

Identity and Difference, by Martin Heidegger

a. People / Organizations:

- Plotinus - Philosopher (pg. 8) [[Plotinus \(Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy\)](#)]
- Leibniz - Philosopher (pg. 8) [[Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz \(Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy\)](#)]
- Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling - Philosopher (pg. 10) [[Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling \(Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy\)](#)]

b. Key Lesson:

- There is a difference between existence and that which exists. Of that which exists, the identity of any one thing does not reduce to merely its characteristics but is more so defined by its relation toward all else that exists.

c. Quotes:

- "thought and being are the same" - Parmenides (pg. 7)
- "the principle of identity speaks of the Being of beings. As a law of thought, the principle is valid only insofar as it is a principle of Being that reads: to every being as such there belongs identity, the unity with itself" - Author (pg. 26)
- "Being itself, however, belongs to us; for only with us can Being be present as Being, that is, become present [to us]" - Author (pg. 33)
- "the essence of identity is a property of the event of appropriation" - Author (pg. 39)
- "externality is itself a dialectical determination" - Author (pg. 44)
- "science is the systematic development of knowledge, the Being of beings knows itself as this knowledge, and thus it is in truth" - Author (pg. 54)
- "[in] my inaugural lecture 'what is metaphysics' defines metaphysics as the question about beings as such and as a whole" - Author (pg. 54)
- "Being manifests itself as thought" - Author (pg. 57)
- "thus we think of Being [or nature of total existence] rigorously only when we think of it in its [degree of] difference with [respect to] beings, and of beings in their difference with Being" - Author (pg. 62)
- "our representational thinking just happens to be so structured and constituted that it will always, so to speak over its own head and out of its own head, insert the difference ahead of time between beings and Being" - Author (pg. 63)

d. General Notes:

- Introduction (pg. 7)
 - "metaphysics has asked the question of Being, but only to bring Being into a relationship with being as their ground" (pg. 7)
 - "metaphysics comes to represent identity as a characteristic of Being" (pg. 8)
 - "in the history of western philosophy, identity was at first thought as unity, as the unity of thing with itself" (pg. 8)
 - "thinkers are concerned not with the simple unity of a thing with itself, but with the mediated syntheses of subject and object, of subjectivity and objectivity" (pg. 10)
 - "Heidegger conceives the problem of identity in such a fundamental way that what is 'identical', Being and man, can only be thought from the nature of identity itself. He begins his exposition by questioning the principle of identity as a principle of thinking. He concludes that the principle of identity presupposes the meaning of identity itself" (pg. 11)
 - "one of Heidegger's most basic insights is that we do not know what man is, even if he could be understood as a 'what' at all" (pg. 12)
 - "identity is belonging-together. If the element of together in belonging-together is emphasized, we have the metaphysical concept of identity which orders the manifold into a unity mediated by synthesis. This unity forms a systematic totality of the world" (pg. 12)
 - "metaphysical thinking is determined by the difference between Being and beings." (pg. 15)
 - "metaphysics is ontology in that it thinks Being as the first and most universal ground common to all beings. Metaphysics is theology in that it thinks Being as the highest ground above all beings, ultimately as the ground of itself...which is the metaphysical concept of God" (pg. 15)
- The Principle of Identity (pg. 23)
 - "the principle of identity is considered the highest principle of thought. We shall try to think about this principle for a while. For we should like to find out through this principle what identity is" (pg. 23)
 - "the formula $A=A$ speaks of equality. It doesn't define A as the same" (pg. 24)
 - "for something to be the same, one is always enough" (pg. 23-24)
 - "the principle already presupposes what identity means and where it belongs." (pg. 26)
 - "the principle of identity itself gives it to us, if we listen carefully to its key note" (pg. 26)
 - "the principle of identity speaks of the Being of beings. As a law of thought, the principle is valid only insofar as it is a principle of Being that reads: to every being as such there belongs identity, the unity with itself" (pg. 26)
 - "everywhere, wherever and however we are related to beings of every kind, we find identity making its claim on us" (pg. 26)
 - "the claim of the identity of the object speaks, whether the sciences hear it or not" (pg. 27)
 - "the claim of identity speaks from the Being of beings" (pg. 27)
 - "different things, thinking and Being, are here thought of as the Same" (pg. 27)
 - "Parmenides says: Being belongs to an identity" (pg. 27)
 - "but meanwhile we have already fixed the Sameness of thinking and Being as the belonging together of the two...we must repair this rashness...since we do not consider the belonging together of which we have spoken as the ultimate or even only authoritative interpretation of the Sameness of thinking and Being" (pg. 28-29)
 - "if we think of belonging 'together' in the customary way, the meaning of belonging is determined by the word 'together', that it, by its unity" (pg. 29)
 - "however, belonging together can also be thought of as 'belonging' together" (pg. 29)
 - "enough for now that this reference makes us note the possibility of no longer representing belonging in terms of the unity of the together, but rather of experiencing this together in terms of belonging" (pg. 29)
 - "man obviously is a being. As such he belongs to the totality of Being" (pg. 31)
 - "but man's distinctive feature lies in this, that he, as the being who thinks, is open to Being...thus man remains referred to Being and so answers to it" (pg. 31)
 - "man 'is' essentially this relationship of responding to Being" (pg. 31)
 - "a belonging to Being prevails within man, a belong which listens to Being because it is appropriated to Being" (pg. 31)
 - "let us think of Being according to its original meaning, as presence" (pg. 31)
 - "it is man, open toward Being, who alone lets Being arrive as presence" (pg. 31)
 - "man and Being are appropriated to each other. They belong to each other" (pg. 31-32)
 - "[we should move] from the habitual idea of man as the rational animal who in modern times has become a subject for his objects" (pg. 32)
 - "Being itself, however, belongs to us; for only with us can Being be present as Being, that is, become present [to us]" (pg. 33)

- "both [Being and being] are mutually appropriated" (pg. 33)
 - "only the entry into the realm of this mutual appropriation determines and defines the experience of thought" (pg. 33)
- "every analysis of the situation falls in its thinking short of the mark, in that the above-mentioned totality of the world...is interpreted in advance in terms of man" (pg. 34)
 - "by this conception of the totality of the...world, we reduce everything down to man" (pg. 34)
 - "caught up in this conception, we confirm our own opinion" (pg. 34)
 - "let us at long last stop conceiving [of things] as something purely technical, that is, in terms of man and his machines" (pg. 34)
- "the name for the gathering of this challenge which places man and Being face to face in such a way that they challenge each other by turns is 'the framework'" (pg. 35)
 - "the framework concerns us everywhere, immediately" (pg. 35)
- "the belonging together of man and Being in the manner of mutual challenge drives home to us...that and how man is delivered over to the ownership of Being and Being is appropriate to the essence of man" (pg. 36)
 - "within the framework there prevails a strange ownership and a strange appropriation" (pg. 36)
 - "the frame [is] the mutual challenge of man and Being to enter the calculation of what is calculable" (pg. 40)
- "we must enter into what we call 'the event of appropriation'" (pg. 36)
 - "the term event of appropriation here no longer means what we would otherwise call a happening, an occurrence" (pg. 36)
 - "what it indicates happens only in the singular...not in any number, but uniquely" (pg. 36)
 - "what we experience in the frame as the constellation of Being and man...is a prelude to what is called the event of appropriation" (pg. 36-37)
 - "the event of appropriation is that realm, vibrating within itself, through which man and Being reach each other in their nature, achieve their active nature by losing those qualities with which metaphysics has endowed them" (pg. 37)
 - "language is the most delicate and thus the most susceptible vibration holding everything within the suspended structure of the appropriation" (pg. 38)
- "what does appropriation have to do with identity? Answer: nothing. Identity, on the other hand, has much, perhaps everything, to do with appropriation" (pg. 38)
 - "the appropriation appropriates man and Being to their essential togetherness" (pg. 38)
 - "the frame constitutes the active nature of the modern world" (pg. 38)
- "now it becomes clear that Being belongs with thinking to an identity whose active essence stems from that letting belong together which we call the appropriation" (pg. 39)
 - "the essence of identity is a property of the event of appropriation" (pg. 39)
 - "looking toward the present, beyond the situation of man, thinking sees the constellation of Being and man in terms of that which joins the two - by virtue of the event of appropriation" (pg. 40)
- "our view is obsessed by the latest news, and regards them as the only thing that is real" (pg. 41)
 - "this view is indeed fantastical" (pg. 41)
- "do we then have a right to the opinion that the thinking entry into the essential source of identity could be achieved in a day?" (pg. 41)
 - "whatever and however we may try to think, we think within the sphere of tradition" (pg. 41)
 - "only when we turn thoughtfully toward what has already been thought, will we be turned to use for what must still be thought" (pg. 41)
- The Onto-Theo-Logical Constitution of Metaphysics (pg. 42)
 - "for Hegel, the matter of thinking is: thinking as such" (pg. 42)
 - "thinking as such - in the developed fullness in which what has been thought, has been and now is thought" (pg. 42)
 - "the matter of thinking is for Hegel 'the idea'" (pg. 43)
 - "for Hegel, Being means first, but never exclusively, 'indeterminate immediacy'" (pg. 43)
 - "Being is seen here from the viewpoint of determining mediation, that is, from the viewpoint of the absolute concept, and thus with reference to the absolute concept. 'The truth of Being is essence', that is, absolute reflection. The truth of essence is the concept in the sense of in-finite self-knowledge. Being is the absolute self-thinking of thinking. Absolute thinking alone is the truth of Being, 'is' Being. Truth here means always that the knowledge as such is known with a knowledge absolutely certain of itself" (pg. 43)
 - "for Hegel, the matter of thinking is in itself historical - but historical in the sense of occurrence" (pg. 45)
 - "In the merely identical, the difference disappears. In the same the difference appears, and appears all the more pressingly, the more resolutely thinking is concerned with the same matter in the same way" (pg. 45)
 - "for Hegel, the force of each thinker lies in what each has thought" (pg. 48)
 - "the difference between beings and Being is the area within which metaphysics...can be what it is" (pg. 51)
 - "'Being' ever and always speaks as destiny, and thus permeated by tradition" (pg. 51)
 - "just as we call the idea of living things biology, just so the presentation and full articulation of all beings, dominated as they now are everywhere by the nature of the technical, may be called technology" (pg. 52)
 - "science is the systematic development of knowledge, the Being of beings knows itself as this knowledge, and thus it is in truth" (pg. 54)
 - "from the medieval to the modern period emerges for the science of Being, that is, for the science of beings as such in general, is...ontology" (pg. 54)
 - "western metaphysics, however, since its beginnings with the Greeks has eminently been both ontology and theology, still without being tied to these rubrics" (pg. 54)
 - ◆ "for this reason my inaugural lecture 'what is metaphysics' defines metaphysics as the question about beings as such and as a whole" (pg. 54)
 - ◇ "the wholeness of this whole is the unity of all beings that unifies as the generative ground" (pg. 54)
 - "assuming that philosophy, as thinking, is the free and spontaneous self-involvement with beings as such, then the deity can come into philosophy only insofar as philosophy, of its own accord and by its own nature, requires and determines that and how the deity enter into it" (pg. 56)
 - "We ask: how does the deity...enter into metaphysics?" (pg. 56)
 - "it would be easy, of course, to explain the designation of metaphysics as 'logic' by pointing out that for Hegel the matter of thinking is 'the idea'" (pg. 57)
 - "the idea, thinking, is obviously and by ancient custom the theme of logic" (pg. 57)
 - "but how can 'Being' ever come to present itself as 'thought'?" (pg. 57)
 - ◆ "Being manifests itself as thought" (pg. 57)
 - "for Hegel...Being remains the matter of thinking" (pg. 58)
 - "metaphysics thinks of beings as such, that is, in general...[and] as a whole" (pg. 58)
 - "metaphysics thinks of the Being of beings in...what is most general, what is indifferently valid everywhere, and also in unity of the all"

- (pg. 58)
 - "metaphysics is: onto-theo-logic" (pg. 59)
 - "metaphysics must think in the direction of the deity" (pg. 60)
 - ◆ "the onto-theological essential constitution of metaphysics cannot be explained in terms of either theologic or ontologic" (pg. 60)
 - ◇ "the essential constitution of metaphysics is based on the unity of beings" (pg. 61)
 - "the original matter of thinking presents itself as the first cause, the causa prima that corresponds to the reason-giving path back to the ultima ratio, the final accounting" (pg. 60)
 - "only this much is clear, that when we deal with the Being of beings and with the beings of Being, we deal in each case with a difference" (pg. 62)
 - "thus we think of Being [or nature of total existence] rigorously only when we think of it in its [degree of] difference with [respect to] beings, and of beings in their difference with Being" (pg. 62)
 - ◆ "if we try to form a representational idea of it...difference is reduced to a distinction, something made up by our understanding" (pg. 62)
 - ◆ "our representational thinking just happens to be so structured and constituted that it will always, so to speak over its own head and out of its own head, insert the difference ahead of time between beings and Being" (pg. 63)
 - "this thing that is called difference, we encounter it everywhere and always in the matter of thinking, in beings as such - encounter it so unquestioningly that we do not even notice this encounter itself. Nor does anything compel us to notice it. Our thinking is free either to pass over the difference without a thought or to think of it specifically as such. But this freedom does not apply in every case" (pg. 63)
 - "Being in the sense of unconcealing, and beings as such in the sense of arrival that keeps itself concealed, are present, and thus differentiated, by virtue of the Same, the differentiation" (pg. 65)
 - "the difference between Being and beings, as the differentiation of overwhelming and arrival, is the perdurance of the two in unconcealing keeping in concealment. Within this perdurance there prevails a clearing of what veils and closes itself off - and this its prevalence bestows the being apart, and the being toward each other, of overwhelming and arrival" (pg. 65)
 - "arrival means: to keep concealed in unconcealedness - to abide present in this keeping - to be a being" (pg. 64)
 - "Being shows itself as the unconcealing" (pg. 64)
 - "this is the matter of thinking, thought closer to rigorous thinking" (pg. 65)
 - "when we say 'Being!', we use the word in its widest and least definite general meaning" (pg. 65-66)
 - "but even when we speak merely of a general meaning, we have thought of Being in an inappropriate way. We represent Being in a way in which It, Being, never gives itself" (pg. 66)
 - "this discussion... assigns the difference of Being and beings to perdurance as the approach to their essence" (pg. 67)
 - "the only thing that now matters for our task is an insight into a possibility of thinking of the difference as a perdurance so as to clarify to what extent the onto-theological constitution of metaphysics has its essential origin in the perdurance that begins the history of metaphysics, governs all of its epochs, and yet remains everywhere concealed as perdurance" (pg. 68)
 - "In order for something to persist over time, it must—somehow or other—exist at different times. Endurance and perdurance theories offer contrasting accounts of persistence, of how something may succeed in existing in this way" [[Endurance and perdurance - Oxford Reference](#)] [[Temporal Parts \(Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy\)](#)]
 - "since metaphysics thinks of beings as such as a whole, it represents beings in respect of what differs in the difference, and without heeding the difference as difference" (pg. 70)
 - "the origin of the difference can no longer be thought of within the scope of metaphysics" (pg. 71)
 - "the difference constitutes the ground plan in the structure of the essence of metaphysics. The perdurance results in and gives Being as the generative ground" (71-72)
- e. Further Readings:
- Science of Logic, by G. W. F. Hegel