a legitimation for using works and arguments of ancient Greek philosophers, it also is a way of positioning himself in a philosophical tradition. Al-Kindī presents himself as a *student of truth*, for whom nothing is more important than the truth. The path to this truth requires inquiry.[45] This way of approaching truth, is not the same as *truth as cause* (the first approach), what need to be emphasized again, is that an important aspect of truth is, that only human activity, whether it is discovered or achieved after research, will lead to truthful statements. But how are these truthful statements related to al-Kindī's concept of God? In order to answer this question, we first need to have a look at his concept of God.

Al-Kindī about *God* in *On First Philosophy*

For al-Kindī's first approach to truth, cause and effect are related to each other. But knowledge of cause is more noble than knowledge of effect. If someone wants to know the effect completely, he has to know the cause completely.[46] The first truth is the cause of all causes. According to al-Kindī, there are four different sort of questions: whether, what, which and why. Only why-questions ask for the absolute cause (*al-'illa al-muṭlaqa*[47]). In this section, I will show that ''God'' is an equivalent for this *absolute cause* according to al-Kindī. Also al-Kindī's second approach to truth leads to knowledge of God and is therefore useful to clarify al-Kindī's conception of God. By knowing the true nature of things, one also have knowledge about divinity, virtue and knowledge about how to stay away and protect oneself against harm.[48]

God is an important pillar in al-Kindī's triangular composition. He makes a distinction between two kinds of human perception (*wuǧūd*[49]). This distinction makes clear how the divine (God) is different to the human. The distinction is important for the way al-Kindī approaches the concept of God. The first one is the *perception of the senses*. The senses of a living being – which is made up of matter – brings a thing – also made up of matter – in contact with the one who perceives. This perception always takes place in a moment of time and is therefore not stable: ''[The object of sensation] flows and is in constant change, through one sort of motion or another. […][I]t is constantly passing away and unceasingly changing.''[50] The thing is represented in the soul of the living being through the sensual perception. In this representation, the thing – which is constantly changing over time – persists. This first kind of perception is closer to humans, but further from nature. The other kind of perception is conversely closer to nature, but further from human.[51] This second kind of perception is the *perception of the intellect*.

While individual things – or 'bodies' since they are made up of matter – are perceptible, the characterisation and classification (*genera*) of these individual things are not perceivable through the senses. The species are subject to perception. Not sensual perception, but only intellectual perception. Individuals are represented in the soul through perception, but genera do not have a representation in the human soul. Since all non-observable characteristics (genera for example) are not representable through the senses, but nevertheless perceivable, al-Kindī introduces a category of *intellectual principles*. These intellectual principles are intelligible for everyone. Therefore these principles must be

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[45] The ones who draw conclusions, not on the basis of inquiry, but on the basis of speculation (*naẓar*), are 'deceivers' according to al-Kindī.

[46] When ''someone'' is indicated in the third person, this is done with ''he'' also when it can also be indicated as ''she''.

[47] Notice that this *absolute cause* has a different root than *truth* has. So although *cause* and *truth* are according to al-Kindī related to each other, this is not obvious based on their root-letters.

[48] Truth, virtue and divinity are three aspects of a triangular composition in al-Kindī's thought. Although *virtue* plays a role in al-Kindī's conception of both truth and God, this essay will not focus on the truth-virtue and the God-virtue relations.

[49] This Arabic word often means 'existence' in philosophical literature, as mentioned by Adamson (2012: 81). The verb *waǧada* means something like *to find* of *to perceive*.

[50] Adamson 2012: 14. *Section two: IV (2)*.

[51] It is not entirely clear to me how this distinction between human and nature make sense.

true, according to al-Kindī. Logic is an example of one of these intellectual principles: ''[I]t is' and 'it is not' cannot both be true of one and the same thing […]. This is a perception belonging to the soul, not the senses, which is necessary and requires no intermediary.''[52] Adamson suggests that the way al-Kindī argues for human understanding of intellectual principles as represented in the soul by the universal sense (*al-ḥiss al-kullī*), suits the category of *common sense* by Aristotle[53]. Al-Kindī introduces Aristotle as 'the towering figure of Greek philosophy'.[54] The Aristotelean category of common sense can be formulated as: the perceptual capacity of the soul to operate on account of the unity of the senses ''as a higher-order perceptual power which co-ordinates and monitors the senses.''[55] This emphasizes Aristotelean influences in al-Kindī's thought. For certain, Aristotle must be one of the 'outstanding philosophers before him, who did not speak al-Kindī's language'.[56]

Towards divinity

Now we have discussed two forms of perception as distinguished by al-Kindī, the following step is both possible and necessary to understand the way al-Kindī approaches the concept of God. In this next step we need to emphasize the difference between endless bodies on the one hand and characteristics attributed to God's nature on the other. Every body which is perceptible by the senses is limited in size. The senses can recognize it as a body since there is a beginning and an end. It is for al-Kindī not possible that a body limited in size can be infinite in time. Al-Kindī is claiming that limited bodies in size cannot be infinite in time, but he does not substantiate this claim by arguments. Indeed, it might be impossible to always provide logically valid arguments, sometimes premises needs to be made and accepted in order to waterproof the argument as a whole. But even then, justification of crated premises are eligible. If not, a premise like this makes an argument as weak as the weakest link impaired a chain. More of these 'weak links' will be indicated. However, since there are no unlimited bodies in size perceptible through the senses, every body is confined in time. It is for al-Kindī not up for debate that the body of the universe is finite, since we can perceive at least a part of it. Bodies are always perceived in space. Beings exists in space, but al-Kindī argues, space only is through the existence of bodies: ''[P]lace and what is placed are in a relation, with neither one prior to the other. If there is place, there is necessarily something placed, and if there is something placed, there is necessary place.''[57] Therefore it is impossible that there is place with nothing placed in it, according to al-Kindī. In the analysis of Heidegger we will also see relations based on mutual dependency.

If there is plenum (*malā'*) instead of void (*ḥalā'*) beyond the body of the universe, and plenum beyond this plenum and so on, then this plenum is a body and if there is a plenum beyond every plenum, then this body would be infinite. But it is impossible for a body to be infinite as argued above. So, bodies are finite, and the same goes for the body of the universe. What is beyond the Universe is not perceivable through the senses, it is only intellectually perceivable. But not less perceptible. Logical statements are therefore in the same category as everything beyond the Universe. We will see that also God has a place in this category which is unattainable for the senses, but accessible for the intellect. And since only sensible perceptions can have a representation in the soul, intellectual perceivable things cannot be represented in the soul. Many people are confused, according to al-Kindī, when they are trying to represent *things* when contemplating them while they are only perceivable through the intellect. It might be confusing to write about *things* in this context. Although the word 'thing' better suits objects that are

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[52] Adamson 2012: 15. Since I cannot read the Arabic original, it is not entirely clear to me if 'true' in this quotation is rooted from *ḥqq* or based on another root.
[53] Adamson 2012: 81-2.
[54] See Adamson 2012: 12.
[55] Gregoric 2007: 53.
[56] See introducing paragraphs of this chapter: page 9, footnote 38.
[57] Adamson 2012: 16.

perceivable through the senses, it is difficult to discuss matter-less phenomena with language which is soaked by sensual orientation. 'Phenomena' might be an appropriate alternative for 'things' that are matter-less.

Natural things, bodies which are built-up of matter, cannot be investigated by immaterial methods like logic. But mathematical investigation is a proper method for the immaterial, the non-natural phenomena. One misses the truth – truth here must be understood as cause – when he uses immaterial methods to investigate natural things. Thus, before one applies a method of investigation on a thing (whether it is material or not) he has to find the cause (i.e. the *truth*) of it. The cause of natural things is the cause of all motion and therefore the cause of all matter, since all matter is constantly moving.[58] But, since everything that moves are *the natural things* ''what is above natural things does not move, because nothing can be the cause of the existence of its own essence.''[59] The characteristic of 'being in motion' is in this way the essence of natural things. Al-Kindī argues that cause of motion could not be motion itself and that, therefore, what is above natural things does not move. This argument, however, is not really a reasonable argument. His argument does not make entirely clear how the unmoving things are not natural things. It rather is a presumption or an unproved hypothesis. On the top of that, it is not clear why the unmoving things are *above* natural things. Above, rather than besides, opposite or below, for example. In short, al-Kindī argues that if one will not be missing the truth, he has to search for the right thing: seek for *sensual representation* in the study of natural things (*physics*), and for *generalities of thought* in the study of mathematics and theology (*meta-physics*).[60]

The eternal

All natural things will come to an end. Beside the things that come to an end, there is the eternal. Non-being is for the eternal impossible. While natural things have a cause (the first approach of truth), the eternal does not have a cause. The eternal does not have a subject, nor has it an agent or possible explanation for it has no characteristics. The eternal is not perceptible through the senses, nor by the intellect. It has no genus, no genera. So, there is an ironic contradiction about the eternal. On the one hand, non-being for the eternal is impossible, on the other hand the being (*huwīya*) of the eternal does not have any predicate (*maḥmūl*).[61] This is called an ''impossible absurdity.''[62] The eternal is according to al-Kindī necessarily perfect, because the eternal is not in a position to transform. Therefore the eternal is not in a position to become better than it is, nor could the eternal be more deficient than it is. So the eternal must be necessarily perfect. Also in this paragraph, by proving that the eternal must be necessarily perfect, al-Kindī uses a lot of premises which are not further substantiated. Although these premises makes his argument logically valid, argumentative it is not very competent to use premises in this way.

Natural things have *quality* (characteristics of natural things like size, shape, colour) and *quantity* (natural things are countable: ''[T]he doubling of something is increasing its quantity twofold''[63]). All things that do have quality or quantity or both are finite, because only natural things has quality and quantity and all natural things will come to an end. According to al-Kindī, every thing

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[58] All matter is constantly moving as we saw earlier: ''[The object of sensation] flows and is in constant change, through one sort of motion or another. […][I]t is constantly passing away and unceasingly changing.'' Adamson 2012: 14. *Section two: IV (2)*.

[59] Adamson 2012: 17.

[60] Adamson dedicates a footnote on the 'generalities of thought' (*al-ǧawāmiʿ al-fikrīya*). It is not quite clear to him what al-Kindī means by this. For Adamson this can be related to (1) universals or (2) the first principles of reasoning. To me al-Kindī is referring to all phenomena that are only perceptible through the intellect, and not through the senses, as for example the *genera* as discussed on page 11.

[61] Notice that al-Kindī gives a whole description about what the eternal all not has, that ironically is a kind of predicate.

[62] See Adamson 2012: 19.

[63] Adamson 2012: 42.

that is a quality or a quantity cannot be infinite in actuality. ''Time is a quantity[64], so it is impossible that there be an actually infinite time; therefore time has a finite beginning.''[65] It seems here that al-Kindī makes an argumentative mistake. It is indeed legitimate to argue that all bodies (i.e. all natural things) have quantity and quality, and that every thing that has quantity or quality cannot be infinite, and that therefore every body cannot be infinite in actuality. But al-Kindī never writes about the quantities (countability for example) or qualities (color and size for example) itself. The first time he does, is immediately when he writes about the finiteness of time, just because it *is* a quantity, not because it *has* a quantity, like natural bodies have. But what need to be emphasized here is that time is a quantity *of* natural things, in that way *is* time a quantity. This quantity 'time' itself is finite since time does not exist without motion, only motion took place of natural bodies. And since natural bodies exists, time exists. ''Thus body, motion, and time are never prior to one other.''[66]

> It has then been made clear that time cannot be infinite, since there cannot be a quantity, or anything that has quantity, that is infinite in actuality. Thus all time has a limit in actuality, and body is not prior to time. So […] the being of the body of the universe is necessarily finite, and the body of the universe cannot have existed always.[67]

Al-Kindī does not seem to be very convinced by his own argument about the finiteness of time. Later on he tries two more times to argue that time could impossibly be infinite.[68] But, why is it so important for al-Kindī to argue that the eternal is finite? What is the role of the eternal in the relation between the concepts of truth on the one hand and the concept of God on the other? For that we have to discuss the third section of *On First Philosophy*.

Oneness

Unity and multiplicity are according to al-Kindī two categories used by human beings to sort their knowledge about entities. This knowledge is based on impressions of an object or a group of objects. What is multiple in one way, is united in another. The examples al-Kindī gives are: (1) the human body, which is one body on the one hand [unity], but contains different parts like bones, skin and flesh on the other [multiplicity]; (2) a mile, which can be called 'one mile' on the one hand, but which is ''made up of stadia, and a part of a parasang''[69] on the other. As it goes for human bodies and measurements, it is impossible for all perceivable things that they are only multiple without unity. On the other hand, it is also impossible for things to be one without multiplicity. But why is arguing for existence of multiplicity relevant for al-Kindī's concept of God?[70] The beginning of the answer on that question will be given in the following paragraph.

Since it is the case that perceivable thing contains both multiplicity and unity, these characteristics are caused, according to al-Kindī.[71] Two options are possible: ''Since it has been shown that they [unity and multiplicity of sensible things] are associated through a cause, they must be either caused by themselves, or their association is due to another cause, not due to themselves, but to something outside them and excluding them.''[72] If unity and multiplicity is caused by the sensible things themselves, it means that they are their own cause. But this goes to infinity, since there would be cause

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[64] Al-Kindī defines time as ''the number of motion, [the] duration that motion measures.'' See Adamson 2012: 21.
[65] Adamson 2012: 21.
[66] Adamson 2012: 23.
[67] Adamson 2012: 23-4.
[68] In section two: VII (1-2) and VIII (1-5), p. 24-5.
[69] See for these examples: Adamson 2012: 32. *Stadia* and *parasang* are ancient units of Persian measurements.
[70] In section three: XV (1-8) al-Kindī gives eight arguments for the existence of multiplicity: ''So it is impossible that there is no multiplicity.'' See Adamson 2012: 35-8.
[71] And again, no further argumentative substantiation is provided.
[72] Adamson 2012: 39.

for a cause, a cause for that cause and so on to infinity, al-Kindī argues. But he showed that it is impossible for any sensible thing in actuality be infinite. Therefore, ''it is impossible that the association of unity and multiplicity be caused by themselves.''[73] The only remaining option is that the cause of their association is external. All things necessarily have a first cause (*'illa*), ''which does not share with them a genus, shape, similarity, or association.''[74] This external cause, thus, must be totally different from the sensible things it has caused. Al-Kindī writes about this first external cause. Since it must be totally different from the things it caused, it could not be one and multiple, because if it had these both associations, it has the same associations as the all sensible things it has caused. Therefore, the external must be either one or multiple. But since the multiple is merely a collection of units, and it would then be both a multiplicity and unity, the first cause must be one. In the next section I will explain how the oneness of this first cause is related to al-Kindī's concept of God.

God as the true One

Al-Kindī makes a distinction between things that are one in truth (*bi-l-ḥaqīqati*) and things that are one metaphorically (*bi-l-maǧāzi*) but not in truth. Many things are one in truth, but there is only one 'true One' (*al-wāḥidu bi-l-ḥaqqi*). Al-Kindī shows that there is only one of this true One with the following argument: characteristics of things (for example natural bodies) are only comparable in their own genus. Length of a body can be compared with lengths of other bodies, but length cannot be compared with weight since weight and length belongs to a different genus. '''[G]reat' and 'small,' 'long' and 'short,' and 'many' and 'few' are none of them said absolutely, but by relation, each of them is related only to something else in its genus, not something outside its genus.''[75] So, other lengths and weights are necessary to make comparison between lengths and weights possible. But if comparison of certain characteristics of a thing is impossible, it means that there is no other thing in the same genus. According to al-Kindī, the *true One* is a phenomenon that cannot be compared with other phenomena because it has no genus at all. And as written above, what has a genus is not eternal, but what has no genus is eternal. ''Thus the true One is eternal'' according to al-Kindī.[76]

This *true One* is written with a capital O because there is only one of them. What is one cannot be divided into parts. Al-Kindī argues that one is the unit of which all numbers are composed. Two is the composition of two units of one. Three is a composition of three units of one. But one itself is not a composition. One is even not a number, because the constituent (*rukn*) of which something is composed or built is not the thing itself: like every word is a composition of single letters, the letters themselves are not the composite words, but single units. The same goes for numbers: one is a unit and numbers are composed by the constituents. Since a constituent [one] is not the composition [number] itself, one is not a number, al-Kindī argues. And it therefore neither is a quantity, nor does it have quantity. Nothing is concomitant with the true One. So, the true One is unique in its whole essence, since every natural body has specific comparable characteristics, every natural body is composed of matter and form, every body is a unity on the one hand, but multiplicity on the other, but the true One do not have any of these characteristics.[77] The following quotation exemplifies and summaries how al-Kindī approaches the true One relative to all other things:

> [T]he *true One* is none of the terms: neither matter, genus, species, individual, specific difference, proper accident, common accident, motion, soul, intellect, whole, part, all, nor some, and it is not one by relation to something else. Rather it is absolutely one. […] The true

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[73] Adamson 2012: 40.
[74] Idem.
[75] Adamson 2012: 46.
[76] Adamson 2012: 48.
[77] For the whole argument why *one* must not be understood as a number: Adamson 2012: 42-6. *Section Four XVII (7-18).*

one possesses neither matter, form, quantity, quality, nor relation. […] It does not move, and is not described through anything that is denied to be one in truth. It is therefore pure unity alone.''[78]

Every thing that has existence on a certain moment in time, has not existed always. It is originated, that is to say: it has been brought into being. The cause of this being-brought-to-be is the true First One. The true One is the first cause, or in other words: ''[T]he true One is the first Originator, who supports all that is originated.''[79] The true One is a totally different and unique entity. It is the only *true* One and the originator of all unities by metaphor. The true One is the first cause of every sensible existing thing. The appellation 'true One', therefore, is identifiable with God: ''God is referred to in the first definition as the 'First Cause', similar to Plotinus' 'First Agent'.''[80]

The relation between *truth* and *God* in *On First Philosophy*
Al-Kindī has two approaches to truth: (1) as the *cause* of the existence of things. And (2) as *principle*. In the second approach truth can be attained by doing inquiry. The first approach will be understood when we follow his argument about causes, oneness and via uniqueness to the first cause and the true One. Al-Kindī gives extensive argumentative constructions, starting with truth as cause, following a path along logical guidelines to a concept of God in which the *true One* is the first originator, the first cause. The basic role logic plays in al-Kindī's systematic philosophy is characteristic of the whole first assimilation wave of Greek thought into an Islamic milieu.[81] According to Nasr al-Kindī's philosophy in *On First Philosophy* leads to a negative theology:

> According to al-Kindī the philosopher is unable to make any positive statement concerning God. All he is able to state is in the negative: that ''He is no element, no genus, no species, no individual person, no part (of something), no attribute, no contingent accident.'' Thus al-Kindī's philosophy leads to a negative theology, i.e. where God is described only in negative terms.[82]

I completely agree with Nasr, except for one thing. God is indeed described in negative terms, but what is not a negative determination, is that God is called the first Cause, the true One and the Originator.
    From all what is written above about the true One, there is one thing that is essential to it: ''[The *true One*] is that which is not at all multiple, in any way.''[83] As mentioned earlier, it is impossible that unity and multiplicity are caused by the sensible things itself, since it would lead to an infinity of caused causes.[84] I also showed that al-Kindī argues that it is impossible for things in actuality to be infinite. Therefore, the first cause of unity that made things one, is the true One. The true One is not a unity given by anything else. So, only the *true One* is able – and therefore required according to al-Kindī – to stop an infinite regress of causality. ''For it is impossible that things give to one another with no limit at the beginning.''[85] Many things are called one ('one human body' or 'one mile' as exemplified earlier) but there is one *true One*. All other things that are called one are metaphorically one (*bi-l-maġāzi*), and not

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[78] Adamson 2012: 54.
[79] Adamson 2012: 55.
[80] Nasr 1996: 167. See for practical examples in which this 'First Cause' is without further explanation an equivalent of God: Nasr 1996: 171, D'Acona 2006: 25, Adamson 2006: 39, Druart 1993: 334; 341-2, Collinson 1994: 16-8, and Jolivet 2002: 131-2. Beside Aristotle, also Plotinus could be one of the Greek philosophers al-Kindī had in mind.
[81] See D'Acona 2006: 21. This phenomenon is called 'rational theology'.
[82] Nasr 1996: 168.
[83] Idem.
[84] See page 15.
[85] Adamson 2012: 54-5.

truly one.

We saw that al-Kindī makes a distinction between things that are perceptible through the senses on the one hand and through the intellect on the other. God is not perceptible through the senses, but through the intellect. What might be remarkable, is that Qur'ān is never involved in al-Kindī's argument. But, D'Acona argues, this is a characteristic of Arabic *falsafa* in general: ''[P]hilosophical truths do not derive from Qur'ān, even if they fit perfectly with it. All this results from the combined reading of Aristotle, Alexander of Aphrodisias, Plotinus, and Proculus, whose works are meant to convey a consistent set of doctrines.''[86] Possibly his conservative use of Qur'ānic material was a consequence of heated discussions about to what extent the relation between ancient Greek philosophy and Qur'ānic revelation was allowed to make. While there were convictions that proclaimed: ''One is only able to know God through God, not, in the manner of the *kalām* theologians, by *starting from* the creatural, not by starting from the contingent being, in the manner of the philosophers (*falāsifah*).''[87] In the end, al-Kindī uses philosophical methods of the ancient Greeks to write about God, therefore it were rational theologians (practitioners of *kalām*) who were his most important interlocutors. [88]

Al-Kindī's first approach to *truth* in *On First Philosophy* coincides with his concept of God: truth must be understood as the cause of all things. Only the First Cause is truly true and not only metaphorically. There is only one first cause and this One is unique in all its essences. God is the only one who is One, eternal and unique in all its essences. Therefore God is the First Cause, the truth of al-Kindī's first approach of truth.

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[86] D'Acona 2006: 21. Al-Kindī uses different names for God. Beside 'the First Cause' (*al-'illat al-ūlā*) he also used 'Creator' (*al-bāri'*) as a name for God. This last name only occurs once in the Qur'ān: al-Ḥashr (sura 59) verse 24: ''He is God. The Creator. The Maker. The Designer. The most beautiful names belong to Him. All what is in heavens and on Earth praises His names. He is the most prodigious, the wisest.''
[87] Corbin 1993: 46.
[88] See Adamson 2006: 48.

Chapter three
Heidegger

Al-Kindī wrote *On First Philosophy* in the tenth century C.E. It is Heidegger who wrote in the twentieth century a work which shows remarkable similarities with al-Kindī's work in both methodical approach and content. Al-Kindī argues for the Oneness of God and God as the First Cause. He also argues that *truth* must be understood as the *cause* of the existence of things, as shown in chapter two. In this chapter I will show that Heidegger also writes about truth, about God and about a relation between these two in which causality plays a remarkable role. Where I used al-Kindī's causal conception of truth as the starting point to show how he – after an extensive argument about numbers, the eternal, oneness and causal relations – concludes with the statement that God is the First Cause and therefore truth, the analysis of Heidegger's *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes* will be focussed on Heidegger's conception of truth and how this concept is related to what Heidegger writes, both directly and indirectly, about God. There are three central questions in this chapter: (1) What is Heidegger's concept of *truth* in *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes*? (2) What is Heidegger's conception of *God* in *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes*? And (3) how is Heidegger's conception of *truth* related to his concept of *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes*?

This work of Heidegger seems to discuss the world of art, the artist, artwork and many aspects that comes with it. In this chapter, however, I will argue that his dispute about the origins of the artwork also reveals at least one way Heidegger thinks about God. I will show that Heidegger uses the discourse of the artist and the artwork to also discuss the relation between God and his creation.[89] Heidegger emphasizes that there is an interpretation of scripture in which every thing is presented as created: ''The philosophy of this (biblical) interpretation can declare that all creatures of God have to be understood in a different way than the activity of an artisan.''[90] What might be clear, is that Heidegger is fascinated by the phenomenon of creating things. Heidegger is totally aware of his own position as a philosopher who uses creativity to produce arguments, essays and books in which something is created. This will be clarified by showing the way he writes about how language is the first and most essential condition in which creation is possible.

In 1933 and 1934 Heidegger gave at the University of Freiburg a series of lectures about the essence of truth. In this series, he went through Plato's allegory of the cave to emphasize a two-partite understanding and use of the Greek word for *truth*.[91] One of the sentences that show his vision about truth and which also will be useful in this analysis of Heidegger's concept of truth in *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes* is: ''Truth is always truth for us. For us today, the true is not so much some particular truth as it is knowing about the essence of truth itself.''[92] This quotation indicates several things about the way Heidegger uses the word 'truth' in *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes*. In that treatise 'the true' will be presented as truth for us. But the location in which truth takes place, will be different than this

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[89] However, there are also possible arguments to emphasize Heidegger's focus on art as a form of human creation, and without reference to a divine relation between God and his creation: ''Andrerseits zeigt das Zeug eine Verwandtschaft mit dem Kunstwerk, sofern es ein von Menschenhand Hervorgebrachtes ist.'' See Heidegger 1980: 13.

[90] ''Die Philosophie dieses Glaubens kann zwar versichern, daß alle schöpferische Wirken Gottes anders vorzustellen sei als das Tun eines Handwerkers.'' Heidegger 1980: 14. As noticed in the second chapter, sometimes the quotations of the English translation are supported with transliterated Arabic. The German quotation frequently will be mentioned in a footnote, and I will provide my own translation as quotation in the text itself.

[91] See for this lecture series Heidegger 2010: 67-201.

[92] Heidegger 2010: 200.

quotation suggests. Also al-Kindī's conception of truth will turn out to be different from Heidegger's conception. Before we can accurately conclude what Heidegger's conception of truth is, a detailed analysis is necessary.

Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes is a cluster of lectures given by Heidegger in 1935 and 1936. The book is structured by three chapters. The first chapter discusses distinctions between things, tools, and works. Art, Heidegger argues, can let work the essence of a thing, not by representing matter and form of that particular thing, but only by showing how a thing works. In his argument Heidegger gives an example of a Van Gogh painting of a pair of peasant's shoes. This painting does not ask about the material, the temperature, the form, of these shoes, the painting only shows how these things were used: as a pair of peasant's shoes. The second chapter discusses the work and truth, in which Heidegger introduces the ancient Greek way of approaching truth. The third and last chapter focusses on truth in the discipline of art. I will focus on the middle part of this book to demonstrate Heidegger's argument about truth. The German word for truth is *Wahrheit*. Heidegger himself asked the question '*Was ist Wahrheit?*'[93] His answer on this question will be discussed below.

I will go through Heidegger's entire argument by touching all niches as far as they are needed to understand his use of the concept of truth. While writing about art and trying to define art in relation to single artworks, Heidegger ended up in a circular reasoning: a concept of art is needed in order to determine whether a piece is a piece of art. But, on the other hand, what art is, can only be known by having a clear image of concrete pieces of art. Ideally this circular reasoning needs to be avoided. But, Heidegger says, if a circular reasoning is unavoidable, the philosopher needs to embrace it: 'this is not a solution of emergency, neither it is a deficiency. Walking on this path is the power of our thought, and keep walking on it is the feast of thinking.'[94] As a consequence, Heidegger investigates this roadblock as a feast of thinking.

Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes

For Heidegger, works of art cannot and must not be understood as things.[95] But, is an artwork accessible on its own, without approaching an artwork as a thing? Someone has to visit or attend a piece of art to experience it. For most of the works applies, however, that the work of art is no longer 'working' in the world it did. We can visit the fronton in the collection of the museum of Munich for example which is no longer working as a fronton of the temple of Aphaia in Aegine. If the world in which a piece of art has worked, is lost, it will never be restored. I will explain this later. The work of art will never again work in the same way as it did in previous times when the world was not yet lost: ''Lost and decay of a world can never be reversed. The works are no longer the ones they were. Admittedly, what we see are the works, but the working aspect of it has been lost. As have-been-works they are standing in front of us, ready to be part of a tradition, part of the world of conservation.''[96] But, as we shall see, this 'world of conservation' is a very important condition for works of art, according to Heidegger, and therefore for truth.

Since the world in which the artwork has worked, is lost, the work belongs to a domain which

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[93] Heidegger 1980: 35. This question can be translated as 'What is truth?'

[94] ''Das ist kein Notbehelf und kein Mangel. Diesen Weg zu betreten, ist die Stärke, und auf diesem Weg zu bleiben, ist das Fest des Denkens.'' Heidegger 1980: 2.

[95] A thing has a thing-ness and every work has a work-ness. But Heidegger shows in chapter one that it is impossible to catch that thing-ness of a particular thing. And if we would understand a piece of artwork as a thing, than we would linger in the elusiveness of thing-ness. Therefore, a work of art must not be understood as a thing: ''Der Versuch, diesen Dingcharakter des Werkes mit Hilfe der gewohnten Dingbegriffe zu fassen, mißlang.'' See Heidegger 1980: 25.

[96] ''Weltenzug und Weltzerfall sind nie mehr rückgängig zu machen. Die Werke sind nicht mehr die, die waren. Sie selbst sind es zwar, die uns da begegnen, aber sie selbst sind die Gewesen. Als die Gewesenen stehen sie uns im Bereich der Überlieferung und Aufbewahrung entgegen.'' See Heidegger 1980: 26.

is opened through the work itself, Heidegger argues. This 'opening of a domain' is by Heidegger related to truth. Truth is working through the work. What he means by that is exemplified with a comparison of a Greek temple. A Greek temple, he says, does not depict anything. A temple is just standing on a rock between some trees. But it is just the temple which ensures that the world (the rock and the trees, the *context* so to say) become meaningful. Through the temple, we see the world in which it is built. But remarkably, the ground itself is hidden by the fundament of the temple. The ground became holy-ground through the temple, but this ground, on the other hand, is a necessary condition for the temple too. So, world (context) and work (temple in this case) are mutually related to each other. They both make each other meaningful: the working of the world is opened through the work and the working of the work is opened through the world.[97] In other words: the context became meaningful through the work, while the work became meaningful because of the context. But how are *world* and *work* related to *truth*?

Heidegger about *truth* in *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes*
Heidegger notices that our concept of the word truth or 'the essence of truth[98]' is blunted. That is evident from the way we are using this word *truth*. Heidegger describes this word as '*Grundwortes*', as 'primitive'. Sometimes the word *truth* is used to emphasize the verifiability of a statement. But also a *Sache* (thing) is usually called true: 'true gold is distinguishable from fake gold. 'True' here means something like real, genuinely gold.'[99] But, Heidegger argues, this is a definition which leads to a circular reasoning. Because, what is meant by this 'genuinely' is considered as 'complied to the truth', and this completes the circle. Since our use of the word truth is blunted, and Heidegger therefore cannot come to know what it means, he suggests that the following question may be fruitful to understand the concept of truth. ''What does *truthfully* mean?''[100] According to Heidegger, *truth* means something like 'the essence of true things', *Wesen des Wahren* in German. Here, Heidegger immediately relates truth with the ancient Greeks: this *Wesen des Wahren* is a remembrance of the word of truth used by the ancient Greeks: 'ἀλήθειᾶ',[101] which means: the unconcealed-ness[102] of things'. But by redeeming the word *truth* for 'unconcealed-ness' it is not immediately clear what this exchange means. It therefore is necessary, for Heidegger, to explain what it means to express *the essence of true things* in the way the ancient Greeks did. This explanation, however, is not an easy task for him because *the essence of true things* has not only always been concealed in Greek thought, but also in later philosophy.

According to Heidegger, truth means since the memory of generations agreement between

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[97] ''Aber was stellt das Werk her? […] Zum werksein gehört die Aufstellung einer Welt. […] Das Werk läßt die Erde eine Erde sein.'' See Heidegger 1980: 31-2. In German, Heidegger makes a distinction between world (*Welt*) and earth (*Erde*). This distinction makes sense in Heidegger's attempt to determine the discipline of art in relation to his major philosophical questions about being. In my argument, however, this distinction between world and earth will lead to superfluous complexity. Therefore I try to leave that part of his argument aside. See Bartky (1981: 257-264) for a disquisition on earth and world in relation to art.
[98] ''Wesen der Wahrheit'' see Heidegger 1980: 35.
[99] ''[…] wahres Gold im Unterschied zum Scheingold. Wahr heißt hier soviel wie echtes, wirkliches Gold.'' Heidegger 1980: 35.
[100] In German this question is: *Was heißt 'in Wahrheit'?* See Heidegger 1980: 36.
[101] Ἀλήθειᾶ is the Greek word for 'truth'. Transliterated it will be 'aletheia'. Heidegger emphasizes that this is a denial (a-) of letheia. Letheia would be a contraction (it is not entirely clear to me which form) of the verb λήθω that means 'making invisible'. Letheia means concealed-ness. A denial of letho therefore will mean: 'making in-invisible' or 'making visible' or 'revealing'. So Heidegger concludes, *aletheia* need to be understood as *unconcealed-ness* or 'Unverborgenheit' in German.
[102] Other scholars uses other translations for *Unverborgenheit* instead of unconcealed-ness. 'Unconcealment' is one of them. See for example Wrathall 2005: 70; and Bartky 1981: 265. Another translation is 'non-concealment'. See for example Kockelmans 1985: 84. But there are also scholars who use the same translation 'unconcealedness'. See for example Fynsk 1986: 146.

knowledge and things (*Sache*).[103] This concept of propositional truth is closely related to al-Kindī's definition of philosophy, as we saw in chapter two: ''the knowledge of things as they really are''.[104] But, Heidegger argues, before it is possible for knowledge – and the stipulation in which knowledge is expressed: 'the saying', so to say – to be adaptable to the *Sache*, it is necessary for the *Sache* to present itself as such. It is impossible for the *Sache* to present itself as such, if this *Sache* is not in the domain of unconcealed things: ''A saying is only true because it is addressed to the domain of unconcealed-ness, that is the domain of true things.''[105] But what does this *unconcealed-ness* or *Unverborgenheit* of a thing mean? For Heidegger, this *Unverborgenheit* is not a condition, it rather is a happening, an event. *Unverborgenheit* occurs. The truth of a *Sache* or saying is not in the characteristics of that particular thing or saying. If we say that a thing is unconcealed, it does not mean that it discards all its unconcealed-ness. On the contrary: 'the essence of truth is untruth'[106]. In first instance, this sentence seems to be a paradox. The following examples will show what Heidegger means by this apparent contradiction.

Even when something is shown in the domain of unconcealed-ness, there is always something hidden. When, for example, a coin is shown in the area of unconcealed-ness, it is impossible to see both heads and tails. When heads is shown, tails is hidden from that perspective and the other way around. Where something is shown, also something is hidden. And when it comes to art, the painting on the wall hides at least a part of the wall on which it hangs. But not only that, also the paint that makes it possible to show the artwork, in other words that makes possible *the being and existence of the work*, is hidden in the first instance. Heidegger argues that when we look at a painting we can see how something (in his example a Van Gogh painting with a pair of peasant's shoes) is working through the work. The workability of a thing is shown through the artwork.[107] But what is hidden in the first instance is the paint itself. What we see is a pair of peasant shoes, or a landscape or looking eyes, rather than a composition of pigments. So when Heidegger argues that the essence of true things is untruth, he does not mean that the truth is, or true things are, fundamentally falseness as well. What he means is that if something is shown, something is hidden too. These are the two sides of the coin.

We saw that when Heidegger argues that a Van Gogh painting let work the truth, it does not mean that this painting shows something in a correct way, but that the pair of shoes enters the domain of unconcealed-ness as a pair of peasant's shoes through the painting. In this way, the truth (instead of a 'true' or 'truthful' representation) is working through the work. But not every thing available for our senses is a work. What makes a work a work, is that someone made the work. A work is a work because someone has worked on it: ''If there is one thing that is characteristic for the work as work, it would be the created-ness of it.''[108] In this part of his argument, Heidegger pulls his story that seems to cover topics like art, the artist, and the artwork, to a theological discourse in which speaking about a creator-God is possible. By 'the created-ness' of a work, Heidegger makes clear that a created work is truly

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[103] This commonly used conception of truth is called 'propositional truth'. Because this truth is about the correspondence between the proposition (a connection between subject and predicate) and that what is: ''Propositional truth is the correctness of things that have as their content a proposition.'' Wrathall 2007: 242. See also p. 264. See for a detailed explanation of Heidegger's understanding of propositional truth: Wrathall 2007: 244-247.

[104] Adamson 2012: 10.

[105] ''Der Satz ist wahr, indem er sich nach dem Unverborgenen, d.h. nach dem Wahren, richtet.'' Heidegger 1980: 37.

[106] ''Das Wesen der Wahrheit ist die Un-wahrheit'' Heidegger 1980: 40.

[107] Something always works in a particular context. This workability in the words of Wrathall: ''[A] work of art can show us an entity, and shows it so purely and beautifully that by learning to see and feel the work of art, we also are in a position to understand and uncover entities as a whole, as they show up in a specific historical world.'' (Wrathall 2005: 75.) From Heidegger's text itself cannot be derived that this skill of 'understanding and uncovering entities as a whole' is a learnable skill, as suggested by Wrathall.

[108] ''Wenn etwas das Werk als Werk auszeichnet, dann gilt dies vom Geschaffensein des Werkes.'' Heidegger 1980: 42.

unique and truth-revealing. This revealing of truth in the created work is accompanied by a shock in a moment of realization. This shock clarifies that a work has existence, rather than being nothing. Let us first look at Heidegger's argument about the created-ness of things, and how these created works are distinctive to other things like tools and other manufactures (i.e. things made by hand for a particular purpose).

Heidegger about _God_ in _Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes_

Heidegger is not always explicit about God. What he writes about God is almost always in a careful way. In the beginning of his argument Heidegger clarifies the distinction between _things_ and _created works_. It is not entirely clear if God in this dichotomy must be understood as a created work, but what is clear is that people are not willing to call God a thing: ''Überdies scheuen wir uns auch wieder, Gott ein Ding zu heißen.''[109] God is not a thing. Creation plays a key role in Heidegger's conception of God. The created-ness of a work can, according to Heidegger, only be understood in light of the process of creation. Therefore it is important to change our attention from the work to that creative process. Creation is considered in that process as 'generating', 'originating' or 'bringing forth' (_Hervorbringen_), but not as 'manufacturing'. This distinction between bringing forth and manufacturing becomes clear on the basis of Heidegger's analysis of the Greek word τέχνη (_technè_). ''Use of the word τέχνη never is meant to indicate the activity of creating something.''[110] It rather has the connotation of bringing something out of the area concealed-ness or out of 'mystery', and bring it into light, into the area of unconcealed-ness. The creator brings forth a being into light.[111]

The work, thus, can at best be understood in the process of creation. But, Heidegger argues, also the process of creation can better be understood when looking at the essence of the work. Investigating this double-directed relation between creation on the one hand and the essence of a work on the other, is essential to have a better understanding of both sides of this coin. If we want to have a better understanding of the process of creation, it is important to come to know the essence of the work. The essence of the work (_Wesen des Werkes_), according to Heidegger, is that a work let work the truth. The process of creation can therefore be defined as 'bringing forth into light'. Truth (_Wahrheit_), as unconcealed-ness, can only take place in the process of creation. This process takes place in a limited period of time. The created being did not exist before it was created, and the process of creation is over when the work has been brought into light, in other words when the work 'is created'.

The created work can be distinguished from manufactured things, because the aspect of creation is co-created in the process of the created work. This is not the case for manufactured instruments which are intended to be merged into servitude: a hammer is manufactured to serve a purpose outside itself: as a tool to nail down. The manufactured-ness of the tool is not being brought into light, but it disappears in servitude. This is not the case for created things, according to Heidegger. The 'forth bringing' of the created-ness within a work does not mean that this work is created by a great artist: ''The created is not an achievement by which can be concluded what the skills of the artist are.''[112] The created work contains a shock. This shock is the truth which is being brought into light. This shock arrives at best when the artist and the conditions among which the work is created, are unknown. Possibly this is the reason why it is impossible for Heidegger to contribute characteristics to a creator-God, nor to say

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[109] 'Moreover, we are sparing to call God a thing.' Heidegger 1980: 5.
[110] ''[τέχνη] meint überhaupt niemals eine Art von praktischer Leistung.'' See Heidegger 1980: 45.
[111] The etymological connection between 'bringing forth into light' (_tevoorschijn laten komen_) and aesthetic (_esthetisch_ or _schoonheid_) is easy to make in Dutch and German as well. Since the verb 'to shine' (_schijnen_) has both a link in 'bringing forth into light' [in English the aspect of 'to shine' is reflected in 'light' and therefore also included] as well as in _schoon_heid. This connection disappeared in English when talking about aesthetics in terms of 'let shine'.
[112] ''Das Geschaffene soll nicht als Leistung eines Könners bezeugt und dadurch der Leistende in das öffentliche Ansehen gehoben werden.'' See Heidegger 1980: 51.

something about the circumstances in which the process of creation takes place. Since Heidegger showed how we can have a better understanding of the essence of a work, by looking at the created-ness of its being, it is time now to analyse the sufficiency of this approach. Heidegger himself gives a start for this analysis: ''By knowing the created-ness of a work, we do not come to know the essence of the work in all completeness.''[113]

Truth happened in a moment of time. This *Unverborgenheit* is not without any doubt working in a work infinitely. What is being brought into light during the process of creation can never be completely determined, even if the most thoughtful method has been applied. The best we can do, is to see a glimpse of how truth has been working through the work. In that way we can give a created work a place in our thoughts. But the unique and true reality of a work can only thrive during the process of creation and at the place in which the working of truth through the work is guaranteed. Here again we can mention the example of the fronton of the temple of Aphaia in Aegine in the collection of the museum of Munich. This fronton in no longer working as part of a temple, standing on a rock. This piece of stone no longer let work the truth as it did centuries ago. By doing research, the highest achievement we can hope for, is to see a glimpse of how truth has worked through the work. Truth only works through the work, moreover, through what is essential to the work: the work-ness of the work. Instead of the thing-ness of a work. After all, a work cannot work as a thing.[114]

Another distinction that needs to be stressed here, is the place in which truth is located. Heidegger argues that truth occurs in the work, instead of in ourselves. This is contradictory to the location attributed to truth in his lectures in 1933-4. In that series, Heidegger argues that the place in which truth occurs is the subject, the one who perceives. This rather leads to a form of subjectivism in which it is the subject that makes truth meaningful. While in his argument two years later, it is the work in which truth takes place. This rather leads to a kind of objectivism, in which it is the object (the work) in which truth is guaranteed. Since the place in which truth is located is the work itself, Heidegger raises the question about the relation between the work and nature.

Nature houses capabilities of creation. Which means that in nature, art is already present, and that the one who is able to pull art out of nature is an artist, a creator.[115] In German, Heidegger links this pulling (*reißen*) to a characteristics of arts: the sketch (*riß*). The lines by which a sketch is built, are also in some way 'pulled'. This idea of the artists task to pull the artwork out of nature, can also be found in a famous quote attributed to one of the greatest artists of the fifteenth and sixteenth century Italy, Michelangelo: 'Every block of stone has a statue in it. The sculptor only has to reveal it.' In this quote the *Heideggerian* approach of *aletheia* can be reflected. The statue has to be made unconcealed. This way of thinking is enclosed in the idea that art is already present in nature. Nevertheless, the artist plays an important role in letting work truth by revealing truth and bringing unconcealed-ness into light. So the link that Heidegger makes between the artwork and the possibility to pull it out of nature, is extremely relevant in our understanding of Heidegger's conception of *aletheia* as unconcealed-ness. It shows how creation – which is *non-ex nihilo* according to Heidegger – exemplifies this way of approaching *aletheia*.

Heidegger argues that we only can understand specific artworks by knowing why that work belongs to the discipline of art. So we have to know what the discipline of art is. But on the other hand, we only can have an image of art as discipline by looking at the individual artworks. So, since this

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[113] ''[…] im Geschaffensein erschöpft sich die Wirklichkeit des Werkes nicht.'' See Heidegger 1980: 52.

[114] This is emphasized by Heidegger and already mentioned on page 19, footnote 88.

[115] This is where Heidegger argues for in line with a quote from Albrecht Dürer: ''Denn wahrhaftig steckt die Kunst in der Natur, wer sie heraus kann reißen, der hat sie.'' (Heidegger 1980: 56.) This quote is probably quoted from *Hierinn sind begriffen vier Bücher von menschlicher Proportion.* This book of Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528) was published in 1528. I cannot find the exact location, since it is written in a medieval German manuscript: http://www.aproged.pt/biblioteca/hierinnsinddurer.pdf (last visited on 11 July 2018).

individual artwork is explained (as a way through which truth has been working), it is time now for Heidegger to go back to art as a whole. Because this retrieval is not very useful for the present argument here, I will leave it for now. But what is important to emphasize, is the way in which the role of the curator (in general) forms an essential contribution to the created-ness of work. Heidegger writes: ''The essence of the created-ness of a work not only belongs to the creators, but also to the conservators.''[116] This statement need to be explained further. In a previous stage, Heidegger argues that work and creator are in a relation of mutual dependency: ''The artist is the cause (*Ursprung*) of the work. The work is the cause of the artist. None of them exists without the other.''[117] Heidegger starts *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes* with a justification of his use of the word *Ursprung*. He writes: ''*Ursprung* here means: from whence and through which one thing is, what it is and how it is.''[118] So, *Ursprung* is that by which a thing (*eine Sache*) become the thing it is and how it is. *Ursprung* is difficult to translate but can probably at best be translated as 'origin' or 'cause'. In Dutch this connection between *Ursprung* (oorsprong) and cause or origin is easier to make, since the word for cause in Dutch (oorzaak) already contains the word 'zaak' (*Sache* in German). Heidegger refer to the origins (*oor-* or *oer*) of the thing ('Sache' in German and 'ding' or 'zaak' in Dutch). Although *Ursprung* used by Heidegger in this work can be translated as cause, in the next section I will argue that this does not mean that the work is causal responsible for the working of truth.

It seems obvious that it is only possible for a work to have existence if a creator created the work. But, Heidegger argues, also the one who created a world (a setting) in which the work is accepted as work, which means, a work whose created-ness is recognized as such, fulfils a necessary condition in which the created work exists. It is the work whose essence (*Wesen*) exists by the grace of the creator, but whose existence (*Wesen*) requires conservators.[119] For Heidegger, poetry is the art that is exemplary for all arts. Poetry is never is depicting already existing things. Poetry designs, poetry creates. In this process of creation, something new is being brought into light. Poetry let work *true* unconcealed-ness. But what is also exemplary for this kind of art, is that it clarifies that unconcealed-ness only can be recognized by the ones who do have a correct understanding of language in order to recognize and accept the poem as poetry.[120] According to Heidegger, language is generally accepted as a means of communication, in order to make appointments and to express oneself. What language is doing, Heidegger argues, is letting things be a being: ''Only when things are called by language, it is possible for a thing to appear as such.''[121] This can be exemplified by an open place in the woods. In the forest, it is only possible for daylight to reach the ground in an open place. This open place brings the ground into light.[122] But the forest is necessary for the existence and determination of the open place. Without the woods, no open place is possible. Like a forest is a necessary condition for the existence of an open place, and therefore it is possible for the light to reach the ground, so it is with language: language

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[116] ''Aber das Werk ist es, was die Schaffenden in ihrem Wesen ermöglicht und aus seinem Wesen die Bewahrenden braucht.'' Heidegger 1980: 57.

[117] ''Der Künstler ist der Ursprung des Werkes. Das Werk ist der Ursprung des Künstlers. Keines ist ohne das andere.'' Heidegger 1980: 1.

[118] ''Ursprung bedeutet hier jenes, von woher und wodurch eine Sache ist, was sie ist und wie sie ist.'' Heidegger 1980: 1.

[119] This act of conservation is explicitly based upon the concept of *Entschlossenheit* in *Sein und Zeit*. See Fynsk 1986: 135.

[120] This is what Hans-Georg Gadamer recognizes in his introduction of *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes*. Heidegger 1982: 113.

[121] ''Indem die Sprache erstmals das Seiende nennt, bringt solches Nennen ernennt das Seiende erst zum Wort und zum Erscheinen.'' See Heidegger 1980: 59.

[122] 'To appear' is *Erscheinen* in German, which is related to 'to shine', and so is light.

necessary condition to let appear things as things.[123]

As already mentioned, Heidegger is not always explicit about God. What he writes about God is almost always in a careful way. It is clear to Heidegger that God is not a thing. In Christian tradition – Heidegger himself is part of this tradition – God is commonly known and adored as creator-God. It is not a coincidence that Heidegger here uses this language of creation and creator. According to Genesis, on the first day God created light, God brought light forth, so to say: ''and God separated light and darkness from each other.''[124] Two things about Heidegger's usage of creation are remarkable: (1) the conservator is a necessary requirement for created works that makes its existence possible. And (2) it is the work that enables the creator to exist: ''[D]as Werk ist es, was die Schaffenden in ihrem Wesen ermöglicht.''[125] So, before it is possible for the essence of the creator to be recognized as such, the creator not only has to create to become a creator, but also the conservator is an essential condition for the existence of the creator. The consequences of this dependency will be that religious people – the ones who acknowledges creation as being created ('being brought forth into light') by God – make it possible for God to have existence. Above all, language needs to be attributed to it. This goes for all three of them: both God and the created work, but also the party who acknowledges these created works as creation.

The relation between *truth* and *God* in *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes*

In *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes*, Heidegger gives a typical Heideggerian analysis of art. In this analysis Heidegger roughly makes three conclusive theses: (1) truth occurs through the created work (2) created things not only exist by the grace of the creator, but the conservator is at least of equal importance; (3) things in general, but created works in particular only have existence when they have a place in language. The first one is especially related to Heidegger's concept of truth. The second is implicitly related to Heidegger's concept of God. The last thesis has consequences for Heidegger's concept of both truth and God. This last conclusion, however, is particularly exemplary for the stage in his development in philosophical thought.

Heidegger's concept of truth is captured in his analysis of art. The approach and use of the word for 'truth' by the ancient Greeks plays a key role in Heidegger's concept of truth. Although 'truth' has been understood for centuries as 'an agreement between knowledge and things', ἀλήθειᾶ must be translated as *Unverborgenheit* (unconcealed-ness). Translation alone, however, is not enough. It is the created work which shows this unconcealed-ness according to Heidegger. Moreover, this 'showing' of truth rather is a 'letting work' of truth: it is the created work which allows the truth to work by showing (or: 'put into light') something, that now no longer is concealed, but 'works' in the domain of unconcealed-ness. In created works, this unconcealed-ness is being expressed at best. The creator plays a major role in this process of creation. But also the conservator is an inevitable condition for a being to have existence as such, and in this qualification to let truth work through the work.

Metaphorically, truth only works like an open place in the woods: in an open place everything is completely different. Light penetrates and reveals the forest-ground only in an open place. But this open-ness in it's turn only works in a forest: without forests, there are no open places. Like an open place only 'works' in the context of a forest, so truth can only work in the context of creation. The created work guarantees the origin of truth, but that does not mean that the work is causal responsible for the working of truth. Truth is the working of the unconcealed-ness of things. So a statement can only

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[123] According to Wrathall (2007: 241-2) the question about truth may be an important philosophical issue, it never is Heidegger's primary concern. Comprehensive philosophical questions about the nature of language or about the mind-independency are more important issues in Heidegger's philosophy.

[124] Genesis 1:3b. The domain of concealed things and the area of unconcealed-ness as used by Heidegger are probably in light of these first biblical verses.

[125] Heidegger 1980: 57. See footnote 109, page 24.

be true if the thing regarding the statement is in the domain of unconcealed things. The question here is, to what extent can we say that God is in the domain of unconcealed things? God does not have a place in this domain as a thing, as already mentioned. But what is important is that God has a place in our language. Existence, according to Heidegger, is guaranteed by the language that is attributed to it.

To conclude: in *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes*, truth need to be understood as unconcealed-ness which is working through the created work, and brought into light in a world which is preserved by people who created a setting in which the created work is acknowledged as being created. In this setting, the attribution of language is essential: for both the created work as well as the creator. If something or a phenomena is thinkable or imaginable, it is impossible for Heidegger that language cannot be dedicated to it. In other words, if something or a phenomena has existence, language can be attributed to it. Although Heidegger writes about God, he is not explicit about God's characteristics. However, his analysis of the artwork can be applied to God as creator of light, and to God as creator of the two domains: of concealed-ness on the one hand and unconcealed-ness on the other. By using language which is permeated by theological connotation, I can cautiously conclude that Heidegger implicitly acknowledges that God made creation possible and therefore truth. Language is attributed to God, and therefore a setting is created in which the essence of God as creator-preserver has existence.

Chapter four
Conclusion

How is Heidegger's conception of truth related to his concept of God in Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes, how is al-Kindī's conception of truth related to his concept of God in On First Philosophy and how are these relations different and similar to each other?

In the first part of his argument, al-Kindī writes about the path that leads to the truth. By sharing the results of study, one can pave the path *to* the truth.[126] Later on in his argument, al-Kindī writes about *the path of truth* rather than *the path to the truth*. It is not entirely clear if this path *to* the truth is the same path as the path *of* the truth. But what is clear, is that the path of truth is pleasing God. This God is the only one who is divine. But not only this path is pleasing God, the divine is also helping the ones who are searching for truth and therefore the ones who help to pave the path to the truth: ''He [God] may […] let us reach the end of our intention in aiding the truth and supporting what is right.''[127] So, God is the one who helps people who are searching for the truth to find it, while the path of truth is pleasing God. Therefore, God maintains or guarantees His own pleasure, according to al-Kindī.

     God, emphasized by al-Kindī, is not perceptible through the senses. God is not limited in size and time. Moreover, al-Kindī argues that God is beyond time and size. Although this sounds very noble, it is not entirely clear to me what it means to be beyond size and time. What matters is that God is not a thing nor a body. God is neither composed of matter, nor to investigate in a physical way. This is why al-Kindī argues that God is not perceptible for our senses. But God is perceptible for our intellect, to investigate in a meta-physical way. Truth, according to al-Kindī, can be approached in two ways. The first one, as shown in chapter two, is *truth as the cause for the existence of things*. It is this approach which al-Kindī tries to identify with God. The other approach is *truth as principle*. This principle of thought can be revealed by intense inquiry. This means that this kind of truth is hidden before it has been discovered. This aspect about the truth that could be hidden, clarifies how al-Kindī's concept of truth is different from Heidegger's concept of truth. Heidegger's concept of truth is related to ancient Greek usage of ἀλήθειᾶ. Truth needs to be understood as unconcealed-ness, *Unverborgenheit*. Therefore, truth can never be hidden according to Heidegger. But on the meantime, truth is always accompanied by concealed-ness, since every times something is being brought into light, something is hidden too.

     In chapter three, we saw that Heidegger is not very explicit about God. His God is a God of others, standing in a tradition of almost two thousand years of Christianity. Although, while giving the lectures about art halfway the nineteen-thirties – a period in which Heidegger is moving towards atheism – his philosophical language is permeated by a theological overtone. In biblical interpretations, God is the one who separated darkness from light on the first day, in which two domains were created: the domain of concealed-ness on the one hand and the area of unconcealed-ness on the other. Although Heidegger is not always explicit about God, I argued that essence of God have existence in *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes* and can be understood as creator and preserver, just because God (*Gott*) has a place in Heidegger's language and because his analysis of truth is theologically loaded. Al-Kindī's disquisition on truth in *On First Philosophy* is also permeated by theological language. Not because this usage is unavoidable, but because al-Kindī wrote a theological treatise, with a specific confessional

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[126] See *On First Philosophy*, section one: II (2). Adamson 2012: 11.
[127] Adamson 2012: 14.

audience in mind. His argument starts with the premise that truth is the first cause and he ended up with the conclusion that God coincides this approach of truth. God is the only true One, eternal and unique in its whole essence. God is the first cause, God is truth according to al-Kindī.

Of course, al-Kindī and Heidegger are two different scholars who lived their lifespans in a different time, at a different place in a different culture and climate. They wrote their works in a different language, founded by different agendas. But yet, if they want it or not, their works are both standing on one and the same bookshelf, cover to cover, available in one glance. But this is absolutely not the only similarity between *On First Philosophy* and *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes*. Both authors, as we saw, dedicated a comprehensive argument in which *truth* plays a central role. Al-Kindī writes about God in a more directly manner: he wants to prove that God can be identified with truth, because they both are determined as 'the first cause'. Causality also plays a defining role in Heidegger's story about art. But not in the logical methodical way as shown in chapter three, but as *Hervorbringen* (bringing forth into light). Heidegger is not explicit in this book about the role God plays in the establishment of the domains of concealed-ness and unconcealed-ness. But I showed that his use of theological language in combination with the stage in his philosophical and theological development, suggests that God can be understood as the one who makes creation possible. But also that both 'created works' and 'creators' are thriving on a place in language, according to Heidegger. Al-Kindī in the meantime, is writing directly about God. In line with Aristotle he tries to produce logical valid arguments. And indeed, besides unacceptable premises, his arguments are logically valid. This cannot be said about Heidegger's work. Not because it would be logically invalid, but because his dissecting use of language is not built by means of logical guidelines.[128]

Both *truth* and *God* are different for al-Kindī on the one hand and Heidegger on the other. Although in translations of their works, both *truth* and *God* are used in their separate language, and although it might be possible that they both would agree with the translation of respectively *ḥqq* and *Warheit* with 'truth', the meaning that is attributed to these word is from a different world. What is truth for al-Kindī is not for Heidegger, and what is truth for Heidegger is not for al-Kindī. Not because their input or sources are different to each other – however that in general indeed is the case – what the only foundation is for their aberrant truths, is their deviating conception of truth. Although if the same sources would be available for both of them, they would not agree about what truth is, precisely because their concept of truth does not match. Al-Kindī and Heidegger are not like two detectives placed separately on the same cold case. After own inquiry these detective could present their results differently, not because they disagreed about their concept of truth, but because different sources were crossing their path to their truth. Al-Kindī and Heidegger rather are like journalists on the one hand and Donald Trump on the other, right after the inauguration ceremony on the 20th of January 2017 at Washington D.C. What is truth for al-Kindī is not for Heidegger and vice versa. They are not disagreeing about *the truth* on the base of different sources, but because their conceptions of truth are divergent.

This is not the case for their conceptions of God. Indeed what Heidegger writes about God in *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes* is not the same as what al-Kindī does in *On First Philosophy*. Even though it might be well conceivable that they both would agree that respectively *Gott* and *Allāh* can be translated with 'God', the reason for writing differently about God is totally based on the different agendas they had while writing their works. Al-Kindī was tensioned in a totally different web than Heidegger was. Although al-Kindī presents himself as a philosopher, he wrote as a theologian about

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[128] In *Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes* Heidegger did not give any indications that he was aware of the existence of al-Kindī's *On First Philosophy*. However, the knowledge about Aristotle in western modern and postmodern philosophy is at least partly based on the Arabic philosophical tradition. Greek philosophy could be reintroduced in the western philosophical tradition, because the Arabic translations functioned as hatch for ancient Greek philosophy into the Latin world. See Novaes 2016: 2, 48, 93. It would be of historically interest to investigate if there is any causal dependency on works of al-Kindī's oeuvre in particular.

God in a confessional way, trying to serve faith. Instead, Heidegger wrote out of philosophical perspective. Where al-Kindī as a theologian tries to serve faith with the things he wrote about God, Heidegger could not avoid theologically charged language when writing about art and truth. The attempt for al-Kindī was to argue that *truth* and *God* are one and the same, while this is certainly not where Heidegger is aiming for. Heidegger is just dealing with his major philosophical question about the essence of being and the role language plays in it. In that way, Heidegger's analysis of truth as *Unverborgenheit* fits very well, and the extensive amount of implications it has about God is rather an inevitable side effect. Heidegger's dependent relationship between existence of phenomena and a place these things have in the use of language, leads to the agreement between al-Kindī and Heidegger that they both simply cannot deny that God has existence. But al-Kindī proves that God necessarily must exist while Heidegger shows that the existence of God is rather contingent because it is thriving by linguistic conservation.

I already mentioned differences in concepts of truth nowadays, especially regarding United States political and journalistic milieus. It would be of inter-religious interest to have a contemporary inquiry on the relation between people's conceptions of *truth* and *God* here and now, and how they might be related to each other. Heidegger would be very helpful in this respect. Christian theologians have already shown a remarkable interest in Heidegger's later writing in which he provides a new thematic of the 'truly divine God'.[129] Inter-disciplinary investigation between theology and philosophy must not be diluted. Also this thesis tries to provide a contribution. The suggested research can probably provide a better understanding of religious miscommunication and confusion of speech, in order to bridge cultural, linguistic and social differences rather than choosing own paths for each of them.

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[129] See Caputo 2007: 339.

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