

Short Outline of Week 1

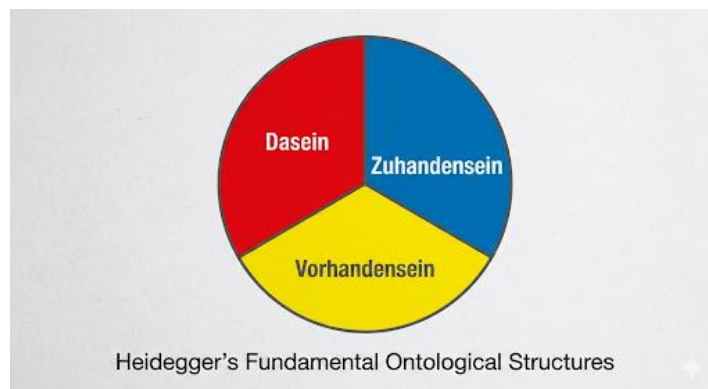
1. Heidegger: "To think is to confine yourself to a single thought that one day stands still like a star in the world's sky." His one thought was the question of the meaning of Being.
2. Rorty's **vocabulary vocabulary**
 - Antecedents: Carnap two-stage story (meanings first, then theories), Quine's critique. Rorty's response.
 - The **power of redescription** by adopting a new vocabulary. That is never *wholly* from scratch; it is always *adapting* some prior vocabularies.
 - I want to explore Heidegger's vocabulary of Being. First, to see what it can teach us about its topic, but second to examine how this new vocabulary works, how it adapts the vocabulary it inherits.
 - The antecedents I find most telling are in **Kant**.
 - In fact, I claim there were two major strands of late neoKantianism: one that **went through Carnap to Sellars**, and one that **went through Heidegger**.
 - **Rorty on Heideggerese**: not (as MH thought), Being's gift to Heidegger, but just Heidegger's gift to us.
3. The **ontological difference** is between beings and their Being.
 - Being is something like what identifies and individuates beings, what makes them the (kind of) being they are. Compare: essence.
 - Example: Particulars (objects), which are what they are because of the facts about them: their properties and the relations they stand in to one another, and the laws that govern the relations among those facts. (You might think, as Wittgenstein did in the *Tractatus*, that this pretty much covers it, that is, applies to *all* beings—but you'd be wrong.)
 - First point of Kantian comparison: Kant's invention/discovery of the *categories*. They apply to what is *conceptually* specifiable. His idea is that in addition to concepts whose job it is to describe empirical particulars and explain empirical facts, there are concepts whose characteristic, defining expressive function is rather to make explicit features of the *framework* of concepts of the first kind, in virtue of which they can serve in empirical description and explanation. I suggest we think of **Being** as a successor-(meta-meta)concept to categories (= pure concepts of the Understanding). That model requires two bits of commentary:
 - a) On side of *things*, not of *thoughts* or *judgments*, and
 - b) Not just a matter of the worldly correlate of things *conceptually* available.

- From one point of view, Heidegger's topic is ***understanding***, in a very broad sense: something like "being onto" things. Being is the structure of what one is onto. But **Being is what is understood**.
- Belnap joke: "The meaning of Being is the Being of meaning." (chiasmus, anti-metabole), and its truth. Quine on meaning and essence.
- "Language is the house of Being."

4. Two lines of thought that help place the concept of Being, and indicate some of its philosophical resonances (though I won't be making much of them here):

- The **ontotheological mistake**: mistaking Being for a being.
- If we avoid the ontotheological mistake, we say that Being is *not* a being. It is not a *thing*. It is *no thing*. Being is ***nothing***. But not just in the sense of the *absence* of beings.

5. Heidegger has a **three-part ontology**, comprising Dasein (us) and *two* kinds of beings whose Being is *not* that of Dasein:



6. **Vorhandensein**

- Vorhandensein comprises the universe (not 'world') of *facts* and *laws*, of *objective particulars, properties, and relations*.
- The worldly correlate of discursive, that is, *conceptual* understanding. Rehearse reciprocal sense-dependence of terms/predicates, declarative sentences, subjunctive conditionals, with objects/properties-relations, facts/states of affairs, laws. Heidegger reconceptualizes this relation, in nonsemantic terms.
- A kind of *conceptual realism*: Vorhandensein is what it is about beings in virtue of which *claims* (judgments) can be made about them. And the claim is that not everything has this kind of Being. There is more.
- "The metaphysics of presence" as Plato's contribution ("a series of footnotes") to the *history* of Being. **Logocentrism** (Derrida).

Three large phases of different forms of the metaphysics of presence:

- Greek, starting with Plato, ideas and forms;

- Medieval Christian: creator and created
- Modern: subjects and objects.

Heidegger claims all three are construed on the model of *presence* or *occurrence*, which turns out to be delimited by what can be asserted-judged, that is, **conceptually represented**.

- Vorhanden things are Kantian things in themselves, conceptually representable, but knowable.

7. **Dasein**

- Mass-noun or form? Mass noun, “the Dasein in man” (“I’ve got the Dasein in me.”) Compare to **Hegel’s Geist**. (My reading of Geist as comprising all norm-governed activities and their products, vs. McDowell’s reading as closer to Aristotle’s rational soul, a kind of *form*.) Google is a case of Dasein.
- Dasein can be **onto** things (discover them), not just discursively-conceptually. It is the **kind of thing things can be something for or to**.
- The essentially **ontologically self-conscious** kind of Being. All *discovering* (entdecken) of beings requires *disclosure* (entschliessen) of their Being.
- “No consciousness without *self*-consciousness” is the Kantian slogan of German Idealism.
- **Fundamental ontology is the regional ontology of Dasein**. (The “existential analytic” of Dasein.) Kinds of Being correlate with modes of accessibility to Dasein—but they are on the side of the *beings*, not of Dasein. This is an analogue of **Kant’s transcendental idealism**—a form of *conceptual phenomenalism*.
- Beings do not in general depend on Dasein. But Being does. That is why **Being has a history**.
- Being as what is understandable, available, or accessible—to Dasein, the Being for which things can be something.

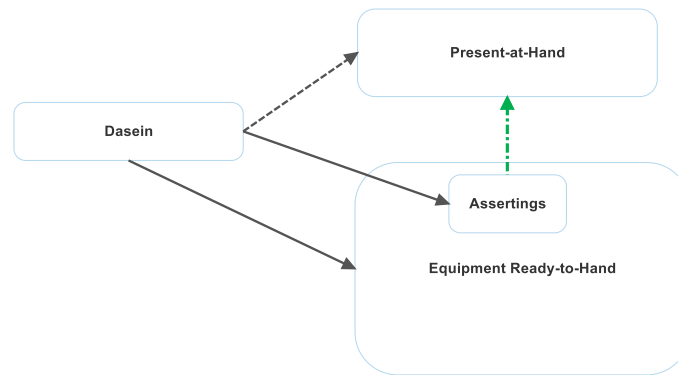
8. **Zuhandensein**

- This is the really new category of Being. (Husserl’s “lifeworld” is an antecedent. Cf. Late LW.)
- Broadly practical and nonconceptual interaction with things, but before the distinction between two directions of fit that defines cognitive/practical distinction. (Pushmipullyus)
- Affordances and nonconceptual appropriatenesses.
- Know-how: Skillful dealing and coping.
- This is what the **Dreyfus school of Heideggerian pragmatists** focus on.
- Having a *world*. Each of the three kinds of Being has its own way of Being-in-the-world.
- Equipment and holistic equipmental totality.

- What is new is not thinking of this as a new mode of access to things, but of that mode of access as revealing a different kind of *thing*: broadly *functional* things (like valves as valves).
- **Breakdown** is responded to by **assertion**.

9. Normativity

- **Kant on normativity of intentionality.** What distinguishes knowers and agents from the beasts of the field is that judgments and intentions are things we are *responsible* for in a distinctive way: responsible for having *reasons* for them. (Hegel emphasizes the *authority* of representeds, which serve as standards for assessments of the (representational) *correctness* of representings, which accordingly count as in this sense *responsible to* those representeds.) Kant replaces Descartes's mind/body distinction with a norm/fact distinction. Is it replacing one dualism with another?
- **Neokantian existential professional panic** in the face of the rise of sciences in Germany. They seized on Kant's norm/fact distinction, to carve out a *Fach* for philosophers as the students of *values* or norms: cognitive-epistemological, practical, moral, and aesthetic.
- Concern: Is the relation between the two elements of their fact/value distinction intelligible? If not, it has become a **dualism**, and so, pathological.
- Heidegger objects to the neokantians' two-factor, facts+values (norms) view, because *both* sides of it are construed as *present*. He claims that so construed 'norms' are unintelligible. This is the accusation that **the distinction has turned into a dualism**.
- Heidegger transforms the neokantians' two-factor, facts+norms view, by postulating, as it were, **basic things that "come with the norms in" already**. Gibsonian affordances are one point of comparison.
- What, then, is the relation between *zuhanden* things and *vorhanden* things?
- **Against abstractive-subtractive view:** But he does *not* then understand the facts side, now in the form of *Vorhandenheit*, as made available by an act of *abstraction*, or *bracketing*, *ignoring* the normative component. For him, that picture just reinstates the cleavage, and amounts to another way of treating what one is trying to get at with talk about norms or values as something merely *present*.
- What he *does* do is invoke a special kind of equipment: assertions (in the sense of assertings).



- Thus we can see that *vorhanden* things, things that are *present* are just those that can be described or explained, that stand in matter-of-factual relations to one another, since facts are what can be *stated* = *asserted*.
- So the objectionable *metaphysics of presence* is, in Derrida's phrase, *logocentrism*: restricting ones view of what there *is* to what can be *said* or described, by the use of *concepts*.
- **Semantic→Ontological Redescription:** If we think of Zuhandensein as giving us the *use* of expressions in assertion, and Vorhandensein as what beings those assertions make available in virtue of that use, Heidegger is re-arranging things substantially by saying that the *use* (specified in a pragmatic metavocabulary) already presents us a kind of *being*. Metaphysical, not semantic. Can compare here with **Frege's tripartite ontology of subjective things, objective things, and senses**.

10. Pragmatism

- Availability of what is available is an ur-practical kind of know how or ability, paradigmatically, to use a hammer.
- That sort of implicit, skillful practical **know-how** is more basic—along some important axis—than the **knowing-that** capacity to make explicit claims, and describe and explain things with concepts. **Practice precedes principles**. This is *fundamental pragmatism*.
- Heidegger has all of that in his understanding of the relations between Zuhandensein and Vorhandensein.

Layercake to Transformative view (Cf. DBT):

- On the layercake account, one could be onto Zuhandensein, and not yet Vorhandensein, because one did not have the specialized bit of equipment that is language (the house of Being). One *only* had skillful coping. That is what Dreyfus and Haugeland (and Okrent), the principal analytic pragmatist Heidegger scholars, think (and I thought in HCBT).
- But that is not Heidegger's view. He insists that only what can talk in the sense of making assertions can be Dasein, or live in a world of equipment. Even the best sort of nonlinguistic animals are doomed to be *world poor* (Weltarm).

- Postulating a kind of *thing*, equipment, in addition to what can be *stated* or *talked about*, is *very* different from thinking that one must be able to *use* sentences in order state facts. The fact-stating is a *semantic* relation, and the *use* of sentences to do that is *pragmatic* matter, standing to each other as *meaning* does to *use*. But that is *not* Heidegger's picture. In effect, *uses* become a kind of *thing*, or involvement with equipment. The equipment, the sentence-as-used, as *available to use*, has a different sort of Being from the things those sentences-as-used then enable us to *say*.

11. From Kant's normative representational version of **appearance/reality** to **concealed/unconcealed**. Latter does not have authority/responsibility structure of represented/representing.

- Here we might compare the modern models: Enlightenment mirror, Romantic lamp, pragmatist flywheel governor.
- The idea is that every sort of access or availability necessarily (why?) involves something not only *not* accessible or available, but something that is *less* accessible-available *because* and *insofar as* what was first accessible-available is so. This is not *just opportunity costs*: pursuing one strategy precludes pursuing others, beam of flashlight being one place precludes its being another. There is a deeper inaccessibility that is the other side of *every* kind of accessibility.
- There is no hint of this in the appearance/reality model, or in its distinctively modern representing/represented model.
- Explicitation path model (for the conceptual case).

12. **Falling** and **authenticity**, expressing two aspects of Dasein:

- **Mitsein** and **Jemeinigkeit**, one socially assimilating and the other individuating.
- **Jemeinigkeit** is the "mineness" that goes with **cases** of Dasein.
- **Das man** and Rede as Gerede.
- **Average everydayness** as normal state of Dasein.
- Das Man, as a being, is named '**Claude**'.
- He later characterizes the **metaphysics of presence** as a distinctive form of **falling**.
- **Authenticity**, a special kind of **taking personal responsibility**, is Heidegger's version of Kant's **autonomy**.

13. Heidegger's **Kehre** (turning). The central topic remains Being-in-the-world. Late work

- Rejects the *subjectivism* of his existentialist conception of Dasein, and
- Rejects the *instrumentalism* of his conception of Zuhandensein.
- Places the *world* and *Things in the world* at the center, and considers four aspects of such a world of Things. Mortals (Dasein) are only one. *Vorhandenheit* is not evidently present.

14. **Life:**
- Nietzsche lost his mind in 1889. Cavell (adapted): His spirit split into four parts: Heidegger, Wittgenstein, Hitler (school-room photo), and Charlie Chaplin.
 - Wrote *Being and Time* 100 years ago (1926), died 50 years ago (1976).
 - Hannah Arendt.
 - Nazism (and Alfred Rosenberg). Evasive, deceptive, and unrepentant.
15. **Work:** *Being and Time*, the *Beiträge*, das Geviert.
16. **Bookkeeping:**
- Term-paper course.
 - Not recommended for first-years to take rather than audit.