

# Ontology and Dialectics, by T. Adorno

a. People / Organizations: <https://subliminalsensibility.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/theodor-w-adorno-ontology-and-dialectics.pdf>

b. Quotes:

- "Things really stand on a knife edge, as is usually the case where truth is concerned, for truth is something extraordinarily fragile. And, if philosophy can teach you anything, it's that you should perhaps lose a little of your faith that truth clings to the massive differences, that it's something you can just take home in your great big folders and notebooks" - Author (pg. 43-44)
  - "...**conceptuality is the prison in which our thought finds itself enclosed**..." - Author (pg. 44)
    - "Conceptual thought is quite capable of becoming its own warning, its own 'writing on the wall'" - Author (pg. 44)
- "It is better to become involved in things than to hover above some lower reality at the cost of refusing to engage with it or to expose ourselves to it" - Author (pg. 69)
- "most of the theories which have proved so influential in the world we actually find, as Schopenhauer admitted with regard to himself, that they really involve only one thought, and this single thought or single motif is then endlessly repeated. And this endless repetition, this constant self-advertisement, which is also of course the secret of commercial advertising, seems to be what sustains the influence and effectiveness of these claims." - Author (pg. 83)
- "in our own time philosophy is no longer a kind of ether which permeates the whole of cultural and intellectual life, as it did in the age of German Idealism, and has now become such a specialist and professionalized subject that it holds very little interest for many people" - Author (pg. 89)
  - "One can and must say that philosophy...or at least that academic philosophy after the time of Hegel, has failed to offer what those who engage with philosophy actually expect of it" - Author (pg. 104)
- "without any background knowledge in philosophy...there can be no real understanding of philosophical questions. At the same time, this initiation also has a certain tendency to wean us off the very things that led us to seek initiation in the first place...I would just encourage you to think seriously about how far our education brings us to sacrifice and renounce what makes us desire education in the first place" - Author (pg. 107)
- "**...the most relevant ethical question there is [is] namely the question concerning the state of society and its rational structure and character**" - Author (pg. 110)
- "**...it is actually impossible to develop relativism as a theoretical position precisely because it would be self-refuting if it were presented as a unified and consistent theory**" - Author (pg. 133)
  - "when people speak today of the so-called sceptical generation...it is not intended to imply that the young people in question refuse to conform to objective norms by virtue of their own unrestrained individuality, but almost the reverse – namely that they are so harnessed to the existing social order, and their entire consciousness is so channelled by it, that they have now become sceptical about any ideas that question the pre-established structures of their own life and the paths which that life is expected to follow" - Author (pg. 133)
- "Once [on has] found something which speaks to them and strikes them as significant, they cling to this phenomenon in an almost sectarian fashion, even when its original quality has long since vanished and been converted to the opposite" - Author (pg. 143)
- "**...philosophy is still relevant, and that it involves a different understanding of what a question is**" - Author (pg. 146)
- "...the philosophical concept of truth involves a different dimension as compared with the aesthetic concept of truth. Here we are talking not just about the degree to which philosophy lives up to a certain level of consciousness but, rather, in a much more tangible sense, about the truth of philosophy in terms of its own coherent judgements. Whereas art is distinguished from philosophy in being an articulated expression of truth that dispenses in principle with judgements, that makes no use in principle of the form of the judgement" - Author (pg. 167)
- "**...in Heidegger, all these things are taken to an extreme**" - Author (pg. 172)
- "**...fundamental ontology actually feels itself to be anti-romantic**. In protest against the limiting and disturbing moment of subjectivity it believes it can 'overcome' all this..." - Author (pg. 198)
- "...the history of thinking, as far as we can trace it back, is a dialectic of enlightenment..." - Author (pg. 230)
  - Cf. *The Dialectic of Enlightenment*, by T. Adorno and M. Horkheimer  
[https://monoskop.org/images/2/27/Horkheimer\\_Max\\_Adorno\\_Theodor\\_W\\_Dialectic\\_of\\_Enlightenment\\_Philosophical\\_Fragments.pdf](https://monoskop.org/images/2/27/Horkheimer_Max_Adorno_Theodor_W_Dialectic_of_Enlightenment_Philosophical_Fragments.pdf)

c. General Notes:

- Lecture 1 (pg. 1)
  - "I want us to relinquish the idea that we can endorse the position of ontology on the one hand or that of the dialectic on the other. For then we would already feel as though the task were to choose between such standpoints" (pg. 1)
  - "I want to address this need in the sense that you may really learn why it is that **I and my friend Horkheimer assume such a critical position towards ontology and attempt to defend a dialectical philosophy**" (pg. 2)
    - "That is precisely what I want to show in the lectures that follow" (pg. 2)
  - "The structural rigour which belongs to philosophy, and which allows philosophical thoughts to acquire their own plausibility and justification, is very different from that of the natural sciences" (pg. 3)
  - "**the path that is meant to bring you to dialectical thinking, to the consideration of certain dialectical models, is the path of immanent critique**" (pg. 3)
    - "We could also express this by saying that, in our present situation, dialectic is mediated by ontology; and the analyses which lead us towards dialectical statements are, in a certain sense, by no means unrelated to the kind of phenomenological analyses which originally led towards ontology" (pg. 4)
      - "This is dialectic: that the transition to dialectic consists precisely in the self-reflection of ontology. Or, to rephrase this in more Hegelian terms, dialectic is mediated in itself precisely through ontology." (pg. 4)
  - "For one of the most fundamental texts of dialectical thought, Hegel's *Greater Logic*, namely the *Science of Logic*, opens with the doctrine of Being, and the dialectical movement itself only gets going through an analysis of the concept of being – that is to say, through an analysis of what 'being' really means. Yet it is **entirely characteristic that modern ontology, inasmuch as it is a philosophy of being, specifically ignores this dialectical movement which is involved in its own concept**. Once I have unfolded this transition to dialectic in what I hope is a fairly convincing manner, I shall then attempt, in the closing lectures, to develop and present certain categories and models of dialectical thinking itself" (pg. 4)
  - "For the concept of ontology...only really unfolds its wealth in and through the investigation of the matter itself. Now it is particularly difficult in this case to begin with a universally accepted definition of ontology, since (as people like to say) **there is no scholarly consensus regarding the meaning of this concept**" (pg. 4)
    - "...what Hartmann understands by ontology, namely a return to 'realism', the doctrine which affirms the existence of the external world independently of consciousness, is rejected as an authentic criterion of ontology by Heidegger..." (pg. 5)
  - "**Ontology, in the first and simplest meaning of the word, is the doctrine of being**" (pg. 5)

- "...the older traditional forms of ontology, especially the ontology of Aristotle and that of Aquinas which was so closely connected with it, presented ontology as an articulated structure of fundamental concepts" (pg. 5)
      - "When Heidegger introduced the concept of 'framework' in one of his later texts, something which sounds terribly concrete but also reveals the same ontological intention, you can see that this attempt to answer the so-called question of being, the question of what being really is, by reference to some kind of structure is just as clearly at work in the ontological schools of today as it was in the past" (pg. 6)
  - "...the relationship between ontology and idealism is an extraordinarily complex one..." (pg. 6)
    - "...what lies behind this entire philosophical movement, which is by no means internally unified and whose representatives are constantly at one another's throats...is the thought that **the question concerning being is emphasized or prioritized over the question regarding the status of knowledge**" (pg. 7)
      - "Indeed I believe that we can identify **this as the fundamental motif of ontology**, and thereby recognize its essential distaste for a philosophy that had basically become nothing but methodology..." (pg. 7)
      - "Ontology is thus a philosophy concerned with being in pointed opposition to a philosophy which remains essentially dedicated to a preliminary question, namely the question of how knowledge is possible at all..." (pg. 7)
  - "...there are indeed ontological aspects in Kant, and that Kant was anything but a simple subjectivist" (pg. 7)
  - "at one point in *Being and Time* **Heidegger expressly defines ontology as the 'explicit theoretical questioning concerning the meaning of beings'**" (pg. 7)
    - "And any critique of the concept of ontology must pay particular attention to this concept of meaning. On one side it derives from phenomenology, which is essentially the analysis of meaning, an attempt to clarify and determine the meaning of concepts. But it also possesses a certain metaphysical quality: What is the meaning of all this?" (pg. 7-8)
    - "this actually already harbours the answer which those of you who have not yet specifically engaged with all this will hardly expect – namely that the meaning of beings is precisely supposed to be being. And here I come right to the central complex of issues which is essential for the whole problem of being, namely the question of the relationship between being and beings" (pg. 8)
  - "for ontology, 'being' is not simply the most universal concept that subsumes all particular beings, for 'being' itself is alleged to be something qualitatively other than what it covers" (pg. 8)
    - "That may all sound rather mystical to you. But it is relatively easy to understand what it means when you reflect on a concept which in an everyday context is expressly opposed to the concept of being, and which is expressly opposed to it in Hegel too, namely the concept of essence. Essence signifies that which first really allows any and every being to be what it is in accordance with its concept. Whatever has being is supposed to have an essence" (pg. 8)
  - "Indeed today Heidegger would go so far as to say that, sensu strictissimo, being is not actually a concept at all. In other words, being is not supposed to be the highest abstraction that we reach by omitting all particular individuation on the part of spatial and temporal beings. On the contrary, **being is actually supposed to be that which is utterly prior and primary**, that which is highest and most constitutive, and in relation to which it is individual beings that are secondary. Or that which has particular and individual existence is also supposed to be nothing but a 'mode of being', as Heidegger puts it, rather than 'being' itself" (pg. 9)
- Lecture 2 (pg. 10)
  - "I drew your attention to one of the fundamental themes of ontological philosophy, and one which is by no means peculiar to the ontological philosophy of our own times, namely the relationship between 'being', τὸ ὄν [to on] (though that is hardly a literal translation of the Greek), and 'beings', τὰ ὄντα [ta onta], the particular things that actually exist, the realm of fact that we are accustomed to contrast with that of essence, that which is individuated in space and time" (pg. 10)
    - "**fundamental for all ontology [is the distinction] between τὸ ὄν [to on], 'being', and τὰ ὄντα [ta onta], 'beings'**, or also between εἶναι [einai], or 'to be', as it is expressed in a particularly famous passage in Aristotle, and particular beings" (pg. 12)
      - ◆ "Ontological difference is therefore understood to mean the difference between being and beings" (pg. 12)
    - "**ontology also understands itself as the question regarding the being of beings** – and this expressly implies that the theme of ontology is concerned not simply with that pure being that you read about in the later writings of Heidegger in particular, but also with the relation between this remarkable category of being and the beings that are interpreted so differently with respect to the former" (pg. 10)
      - "Ontology in the usual sense, in this extremely radical and critical sense of something that precedes all beings, is understood to include the 'ideas', for example, the highest concepts of all possible particular regions – in other words, the structural categories which serve to constitute particular fields as such" (pg. 10-11)
  - "ontology generally involves a double perspective: the question regarding the so-called structure of being and also the question regarding the concept of being itself" (pg. 11)
    - "In the form which ontology has assumed in Heidegger, and which most of you will almost certainly associate with the concept of ontology today, this very relationship between the structure of being, between the fundamental categories of beings in general or the particular realms of being, and the concept of being itself is problematic and is indeed the real issue" (pg. 11)
    - "...you must clearly recognize this distinction – between ontology as a question regarding the meaning of being and the equally ontological question regarding the specific regions of beings – because the central critical considerations we shall raise about ontology depend precisely on this heightened or intensified concept of ontology" (pg. 11)
  - "what Heidegger calls ontological questioning in the naive sense [is] the question concerning the basic truths that, as truths about beings, are supposed to underlie all beings or entities that are investigated by particular disciplines, and here we are thinking specifically of scientific disciplines" (pg. 13)
    - "Thus the clarification of the meaning of being, of what being really signifies, is the essential task of ontology understood in this radical sense – and this is precisely what fundamental ontology is" (pg. 15)
      - "I believe that the really decisive difference between ontological and phenomenological thought on the one side and dialectical thought on the other is to be discovered here. In other words, this primacy of the First, or, to put it paradoxically, this 'Firstness', this priority of the First, this idea of tracing everything back to what is 'fundamental', cannot be accepted in the way it is proposed by ontology. And I believe the nerve of any critique of ontology in general, of an immanent critique of ontology, is intrinsically bound up with the critique of this dogmatically posited concept of what is allegedly 'original' – a concept, moreover, with certain overtones which only a highly prejudiced perspective could regard as entirely unconnected with specific social and political tendencies" (pg. 17)
  - "total subjectivism [is] the notion that an absolutely first principle can be derived from the pure determinations of thought" (pg. 16)
  - "When you constantly read and hear that Heidegger's philosophy has gradually turned into a kind of mysticism, this should not be interpreted merely as the symptom of an aging philosopher increasingly mesmerized by the concept of being. For this turn to what is dubbed mysticism is indeed already implicit in that dimension which I have tried to describe for you" (pg. 18)
    - "We could perhaps also express this by saying that this philosophy harbours an inner flaw, a moment of untruth, which it struggles to escape. On the one hand, it avails itself of language, of all the means of discursive logic, makes all the claims that thought, for God's sake, must ultimately

- make; yet it also constantly indulges in the esoteric gesture and implicitly utters a kind of abracadabra. While it acts as if it wants to be thought of as philosophy or, as Heidegger would rather say, to invite be-thinking, it actually suggests that thinking is ultimately inadequate – that, if you don't feel it, you won't get it" (pg. 18)
- Lecture 3 (pg. 21)
    - "The idea of a philosophy *ex nihilo*, a form of thinking which produces itself simply from its own resources...is the standpoint of an absolute identity philosophy which claims that being and beings can be grasped adequately and completely by pure thought without remainder. And this particular thesis, which is indeed the basic thesis of idealism in the strict sense, is one which is extraordinarily controversial in philosophy generally" (pg. 21)
      - "On the contrary, one must admit that philosophy begins somewhere – and I would add that philosophy cannot establish its beginning purely from itself" (pg. 21)
    - "[Heidegger's] paradoxical claim that philosophy should attempt not to avoid the circle but to enter it at the right point is indeed quite right, yet he falls short of his own thesis to the extent that he actually remains caught up in a merely circular argument" (pg. 22)
      - "we are constantly presented with the same invocation, variation or repetition of this premise, namely the priority of being with respect to beings, while the premise itself is not explored in terms of genuine argumentation at all" (pg. 22)
    - "the ancient doctrine of the ἀρχή [archē] was supplanted by the doctrine of being itself as the ground and essence of all things" (pg. 24)
      - "Now the word ἀρχή [archē] already enjoyed a double meaning, one which returns again and again in ancient ontological speculation and in later ontological philosophies as well. On the one hand the word relates to the concept of 'origin'. For ἀρχή [archē] means 'the First', what is there first of all, the immemorably old. This is the archaic sense of the word. But ἀρχή [archē] also means 'principle' in the specific sense of the most universal and all-embracing principle on which the constitution of any beings whatever, or indeed any particular realm whatever, is supposed to rest" (pg. 24)
    - "If, as the history of early Greek philosophy genuinely appears to me to show, the concept of being is indeed the product of reflection rather than what lies at the beginning, then this implies in any case, historically speaking, that the experience of being is not prior with respect to the experience of particular beings in the way that Heidegger associates this with ancient philosophy, and especially with the earlier pre-Socratics." (pg. 25)
      - "whether we are talking about Parmenides or Heraclitus, or indeed, as I have recently learnt, about Empedocles, we invariably encounter nothing but the same thing: being, being, and being" (pg. 25)
      - "...the concept of being itself has only been attained through a process of reflection stretching over centuries..." (pg. 25)
        - "For what we are talking about here are indeed attempts at explanation in the face of the variety and multiplicity of phenomena. And the unity of Western consciousness, if there is such a thing, lies precisely in this kind of explanatory principle. In other words, it is an attempt to discover a unified ground for the multiplicity of appearances. And the greater the multiplicity, the greater the need for an explanatory ground that is ever more universal and all-embracing. **And the concept of being now steps in to provide the requisite universality**" (pg. 25-26)
    - "the question of being did not actually precede, in a supposedly more 'original' fashion, the question concerning beings, that the distinction between being and beings is not yet made at all, that a tentative consciousness in search of explanation has not yet distinguished between being, as that which lies behind appearances, and the comprehensive categories that apply to particular beings. It is only when both of these moments have been differentiated, or only through a process of reflection, that the concept of being itself can arise at all" (pg. 28)
      - "**the concept of being itself is not the 'original' question that Heideggerean philosophy would have us believe that it is. It is a concept of reflection in the sense of those concepts that Kant subjected to criticism...**" (pg. 28)
        - "On this view of things, the concept of being is not, as we are encouraged to believe, something that is very ancient but something rather late – and here too I cannot help advising some scepticism towards the dogma that what is oldest, what has been there from the first, must inevitably therefore be what is more true" (pg. 28)
    - "you must not simply isolate philosophy as one realm in the world of the mind. Even if, like Heidegger himself, we reject the idea of philosophy as a kind of particular science or discipline, we must not for that reason effectively detach philosophy from its relationship with the totality of conscious experience" (pg. 28-29)
  - Lecture 4 (pg. 32)
    - "In our last session I said something about the elements of the doctrine of being as we find them in antiquity" (pg. 32)
    - "Brentano was originally a priest who came straight out of the scholastic-Aristotelian tradition, and his philosophy represents a rather remarkable combination of scholastic-ontological themes and issues associated with the tradition of empiricist and enlightenment thought" (pg. 32)
    - "Scheler was thus the first to introduce that concept of being-in-itself..." (pg. 33)
      - "Now to a significant extent he too was indebted to the Catholic-Aristotelian tradition. And the same is true for Heidegger, who **also originally intended to become a priest**. Thus this entire philosophy is connected in various ways with a theological-philosophical tradition which in a certain sense is very different from the later general European concept of the Enlightenment..." (pg. 33)
    - "We could say that ontology – in relation to the critical philosophy, in relation to transcendental philosophy in the context of idealism in the broadest sense – has something in common with what certain movements of contemporary philosophy declare themselves to be, namely a form of counter-Enlightenment. In other words, this is a thinking which employs the means of autonomous thought and exploits the entire armoury of philosophical culture and philosophical critique in order **to restore or re-establish a kind of view of the world or a kind of experience which had been dissolved by the Enlightenment and by critical philosophy**. It is a kind of thinking, to put this more crudely and more generally, which would use autonomous intellectual means to restore something like heteronomy – just as in the totalitarian political movements of our time we may clearly observe a tendency not to derive forms of heteronomy in simply immediate terms from established relations of a social kind, but to deduce them instead from rational categories which actually presuppose autonomy, as in the concept of elites for example" (pg. 33-34)
      - "What seems utterly impossible to me in all these ontological efforts...is precisely the idea of getting back to some position where we are bound by categories replete with being, to being itself, from a position where consciousness is not bound at all" (pg. 34)
    - "The concept of ontology is indeed somewhat complex and ambiguous" (pg. 34)
      - "And amongst those of you who have not specifically engaged with Heidegger's thought, there will probably be some who take the naive and straightforward view that ontology is precisely a philosophy of being that is simply opposed to a philosophy of consciousness. In other words, that it is a realist philosophy in opposition to one that is grounded in self-reflection" (pg. 34)
        - "...the concept of being or being as Heidegger describes it attempts to escape...both from any mere conceptuality and from any reality simply or immediately accepted as such. This double approach, this double front against a philosophy of concepts and against a philosophy of reality, is precisely what characterizes the efforts of ontology in its most rigorous and consistent form, namely its Heideggerean form" (pg. 34)
          - ◆ "in ontology of the Heideggerean kind...we are not dealing simply with the concept of being" (pg. 35)
      - "**We are talking about ontology as the doctrine of being** – and **we want to concentrate on this so-called question of being as much as possible**, since it really is the crucial point on which this philosophy turns, and since we can do critical justice to the claim it makes only if we really think through this point where everything is finally 'secured', as Kant puts it – and Heidegger's philosophy of being is caught up in a most curious and

- wavering alternative" (pg. 35)
- "For it is by no means clear whether we are talking here merely about the meaning of the concept of being, what the concept of being means when we think, when we say the word 'being', or whether we are talking here directly about being itself" (pg. 35)
  - "Heidegger himself, or at least the Heidegger of *Being and Time*, expressly confessed his allegiance to phenomenology as a method, and that he regarded himself as a student of Husserl's methodologically speaking. And the phenomenological method of taking up the phenomena of mental life precisely as they are given amounts effectively, to a considerable degree, to the careful analysis and differentiation of meanings" (pg. 35)
  - "we could say that **one of the decisive steps which has shaped modern thought since Bacon**, and the whole movement of Western nominalism in particular, **consists in the fact that this canonic character of language is no longer recognized**. Reflection on the difference between language and its object did eventually emerge, and in a certain sense **critical thought is nothing but the investigation of this difference between language and object**, namely...**the attempt to explore the possibility of concepts themselves** rather than simply philosophizing 'from concepts'" (pg. 36)
    - "And this possibility, this reflection on the possibility of concepts, in **Kant means nothing other than reflection on the fundamental sustaining relationship between the concepts and their object**, that is to say, on their *meanings*. In this way language is actually displaced from its once dominant and unchallenged position. In this sense the refusal to think in terms of mere concepts, the critique of rationalism, is actually one with the critique of scholasticism insofar as it is implicitly but essentially a critique of language. Indeed the word 'nominalism' implies as much, since it treats concepts as mere nomina for what they designate rather than as something substantial, as a kind of being in itself" (pg. 36)
  - "The linguistic form which is supposedly substantiated in the concept of being is the copula. The copula is simply nothing but the 'is' in the predicative judgement A is B. **It is this 'is' which is commonly called the copula**" (pg. 36)
    - "And the concept of being as we find it in Aristotle in the first instance is nothing more than this: when we investigate the state of affairs that is supposed to stand behind these linguistic forms, then **the state of affairs which is also supposed to stand behind the 'is' is just 'being'** – just as in grammar an εἶναι [einaí] or an ὄν [on] stands behind the copula ἔστι [esti] or 'is'" (pg. 36-37)
      - "To that extent, the concept of being, in terms of its origin and its legitimacy, is also directly bound up with the categorial structure of language. In one sense, therefore, this entire tradition hypostasizes concepts by tacitly assuming that some constitutive state of affairs must also correspond to everything which is constitutive for language – and 'being' has also largely fallen victim here through the process of philosophical critique." (pg. 37)
        - ◆ "[Kant] he says that concepts of reflection (concepts which have no immediate application whatsoever since they are essentially posited merely by consciousness in general) are treated **as if they possessed intrinsic being in their own right**" (pg. 37)
          - ◇ \*this 'as if' is the 'hypostasis'
      - "Heidegger's new ontology basically proceeds in a similar way, and indeed precisely by appealing to Husserl's method, which holds that **philosophy can essentially be grounded through an analysis of meanings**. And Heidegger's ontology, as I said before, is to a large extent founded in the theory of meaning – even though this is not entirely the case" (pg. 37)
    - "In order to understand the possibility of the ontological approach in an emphatic manner, you must clearly realize that **this word 'being' involves a very specific problem which does not arise in the same way with other concepts**" (pg. 37)
      - "On the one hand, it is impossible to speak about being directly without reference to the concept of being" (pg. 37)
    - "**the concept of being was due to abstraction, to the transition from more specific ἀρχαί [archai] to principles of an ever more general character**" (pg. 38)
      - "The word 'being' is not being, for there is something else between what we say and what we mean. And to that extent we can say that what we talk about is conceived in terms of something: it is itself a concept. **We cannot get round this conceptual dimension**" (pg. 38)
        - "...in thinking about it we are already treating it as something linguistically mediated. Thus if we really wish to reach the so-called ultimate data, we are still reliant on language, and this explains the extraordinary importance of protocol sentences for positivist philosophy" (pg. 38)
    - "**The concepts that we employ all have something instituted or 'superimposed' about them**, as they say in English, something foisted upon things. They basically serve the domination of nature and are generally acquired more scientifically, through a process of definition, in accordance with scientific procedure. And they are retained as long as they confirm these so-called definitions, without decisively touching what they refer to. They are mobilized as chips or counters and deployed for technical ends – in the broadest sense of the word – although what they mean does not actually find expression in language here. This is something that has often been recognized by philosophy" (pg. 39)
      - "I would simply remind you historically that **Hegelian philosophy rests upon the idea that every individual concept is false**, or that there is no actual identity between any finite concept and what it is meant to designate. It does indeed designate it, but in being imposed on the heterogeneous by the subject it also always differs from what the thing is in its own right. And **the driving force of the whole Hegelian philosophy is an attempt to make good this difference**, to produce that identity between thought and thing, between subject and object, which is bankrupted by every individual concept, precisely through the totality of the developed system as a whole" (pg. 39)
        - "Nietzsche's irrationalism...finds its ultimate epistemological justification in the recognition that concepts are inadequate to the living reality they would encompass, that all that is living, as people repeat ad nauseam, is mortified and life perishes in the medium of concepts" (pg. 39)
    - "**We do not reflect thoroughly upon any individual concept as it is usually deployed – unless we think dialectically**, which certainly cannot be presupposed here – **to see how far this concept is fully adequate to its object**" (pg. 39-40)
      - "in Kant, for example, this will be the highest concept of all those objectivities which are not exhausted in our concepts of them, namely **the concept of 'the thing in itself'**, that transcendent unknowable thing which certainly stands in some obscure relation to the particular knowledge **and thus to the concepts we do have**, yet is supposed to be unreachable as such" (pg. 40)
        - "It would do no violence to Heidegger's thought, and I believe he himself would not particularly object, if we claimed that **the position of the concept of the thing in itself in Kant's transcendental philosophy bears an extraordinarily close relationship with that dimension of being that, as Heidegger believes he has shown, eludes conceptuality**. The peculiar thing about the concept of being lies in its twofold character: on the one hand, it is a concept, the comprehensive concept not only of all beings but also of every idea, of every essence, or the ultimate concept, the concept par excellence; on the other hand, it is also an expression of the opposite, it is a non-concept insofar as it is meant to identify, retain and preserve what cannot for its own part, in principle, be conceptual – in other words, it is the concept which is the intrinsically contradictory concept **κατ' ἐξοχήν [kat' exochēn]**, the concept as anti-concept. It is both at once. And this is what motivates...the distinctive significance of the philosophy of language in Heidegger" (pg. 40)
          - ◆ "Here I am not thinking specifically of social interests or the like, for example, but quite simply of the function which thoughts and concepts possess in the overall philosophical structure or edifice itself – in other words, of what the concepts are meant to be good for. Thus **the idea of language** not merely as a semantic or signifying structure that serves to express beings, but **as a realm in which, Heidegger constantly assures us in his later writings, being itself allegedly resounds, is something that emerges precisely from that distinctive double character of being**. For on the one hand, of course, being qua concept is referred to language, since 'being' is a word; on the other hand, however, being is just what cannot be expressed through mere meanings – inasmuch as it

cannot be exhausted in conceptual terms, or, let me put this more precisely, inasmuch as it points towards what is not exhausted by concepts, what is cut off from concepts" (pg. 40-41)

- ◊ "this peculiar construction of language in Heidegger, which is ultimately there only to do justice to this double character of being as concept and anticoncept, allows you to recognize, in a nutshell, the structure which actually gives shape to this entire philosophy. That is why I have already drawn attention to this aspect at this point: to the way in which contradictions such as that of concept and anti-concept, or the concept of the non-conceptual, are not actually unfolded or developed, and the way in which we find, instead, an attempt to master these contradictions by a kind of sorcery, by magically invoking or summoning them through the Word" (pg. 41)
  - ▶ "there is certainly also a truth moment to Heidegger's conception of language as something which is not simply exhausted by what it means. The problem is that he absolutizes this moment in a one-sided way in relation to being and emphasizes the mimetic moment of language...in a one-sided way over against its semantic moment. He thereby brings the dialectic to a standstill in the very sphere which gives the dialectic its name – precisely in the sphere of language which, ex definitione, is nothing other than a διαλέγεσθαι [dialegesthai]" (pg. 41)
- "Now the difference, if I may anticipate the basic theme of these lectures, between dialectical thinking and fundamental ontological thinking, considered from this perspective, is just this: fundamental ontological thinking remains with such contradictions, believes them to be overcome through the immediacy of the Word of language, whereas dialectical thinking takes up the challenge that is harboured by these contradictions and attempts to unfold the contradictions themselves" (pg. 41)
  - "the task is to develop these philosophies out of the urgency and aporia of the thinking in question, out of the difficulties in which it finds itself entangled – in short, out of its own internal dynamic. And this is what we have found with Heidegger" (pg. 48)
    - "Let me just add that the kind of philosophy of language we encounter here is at home in the theological domain and is one that becomes intelligible, assumes a meaningful context, inasmuch as it proceeds from the idea of a true language, that of the revelation of the divine Word, a language which corresponds, as it were, to the *intellectus archetypus* in which thought and intuition actually coincide with each other. **The whole problem of this philosophy of language in Heidegger seems to me to be the way that it is borrowed from theology while nonetheless being detached from this theological ground**, so that this approach is now just freely ascribed to language as such – completely ignoring the historicity of language and the particular historical features of language – **without showing in any convincing way where the dignity thus afforded to language comes from.**" (pg. 48)
      - ◆ "...this doctrine of language thereby assumes a merely mythological character" (pg. 48)
- Lecture 5 (pg. 42)
  - "We had pointed out that the concept of being – or our talk of being, for the concept of being is not an entirely accurate way of speaking about what I am trying to express – is intrinsically marked by a most remarkable ambiguity. On the one hand, being is a concept, the broadest concept for everything that can possibly be brought under the highest conceptual unity – that is how we would have to define being if we do indeed wish to treat it as a concept. On the other hand, however, being evokes also something else, namely the aspect which a philosopher such as Heinrich Rickert once described with the expression 'heterogeneous continuum' – that moment which is not itself conceptual, which is not exhausted by our subjectively instituted concepts, which for its part underlies all conceptuality" (pg. 42)
    - "**the word 'being' which we talked about...is at once concept and non-concept, namely the concept of what cannot for its part become a concept...**" (pg. 44)
      - ◆ "Since the word 'being' in itself also marks a limit with respect to the conceptual, since the intention of this word is conceptually directed at what is not exhausted in the concept, it is illegitimate to appeal to this word, given that it is nonetheless still a concept, as if it were somehow immediately beyond the concept at the same time" (pg. 44)
    - "**every concept reveals an enormous degree of vagueness with respect to its possible forms of realization**, given that the concept identifies only one feature or only certain features of what it embraces, leaving others free in turn. It is precisely by virtue of this freedom in relation to those dimensions not defined by the concept that so much more already finds its way into the concept, so much which for its part appears contingent or indifferent to the latter" (pg. 42-43)
      - "I would even go so far as to agree with Heidegger and say that it is not even the least of the criteria of philosophy, or certainly not the most contemptible, that it be able to explore such ambiguous matters which hardly unfold in accordance with any established rules of play. For **this ambiguity reveals something which can never be eliminated by deliberate definitional procedures**, or could be eliminated only in the most superficial manner for specific organizational purposes. It reveals, on the one hand, to emphasize this once again here, **that we can only ever think in conceptual terms, that conceptuality is the prison in which our thought finds itself enclosed**; but also, on the other, that **what we strive to grasp in thought, what we intend to think, is by no means exhausted in this structure, that the task of thought is to recognize its own limits through self-reflection**" (pg. 44)
        - ◆ *\*and, yet, I can use thought to learn of its own enclosure.*
  - "the fundamental thesis of Spinoza's metaphysics and theory of knowledge, according to which the order of ideas and the order of things is identical, can rightly be described as the leading principle of rationalist philosophy in general. And the entire critique of Western rationalism, especially as it derives from Kant, has in fact destroyed this conception of knowledge..." (pg. 43)
    - "the truth is that...in fundamental ontology or the philosophy of being, this moment of ambiguity, between being as concept and being as what is beyond the concept, this deficiency or inadequacy which lies in language here and indeed points towards something deeper, is not acknowledged by fundamental ontology or the philosophy of being as a deficiency at all" (pg. 43)
  - "**we showed that 'being' not only aims conceptually at that non-conceptuality but also is itself a concept**. But this strange double meaning that is harboured in the word 'being' is exploited by the Heidegger school as if the distinctive character of the word itself allowed its conceptual dimension to recede behind something quite Other than this, precisely because that Otherness is what is conceptually meant" (pg. 45)
    - "Yet, in spite of this intention directed towards the non-conceptual, the word still does not cease to be a concept. In other words, to come back to this point, in the word 'being' we do not immediately have being in our mouths, so to speak. For something is meant by this word, as with every concept, and this limit over against what lies beyond the concept also needs to be respected in our talk of being – although the philosophy of being rides right over it. What the philosophy of being makes out of this non-conceptual moment of the concept of being, out of this conceptual 'remembrance' of the non-conceptual, is deployed by this philosophy in a very particular way. Thus 'being' is supposedly distinguished from two aspects or moments: on the one hand from the abstraction or pure universal concept of being, and on the other from anything determinate included under a general concept, namely from its correlate, or the particular beings from which abstraction is made" (pg. 45)
      - "as I have already indicated on various occasions, 'being' is not supposed to coincide with 'beings', and nor is it supposed to be a summary concept for all particular beings. It is supposed to be something quite other than all this. In the first place we have to say that this otherness of being with respect to beings is nothing but conceptuality itself. In other words, being is distinguished from all particular beings that are included within it in the sense that it is the concept of those beings, rather than being immediately the same as the latter.

Now the philosophy of being eagerly cashes in on this conceptuality, even while it insists at the same time that being is not itself a concept" (pg. 45)

- ◆ "one of the essential features of all ontology – one of the features to which it most emphatically owes its influence – is to be found precisely here: its anti-subjectivism, or the appearance that philosophy had somehow escaped its imprisonment within subjectivity through this ontological 'project'. This apparent overcoming of subjectivism in conditions where nothing has actually changed regarding the presuppositions of subjectivism is intimately bound up with that quid pro quo that I have tried to lay out for you" (pg. 46)
  - ◇ "fundamental ontology too cannot become aware of the other or the beyond of language, of that which is not exhausted in the concept, except by virtue of the concept" (pg. 47)
    - ▶ "fundamental ontology cannot seriously raise any objections to the method which I have employed in these last analyses of ours, since this ontology emphatically presents itself precisely as a philosophy of language" (pg. 47)
- "...Heidegger effectively began as a theorist of linguistic meaning in a more or less traditional Husserlian sense but was subsequently driven to ascribe some kind of immediate and substantial being to language. And this is duly reflected in his famous remarks that being 'illuminates' or 'unconceals' itself within language" (pg. 47)
  - "...I really want to help you grasp the inner structure, the force field, of this philosophy – precisely why Heidegger arrives at the eccentric claim that being immediately unveils itself in language, rather than simply saying that language expresses being" (pg. 48)
    - "In other words, language must be approached as if it were the manifestation of what is meant in it, as if language immediately coincided with the latter, rather than standing in various intentional relations of tension towards that which it expresses" (pg. 48)
- "...we do not encounter being directly or immediately; we encounter it only in the form of language" (pg. 49)
  - "It is right and proper for us, in other words, to explore the kind of language where that which is highest of all, the *summum bonum*, namely 'being', claims to dwell. One cannot on the one hand set language and the philosophy of language in the place of theory of knowledge, or even of metaphysics, while objecting on the other hand when we actually proceed to analyse the language in question..." (pg. 49)
- Lecture 6 (pg. 52)
  - "Last time I talked about the peculiar ambiguity that belongs to being, on the one hand, as a concept, covering all of the beings that it encompasses, and, on the other, as an abstract and merely negative expression for what is not itself conceptual. And I traced this ambiguity briefly in relation to one or two models from ancient philosophy where this double sense – and not simply the so-called problem of being as such – was also to be found" (pg. 52)
    - "even in Aristotle...this peculiar alternation between being and beings can be found in his concept of πρώτη οὐσία [prōtē ousia], or 'primary substance', as that which pre-eminently has being" (pg. 52)
      - "in Aristotle, this πρώτη οὐσία [prōtē ousia], the first or primary being that exists, is supposed to be the same as the τόδε τι [tode ti], the 'this there', the individuated singular thing that is immediately given to me here and now in space and time. We should point out, incidentally, that this expression τόδε τι [tode ti] for the 'this there', for 'thisness', as it were, is a fundamental expression for the entire history of philosophy..." (pg. 53)
        - ◆ "this concept of the τόδε τι [tode ti], the specific individuated 'this there', the individual thing or appearance that presents itself before our eyes, refers to beings or entities and not to being. For what lies closest, as it were, actually corresponds to τὰ ὄντα [ta onta], to the individual and specific things that exist, not to any underlying structure of being as such, whatever it may be" (pg. 53)
        - "the concept of haec cei, 'the this there', in scholastic philosophy is a direct translation of τόδε τι [tode ti], and the famous Scotist expression *haecceitas*, or 'thisness', namely the principium individuationis in addition to essence and existence, is actually nothing but the hypostasis of this Aristotelian concept" (pg. 53)
        - "two opposed conceptions of what is first or primary, of the πρώτων [prōton], in Aristotle are possible...precisely because they are grounded in that peculiar ambiguity which belongs to the talk of being itself" (pg. 54)
          - "For, on the one hand, being is meant to be the comprehensive concept for all the beings that are, so that beings are primary, and being is derived from that. On the other hand, being is what is meant to recall what stands behind any and every conceptuality, what is not exhausted in concepts, what, in the language of ancient thought, exists φύσει [phusei] rather than θέσει [thesei]. In other words, that which is not itself the result of our classifying operations of the mind, and to which priority can in turn be ascribed over against the τόδε τι [tode ti] or over against particular ὄντα [onta]" (pg. 54)
      - "I tried to show you that the concept of being is itself mediated – in other words, that it is an abstraction with respect to the particular beings from which it derives. But please do not misunderstand me here, for I was not trying to claim that being is nothing but such an abstraction. I was trying to show that this very moment of the nonconceptual, which is indicated by the concept 'being', actually points towards something which, precisely because it is not conceptual, cannot itself be abstract either. On the other side, however, we have already described the mechanism of abstraction as constitutive for the possibility, for the meaningful constitution, of 'being'. And, if that is so, beings would indeed, in this sense, be prior with respect to being, just as we find with the τόδε τι [tode ti] in Aristotle" (pg. 53)
      - "[the] distinction between genesis and validity implicitly plays a certain role in Heidegger as well. For his work always shows a tendency to separate the nominalist moment of thought – the moment which produces concepts as abstractions from the facts which they cover – from the properly ontological level and present it as something pre-ontological. And this in spite of the fact that the point of Heidegger's project...is precisely this: what Heidegger believes he has discovered in his region of being, in what he expressly addresses as being, is not a dimension of validity, a dimension of the logical in itself, which as pure logic would enjoy priority over any process of genesis. On the contrary, in one extremely perceptive passage he has even clearly shown that logical absolutism on the one side – which turns this dimension of validity into an absolute – and psychologism along with the positivist theory of genesis on the other are essentially complementary and fit perfectly with one another" (pg. 55)
        - "he specifically believes not only that the concept of being provides him with the ontological counter-pole to the ontic domain but also that his concept of being is indeed ἀδιάφορος [adiaphoros], that it is effectively indifferent with regard to both of these dimensions: that of an absolutely fixed and objectified conceptuality and that of beings or entities included under concepts" (pg. 55)
          - "It is supposed to refer to an order of thought which resides in principle beyond – or, if you prefer, this side of – that dichotomy between the concept existing in itself and some mere ultimate given" (pg. 55)
      - "...the concept of origin...plays an extraordinarily central and important role in [Heidegger's] thought, although 'origin' here does not refer to anything temporal within time itself. On the contrary, it is an emphatically metaphysical concept that refers to time itself as a temporalizing principle – in other words, to time itself as an ontological structure rather than to any concrete, specific or particular temporal relationship of any kind." (pg. 55-56)
        - "...his whole attack on what he later calls 'metaphysics', namely subject-object thinking with its objectification of thought and thing alike, can be understood only in terms of some such archaic turn in his thinking as a whole" (pg. 56)
      - "[my] critique insists that we should not understand the concept of being...as a counter-concept to beings and should recognize instead that it lies outside or beyond this alternative" (pg. 58)

- "the question of the relationship between τὸ ὄν [to on] and τὰ ὄντα [ta onta] is a principal theme in Husserl's thought, and that Heidegger shows himself to be a faithful student of Husserl in this regard, for the whole priority of the doctrine of being, the doctrine of universal concepts or the 'ideal unity of the species', as Husserl puts it, is also something taught by Husserl." (pg. 58-59)
  - "the method of Heidegger, at least at the level of Being and Time, professes to be a phenomenological one" (pg. 59)
    - **"The task of phenomenology in Husserl's sense is to address the thing purely in its own right, precisely as it presents itself, and ignore as far as possible any further contribution or ingredient (if I may put it like that) on the part of thought. In other words, we must cultivate a passively receptive or intuitive mode of comportment and abandon ourselves completely to the things themselves, thereby discovering a source of indubitable certainty such as we find in the realm of immediate sensory givenness"** (pg. 59)
      - ◆ "When Husserl talks of the being of beings, what he means is nothing more than this: when I see an instance of red, such as the red blouse of the lady in the third row, what is given to my intuition is not just this specific red blouse but redness as such. In other words, this intuition of a particular colour exemplifies the species 'red' itself, even if I cannot see any other red blouses in the room which would allow me to recognize redness as a common feature here" (pg. 59)
        - ◇ "Thus to become aware of the being of beings, for Husserl, is quite simply this: when I see a given red I elevate the redness from this red, as it were, instead of restricting my attention to this limited individuated case of red. But the really decisive twist that Heidegger furnishes here is this: whereas Husserl treats this redness in an entirely innocuous logical fashion, namely as the quintessence of all conceivable shades of red, it is now turned into something independent, is made into a kind of being-in-itself that 'gives itself to me'" (pg. 59-60)
          - ▶ "The move from the immediate perceptibility of this redness towards the being-in-itself of redness, and then, by extension of this method, the move towards the effective independence of being itself with respect to particular beings, is an extraordinarily tempting conclusion." (pg. 60)
      - "It is certainly true that Husserl liked to talk about ontology, and indeed frequently did so, but what he meant by ontology was basically nothing but the attempt to epitomize the highest regions of specific fields and determine their internal structure." (pg. 60)
        - ◆ "if I consider the highest concepts to which mathematics can aspire, or those of theoretical physics, of pure grammar or of pure logic – and he was always fundamentally interested in pure logic and pure mathematics – and bring these concepts together and determine their structure, their interconnection, their mutual dependence, and so on, then for Husserl that would be the relevant ontology" (pg. 60)
  - "the doctrine of categorial intuition, the notion that we can become aware of something categorial or conceptual in an immediate way, already suggests that being-in-itself could also belong to something as categorial, as conceptual, as being ultimately is. And that is why Husserl, with complete consistency, came to subject this idea of categorial intuition to increasing restrictions and effectively demoted it to a merely transitional stage within experience. If we look closely at Husserl's doctrine of categorial intuition, on which the whole of the ensuing ontological development depends, we see that it actually leaves little trace in his own thought" (pg. 61)
  - **"...ontology treats being as what is prior with respect to beings"** (pg. 61)
    - "...we discover here a necessary aporia in this philosophy. For if the priority of being with respect to all beings is not defended in the way that ontological philosophy undertakes to do, then a doctrine of being is not actually possible at all. A pure ontology, a doctrine of being as such, is only possible if being is taken to be independent of particular spatio-temporal beings. This doctrine of pure being, at this level of universality, cannot possibly be carried through in any other way, for otherwise it would inevitably have to refer back to something determinate, particular and individual for its significant content. And it would thereby expressly forfeit that character that belongs to it of the χωρίς [chōris], of that separation from all individual, random and finite things. This seems to me the really decisive issue which has led to the hypostasis of the concept of being" (pg. 62)
  - Lecture 7 (pg. 63)
    - "You will recall that last time I read out a passage from the beginning of *Being and Time* and undertook to interpret it for you. I hope I was able to show you how the text already assumed that priority of being with respect to beings that could properly be a result only of an analysis such as that provided by fundamental ontology" (pg. 63)
      - "we are now in a position to approach the problem that I already identified fairly early on in these lectures as the really crucial one in the context of contemporary ontology, namely the problem of so-called ontological difference..." (pg. 63)
        - **"ontology in the emphatic sense, namely a doctrine of being as such, is impossible unless we can show that being...is independent of any beings, or is 'what is prior' to any beings, to use the language of *Being and Time*."** (pg. 63)
      - "we are not supposed to be talking about logical or conceptual necessities here but rather about what precedes them, about what can only be expressed precisely as 'being'. And this difficulty – the problem that the priority of being is supposed to be neither temporal nor logical but ontological in character, without its being clear what we are actually to understand by that – is precisely what compels recourse to such linguistic formulations as *Vorgängigkeit*" (pg. 64)
        - **"I believe this is really one of the cardinal points for the entire philosophy of being, for a doctrine of being is only possible if the priority of being with respect to beings can itself conclusively be shown"** (pg. 64)
          - ◆ "To enquire into any ontology as the doctrine of being already implies the priority of being with respect to beings, for no such doctrine of being as πρώτη φιλοσοφία [prōtē philosophia], as a philosophy that precedes and bears everything else, would otherwise be possible. If even the barest hint of a particular being, if any determinate being whatsoever, is allowed into this sphere of being, as a necessary condition of the latter, then we have effectively conceded what is anathema to this philosophy. For it would make the doctrine of being itself dependent in a certain way upon beings, and thus upon something particular that is temporal and spatial in character, thereby impugning the very priority of the structure of being which for its part constitutes the claim of ontology as such" (pg. 64)
            - ◇ "Thus ontology is bound, by definition, to teach the priority of being with respect to beings. And, given this necessary relationship, the point of any criticism of a developed ontology cannot be that of altering certain ontological features or trying to replace them with different ones. Rather, the point of such criticism in my eyes, a criticism which would investigate the construction of ontology in immanent terms, already invariably involves...the question regarding the possibility of ontology as such" (pg. 64)
      - "it is a remarkable thing that this overweening claim for the priority of being with respect to beings, and which certainly accounts for the distinctive atmosphere of ontology at least in its most influential contemporary form, is something that ontological philosophy has inherited from phenomenology..." (pg. 65)
        - "...all of these philosophies are really heirs to Plato rather than to Aristotle, even though it is actually Aristotle who talks much more about 'being', while Plato speaks more about the Idea or the paradigm of things" (pg. 65)
          - "...you can most clearly recognize the inherent Platonism of the philosophy of being. I am referring to what is known as the problem of χωρισμός [chorismos], or 'separation', in Plato, and which returns in Husserl when he speaks about the 'abyss of meaning', about the

- utterly unbridgeable difference between the domain of essences on the one hand and that of facts on the other" (pg. 65)
- "Cartesian philosophy was dualistic in character. And this very dualism has often been taken as a key to basic problems connected with modern thought in its entirety – the dualism between *res extensa* and *res cogitans*, between extended substance and thinking substance, between things in space and the conscious subject" (pg. 65)
    - "...right up until Kant the rationalist tradition was nothing but a series of different attempts to mediate between these rigidly and immediately opposed spheres or principles, between the reified sphere of real spatio-temporal being and the sphere of thought itself, or the sphere of pure subjectivity" (pg. 66)
    - "what phenomenology has contributed here is an infinite intensification or radicalization of the claims of *res cogitans* in relation to *res extensa*, or, in other words, not so much a mediation between the two as a deepening of the rupture between them" (pg. 66)
  - "We can say that an enormous part of what is described as subjectivity, or as the transcendental sphere in Kant, is to some extent swallowed up in the course of Husserl's logical reflections by that which merely is, by mere spatio-temporal existence, and that it thus forfeits something of its essential character as pure thought. We could say that all that remains of subjectivity – something already implicit in Kant's doctrine of reason qua logical faculty and quite explicit in Husserl – is just that which is entirely abstract and indeterminate, namely the objective regularity of thought itself" (pg. 66-67)
    - "if everything that is individuated in time and space is written off by the concept of constitutive or transcendental subjectivity, then whatever remains on the side of *res cogitans* – namely pure possibility and the logical regularity to which this possibility is subject – is no longer really anything subjective at all, but nothing more than a kind of objectivity. The subject finds itself so reduced, so divested of all those aspects and features through which it becomes an 'I', through which we can give any rational meaning whatsoever to the word 'I', that it eventually forfeits its I-hood altogether and becomes an objectivity at the second level. And it is only because it has been made into just such an objectivity that it can take on that exaggerated purity which allegedly allows it to furnish a priori or, with Heidegger, ontological structures" (pg. 67)
    - "[Husserl] attempted to bring transcendental subjectivity, or the constitutive subjectivity of idealist thought, into specific relationship with the realm of pure essence, albeit by means of a highly elaborate philosophical construction. And his motivation is understandable here, for so much of the transcendental in Kant is actually bound up with the realm of factual existence, and the primacy of thought itself is also threatened if every trace of subjectivity is simply eliminated" (pg. 67)
      - "But Husserl does not actually succeed in justifying this philosophical construction." (pg. 67)
  - "**what Heidegger calls being**, and what we can indeed actually grasp only in this extremely tentative and, as I would say, dynamic way, namely through the force field of philosophical concepts rather than by immediate recourse to some drastic claim...**is ultimately nothing but a pure state of affairs which is presented independently of all actual existence, including the actual existence of thinking and personality, and as utterly prior to all this**" (pg. 68)
    - "...this state of affairs can no longer be defined or determined at all, for any determination we might try and ascribe to it would simply be redirected in one way or another to the realm of beings" (pg. 68)
  - "**this kind of trans-subjectivity, which is all that remains of the subject once it is reduced to pure essence, furnishes the model for Heidegger's concept of being.** The abandonment of the empirical dimension in phenomenology – which actually goes so far as to ascribe all substantive content whatsoever, and not just psychological phenomena, to this dimension – is what leads to a kind of allergy towards beings in general where fundamental ontology is concerned. And if you really wish to understand what motivates fundamental ontology, and if you also wish to reflect personally on what it is that many of you surely find so tempting about fundamental ontology – or at least once found so tempting about it before you were prompted to pursue these somewhat unwelcome reflections along with me here – then I believe we must look to this distinctive allergy, as I have called it. **For it is a philosophy, if you will permit me this psychological image, which rather reminds us of those people (and they are not that uncommon) who feel a constant compulsion to wash their hands.** It is a philosophy which is terrified at the thought of getting its hands dirty, which would dearly like to exclude from itself all that is ephemeral, all that might be otherwise, all that reminds us of what is somehow base or lowly, of the merely material character of the senses" (pg. 68-69)
    - "...it is one of the decisive distinctions between Hegel and the other idealists that he does not actually share this allergy." (pg. 69)
      - "**...the Hegelian dialectic...is exactly what is captured by the idea of *Entäußerung*, or self-exposure, of venturing out beyond the pure Idea for the sake of its own realization**" (pg. 69)
  - "that ideal of purity on the part of being, which grounds the pathos or, as I would call it, the religious or theological aura of fundamental ontology, is something *borrowed*" (pg. 70)
    - "there is something about this particular attitude that I would describe as mythical, a certain fear lest the slightest hint of something beyond our own principle might already suffice to threaten or dislodge the entire authority or dominion of what we are, namely the authority of the mind, of the mind as 'in-group', if I may express this in sociological terms. Thus fundamental ontology relates to the domain of beings in like manner to the wicked stepmother in the story of Snow White" (pg. 70)
      - "**fundamental ontology...in a kind of manic or even paranoid extremity, is driven again and again to expel any trace of anything that might recall the realm of beings, to eliminate anything of the kind and run the danger of becoming so abstract in the end that no such trace remains**" (pg. 70)
  - "...at the very moment when philosophy acknowledges beings *as* beings – in place of the abstract category of beings in general – we have already renounced the form in which all traditional philosophy appears. There is no longer any such thing as *prima philosophia*" (pg. 70-71)
    - "In terms of the history of philosophy, this excessive χωρισμός [chorismos] and essential purity, which has ultimately led to the concept of being, is the response to positivism and nominalism. For positivism and nominalism alike, if I may put this in a rather exaggerated form, all that is left now is beings, while the concept has been dropped" (pg. 71)
      - "**even nominalist and positivist philosophies, of course, cannot manage without concepts, and the fact that they cannot do so reveals both the impossibility of reducing concepts entirely to beings and that of reducing beings to being**" (pg. 71)
  - "the attempt to preserve that which has been forgotten, that which has been suppressed by the tremendous power of positivism – namely the independence of conceptual thought itself – will be as isolated and neglected in a philosophy, such as Heidegger's, which fails to mediate thought with the domain of beings, as it is in positivism, which fails to mediate the domain of beings with thought" (pg. 71)
  - "being is indeed what is not subject, what would not be subject at any cost, yet acts in all kinds of ways and has all kinds of things ascribed to it. Thus being is said to 'illuminate itself' and 'unconceal itself', and God knows what else, in language that we usually apply only to a subject. And this whole structure of thought closely resembles the kind of archaic thinking which ascribes various activities or teleological tendencies of one sort or another to certain material substances precisely because such thinking has never isolated the concept of stuff as such. The ψεύδος [pseudos] or actual untruth of ontological philosophy is not that it maintains the independent aspect of conceptual thought with respect to what it subsumes. On the contrary, this philosophy is true precisely as a corrective, to use Kierkegaard's language, in relation to positivist thought and has rightly grasped something essential here. The ψεύδος [pseudos] consists in the way that this aspect or moment ceases to be a moment, that the necessary mediations are forgotten, and that the principle in question is itself turned into something immediate. We could therefore say, once again in a rather paradoxical fashion, that, **while Heidegger constantly challenges reification by warding off any contamination of beings with being, or rather of being with beings, the**



- thinking itself is a reified and fetishized consciousness insofar as it establishes the intrinsically mediated concept, which points ineluctably towards the non-conceptual, as an absolute, and struggles laboriously to repudiate and forget these aspects of mediation. At the same time...this pure being is not supposed to be an issue of essence, a question of essentia, for that would only presuppose the very divorce of essence and fact which is contested as anathema here. And the peculiar paradox which brings this philosophy to nothing lies in the way that being is supposedly neither a being nor an essence, but a third possibility beyond both. Yet if we were to describe it as such a third, we would roundly be told it is not that either – so that we can eventually come to no other conclusion than that it is indeed precisely nothing" (pg. 72)
- Lecture 8 (pg. 73)
    - "You will recall the analysis of the problem of ontological difference which I attempted to present for you earlier. I explained why, in spite of the doctrine that being or the concept of being is allegedly prior to the conceptual and the domain of beings, we actually find that ontological difference is already decided in favour of being in the sense of concept or idea. And I explained the way in which this claim to priority turns out to be unjustified" (pg. 73)
      - "We have good historical reason for regarding the separation into subject and object, and thereby all the dualisms and rigid antitheses with which consciousness typically likes to work, as something which has actually come to be" (pg. 73)
        - "It also has to be said that **this realization that dualism should not be regarded as definitive or absolute is precisely what motivated those tendencies of idealist philosophy which often prove most offensive to the contemporary mind.** Here I am thinking for example of Schelling's doctrine of intellectual intuition as an immediate unity of subject and object, or also of Hegel's dialectic insofar as it always takes the object to be subjectively constituted and the subject to be objectively constituted at all levels" (pg. 74)
    - "this intensified form of the philosophical problematic that is expressed in the word 'being' can only really be understood, can only amount to more than a kind of verbal magic, when we see how the problematic of philosophy already leads in this direction in terms of its own rigorous and internal logic. And it is also one of the tasks of these lectures to draw your attention to this point and help you to realize its full significance. For it also implies, amongst other things, that certain vulgar objections which have been raised against fundamental ontology and Heidegger in particular...essentially reflect the charge that this philosophy is unintelligible." (pg. 74-75)
      - "when we really recognize these difficulties in their internal and necessary relationship to the problematic that has been handed down by philosophy, to the continuing process of thought itself, I will not exactly say that we can instantly fulfil, as it were, all of the concepts in question. For where philosophical concepts are concerned that is often quite impossible. In Kant too there are many concepts where we have to ask what precisely it is that we are supposed to think when we use them. And when we look for whatever it is that corresponds to them we find again and again that this eludes us. Yet in many cases we also discover that **philosophical understanding is not a matter of translating concepts into corresponding facts or states of affairs at all; rather, it is a question of translating concepts into problems.** In other words, it is a matter of realizing what has driven us to formulate a specific concept, of recognizing what is effectively postulated in the formulation of a specific concept such as, in this case, that of 'being'" (pg. 75)
    - "if we suffer today from this division, from this rigid separation of dualistically opposed moments, whether we call them subject and object, or conceptuality and actual beings, or however we describe them, if we suffer from such ossified antitheses, and become aware at every step of their own inadequacy – in the inadequate character of the business of science itself, for example – then the possibility of any reconciliation here surely cannot lie in a forced attempt to restore a stage of consciousness that has already effectively been abandoned. Rather, **if the distress of this separation continues to be felt, this can only encourage us to think this dualism through to the end, to overcome these rigidly opposed moments by reflection upon the very reflection that has produced them**" (pg. 77)
      - "In terms of the problem we are talking about here, that is precisely what defines the problem of dialectics" (pg. 77)
        - "...it is necessary to contrast dialectical thinking with ontological thinking" (pg. 77)
          - ◆ "I have indicated only the necessity for thinking dialectically rather than ontologically..." (pg. 77)
    - "Heidegger certainly inclines...to the idea, as he says, that being has a 'completely different essence' from any concept whatsoever" (pg. 78)
      - "And right there you actually have the whole aporia that I have tried to present to you as the essence, indeed as the dynamic essence, of this conception of being. For you have now recognized the specific character of this concept of being in both of its aspects: on the one side it cannot signify beings regarded as a whole, cannot simply be taken as an objectification of the 'is', of existentia; on the other side it is not to be regarded as a concept or as mere universality either. For, in contrast to the realm of conceptuality, it is supposed to enjoy the wealth of significance and the kind of objective character that we generally ascribe only to what actually exists. Thus we see how one side effectively lives off the other here, how one always borrows something from the other, although the debt is never paid back. In other words, **it is precisely from beings themselves that the concept 'being' borrows that concreteness, wealth and objective character which concepts otherwise lack; while this moment that is borrowed from beings now borrows in turn from being, thus helping itself to that essential, universally binding and unforfeitable character which contrasts with the contingency of the things that simply exist.** Now if these two moments are inseparable, and if in such inseparability this mode of thinking emphatically, deliberately and archaically resists the differentiating movement of thought, this even serves a good functional purpose. For the inseparability of both elements here already means, whenever we try and pin one of them down on either side, that such thinking can always claim that this is not what it meant to say at all, and that we are thereby simply failing to enter the dimension of being in the first place. One is thus secured on every side, and this very inseparability, this lack of articulation, already affords protection to such thinking, allowing it to spurn everything that does not bow to its claims. For the separation into being and beings, into the domain of the conceptual and the domain of beings – which is maintained throughout the history of metaphysics, for which indeed Heidegger shows such disdain – would already open up this concept of being to critique" (pg. 78)
    - "**Critique is actually nothing but a process of distinguishing, a process of confronting different aspects or moments in order to see whether the conceptual moment is genuinely fulfilled in its respective objects, whether it is an empty or a legitimate conceptuality, namely one to which something corresponds; and, on the other hand, it is a confrontation of the realm of beings, of what is there, with the concept.** In other words, we must ask, like Hegel, how far something that exists corresponds or answers to its concept, namely whether that which merely exists is actually what it purports to be. This process of distinguishing varying and contrasting aspects or moments is the critical element par excellence" (pg. 78-79)
      - "...the etymology of the word 'critique' refers back directly to the idea of separating or distinguishing things, specifically to the verb κρινεῖν [krinein] – thus κρινω [krinō] means 'I distinguish'" (pg. 79)
    - "If Heidegger's philosophy actually reveals itself in countless variations as anti-intellectualist in character, and to that extent takes up the legacy of all those irrationalist tendencies in philosophy which have emerged from the most varied quarters, such as Nietzsche, Bergson, Simmel and Dilthey, this irrationalism or anti-intellectualism itself is also, if I might put it this way, still systematically motivated. In other words, since this philosophy repudiates the separating and distinguishing aspect of thought precisely because, as a function of the intellect or the reflective understanding, it fails to do justice to the concept of being, the devaluation of this dimension inevitably leads to the devaluation of the very capacity for making such distinctions" (pg. 79)
      - "in spite of that return to the origin which Heideggerean thought claims to accomplish, it cannot actually escape its own historical situation; in other words, that the very reflection in terms of subjectivity which it presumes to overcome as an immediate proclamation from the heart of being nonetheless still makes itself felt in its own method and mode of thought. And in fact Heidegger has not really attempted to deny this" (pg.

81)

- "the ontic itself is turned into a way of 'being ontic', beings themselves are turned into a 'mode of being' that belongs to being. And this tendency to ontologize the ontic, to take *Dasein* and facticity itself, which represents a universal structure, and use it precisely to resolve everything factual into the relevant conceptuality and universality – this is actually the trick, the universal procedure, of this kind of thinking" (pg. 83)
- **"fundamental ontology is a parody of the dialectic, for it pursues a kind of positive negation in the sense that, if this philosophy is deficient or lacking in something, this very lack becomes a mark of distinction, becomes something positive and, above all, even an emblem of higher dignity.** The abstractness to which being is aporetically condemned is stylized and transmuted through the supposedly concrete character of this monastic life of thought as if it represented some greater immediacy and proximity with respect to what 'authentically' is" (pg. 81)
  - "it is characteristic of this whole way of thinking that it makes a virtue out of necessity. In other words, precisely what thought has failed to accomplish, the defects and negative features that it involves, everything that it cannot resolve, all of this, in an extremely bold and clever move, is now reinterpreted as if it were actually a higher form of positivity" (pg. 81)
  - "the meanings of words also always necessarily involve something which is subjectively instilled in them..." (pg. 81-82)
- Lecture 9 (pg. 84)
  - "In our last session I had begun to say something about that basic structure of fundamental ontology which, along with its general method, seems to me to justify the critical approach we need to adopt in relation to it. I am referring to that aspect which I provisionally described as the **ontologization of the ontic**. And this structure, as I pointed out, **permeates the whole of Heidegger's philosophy and that of his followers**. The trick, as it were, of this entire philosophy basically operates as follows. We are confronted with an opposition between the concept and the non-conceptual dimension which every concept tries to grasp. But insofar as I now form a concept of the non-conceptual, the non-conceptual that is subsumed by this concept in a certain sense itself becomes something conceptual. In other words, if I grasp all manifold beings together, which is what happens when, to use Greek terminology, the things that exist are gathered under the expression τὰ ὄντα [ta onta], then this non-conceptual and material dimension, heterogeneous to thought, is itself subjected to conceptuality. And this moment, through which the non-conceptual is subjected to the conceptual, and with it the universal expressions employed to capture the non-conceptual, **are now ontologized – that is to say, are themselves elevated to structures of being**." (pg. 84)
    - "The transition consists precisely in this: **since every being, everything non-conceptual, is mediated, as we would put it, or is referred to some concept, the domain of beings, or of what is, is at the same time supposed to be more than what it is, more than the beings themselves – is supposed to be ontological**, as Heidegger puts it" (pg. 84-85)
  - "I consider the existentialist thesis that any form of thinking should be measured against the one who thinks it to be extraordinarily questionable in itself. And, apart from that, I think I have already indicated in these lectures that the problematic aspects of Heidegger's philosophy which I have pointed out do not arise on account of subjective insufficiencies of any kind. On the contrary, such errors of thought are, if I may put it very strongly, aporetic in character. In other words, **they are inevitably brought about by the way this form of thought possesses and pursues a quite specific intention, deliberately undertakes to express a specific kind of experience – or however you wish to describe it – but in the very attempt to realize this intention comes up against certain internal substantive problems, which lead to the sort of manoeuvres we have described if the original intention is to be maintained**" (pg. 85)
    - "Just as idealism must try and resolve everything into consciousness, so Heidegger too must try and resolve everything into being. And **'being' here, as this pure and absolute objectivity, is precisely nothing other than a subjectivity that is concealed from itself, that is held over itself – in other words, pure thought**" (pg. 85)
      - "What we find at these points in Heidegger is not so much a desperate attempt to capture something merely 'conceived in thought' as an attempt, as I hope I have shown, to present something that cannot be thought at all or again, and this amounts to the same thing, to present thoughts to which nothing effectively corresponds, as if they could indeed claim a kind of self-evidence in the realm of thought" (pg. 86)
  - "I would just like to say in advance that this tendency to ontologize the ontic relates not only to the highest category of all, namely 'being', but also specifically and in precisely the same way to the realm which is emphasized more than any other by the philosophy of being. I am talking about the sphere of history which in fundamental ontology is immediately sublimated into the *Befindlichkeit*, or 'state of mind', that belongs to *Dasein* – in other words, into *Geschichtlichkeit*, or 'historicality' – and indeed in such a way that concrete history, and the wholly concrete distress and problematic of history with it, actually falls through the gaps in this concept of historicality and is thus repudiated as something unworthy of philosophy" (pg. 86-87)
    - "In the form which it assumes in Heidegger, **this ontologization of what is not ontological refers in the first instance to the 'existence' of *Dasein***. This is the point...where fundamental ontology and the philosophy of being connects with what you would perhaps call existentialism, which ultimately goes back to Kierkegaard and his doctrine that existing subjectivity is truth" (pg. 87)
      - "For the analysis of *Dasein* – and to make things easier to grasp here I would suggest that you understand *Dasein* simply as subjectivity in an extremely broad sense of the word – is already essentially taken in *Being and Time* as the key or appropriate mode of access to the domain of being. The construction that I describe as the ontologization of the ontic serves precisely to facilitate this transition. In other words, ***Dasein* is meant to be the key to being because existing subjectivity is the place in being, as it were, where the being that exists becomes aware of itself as being**. Existence or *Dasein* or subject thus constitutes the place where ontology enters into subjectivity or subjectivity enters into ontology – a construction which indeed is hardly alien to the history of philosophy" (pg. 87)
        - ◆ "Already in Schopenhauer, for example, the theory of motivation as one form of the principle of sufficient reason, which initially relates specifically to the world of 'representation', to the world of appearances, is at the same time the little window through which the absolute, namely the will, peers in to the realm of representation. In other words, this is the place where representation is mediated in relation to will, where beings (as Heidegger would say) are mediated in relation to being" (pg. 87)
      - **"the intention behind the analysis of *Dasein* in no way involves the reduction of truth to human existence, given that the analysis of human existence itself is only supposed to open up some kind of access to the problematic of being as such"** (pg. 88)
        - ◆ "since this philosophy claims to be one of 'radical questioning' and of absolute originality, these historically mediated problems always also appear as if they were being asked for the very first time, as if entirely new ground were being broken" (pg. 89)
      - "...you should translate the term *Dasein* in terms of the subject, in terms of man – not indeed in any particularly individual sense, but in the sense of the human essence – if you wish to get a preliminary understanding of what *Dasein* means in this connection" (pg. 88)
    - "Now when Heidegger says so pompously that this particular being, namely *Dasein* – in other words, the human being in general or in its essence – is concerned *in* its being *about* this very being, this initially means nothing more than that human beings think or reflect about themselves..." (pg. 89)
      - "This concern, this being-concerned-about-something, as it is understood here, actually means that what this being is concerned about is what this being is. In other words, the human being wants to know what it ultimately is. But **the concept of the 'is' here is at first completely ambiguous, or completely vague**, and it certainly does not already imply the idea that, when we think about what Fichte still calls 'the vocation of man', we must think about the being of man in distinction from *Dasein*, as that which is particular and individuated in space and time. But the substantivized verb to which the actual verbal form 'is' belongs is none other than Sein, or 'being'. Yet 'being' in Heidegger's philosophy is of

- course an eminently laden expression. For **'being'** is precisely that which precedes both any particular being and any conceptual universality, as I hope I showed you when I explicated the concept in some detail in the last few lectures" (pg. 90)
- "Heidegger presents the idea of the twofold character of *Dasein* as at once 'being' and 'a being', as some kind of primordial relationship. In other words, *Dasein* is supposed to be that specific being which, through its mere existence, possesses a relationship to that absolute which is known in Heidegger's philosophy as 'being'" (pg. 91)
    - "It is already evident that **what really constitutes man as man, for Heidegger, what constitutes *Dasein* as *Dasein*, is precisely that it is a particular being that stands in a relationship to that absolutum which is singled out by the honorific name of 'being' in this ontological philosophy**" (pg. 91)
      - "according to Heidegger, it is the distinctive characteristic of man that *Dasein*, as a being, possesses the quality, the admittedly rather enigmatic quality, of being open to that absolutum, namely 'being' which is itself neither a concept nor a being" (pg. 91)
        - ◆ "every being, all that exists, precisely by virtue of existing, is itself subject to universality, to the category of existence, so that in its being it has existence 'as its ground', as Heidegger would say, and that within it which is precisely not being, namely its character as a being, the particular qualification of its being, is itself specifically supposed to be a particular ontological characteristic, and thus again something ontological" (pg. 92)
          - ◇ "...existence is indeed identified with being, and thus how the ontic, the actually existent, is identified with the ontological" (pg. 92)
          - ◇ "this concept of existence is defined by Heidegger as its own possibility to be or not to be itself..." (pg. 92)
    - "**Heidegger appeals to this structure – that a particular being is itself 'ontological' – as the defining and distinctive feature for the doctrine of *Dasein***" (pg. 92)
      - "the considerable influence of Heidegger's philosophy, consists in this: the realm of being or objectivity, or however we may describe it for the moment, is not constituted from the perspective of the subject, since the question concerning the subject is subordinated to the question concerning being. And this is abundantly clear from everything I have told you about **the superiority or the priority of being in his philosophy**. And when he defines *Dasein* precisely as that being which also enjoys the particular advantage of being open to being and receptive to being, then you find that this immediately implies, in contrast to the critical philosophy, that it is not being, namely the concept of being, which is brought back to subjectivity in a critical manner but, rather, subjectivity, which almost becomes, to recall the terms I have used before, the stage or scene of being" (pg. 94)
  - "in Husserl every particular discipline – including the factual sciences which are concerned with specific beings, such as psychology – is coordinated with a so-called eidetic discipline, namely a pure science concerned with the fundamental structures of the psyche..." (pg. 93)
    - "...a discipline such as psychology, taken as a mere doctrine of essence, is at once both ontic and ontological. The ontic, namely the elements of psychology which are confirmed in the field of experience, then becomes the ontological as an eidetic science, as a pure doctrine of the psyche, as ideal possibility" (pg. 93)
  - "What sets Kant apart from empiricism is that he was not really interested in studying the mechanisms of thought or consciousness as such, although he does do this; rather, he was interested in studying and understanding how, through these processes, something like objective cognition, validity and objectivity are possible at all." (pg. 94)
  - Lecture 10 (pg. 95)
    - "In the last session, after discussing the problem of the ontologization of the ontic at some length, I also spoke about the moment of objectivity that is involved in subjectivity. And in this regard I would call your attention once again to the way that here fundamental ontology in a sense unfolds something that was already implicit in subjectivist and idealist philosophy" (pg. 95)
      - "what they really wanted to do was to discover how we get to knowledge at all and, by more or less assuming the validity of objective knowledge, to learn something about how objective valid knowledge comes about in the first place" (pg. 95)
        - "To this extent, therefore, we can say that **the traditional idealist philosophies were animated by an interest in objectivity**" (pg. 95)
    - "Now in Heidegger – for whom every objective interest is tacitly synonymous with an ontological interest, that is to say, with an interest in being – this comes to mean that this interest in objectivity, in a philosophy such as Kant's, is already precisely an interest in being rather than an interest in knowledge" (pg. 95-96)
      - "Kant himself, where Kant explicitly talks about his objective interest, emphasizes that he is actually interested only in the question concerning objectivity, that the subjective perspective adopted by the *Critique of Pure Reason* is only a vehicle for bringing out the objectivity in question. And Heidegger has certainly performed a very considerable service in having emphasized this moment so strongly..." (pg. 96)
      - "...the *Critique of Pure Reason*...does claim to show the possibility of objectively valid knowledge – that is, of truly necessary and universal knowledge – and thus to ground 'experience'" (pg. 96)
        - "But Kant's ruse, as it were – or, since I have spoken of Heidegger's trick, we might also say Kant's trick – in his attempt to provide a stringent justification of this objectivity is to use the same analytical means which Hume himself, the man who crucially roused him from his slumbers, had expressly used to do the opposite, namely to dissolve this objectivity" (pg. 96)
      - "...if the interest of philosophy in this borderland between metaphysics and epistemology, where all of the questions we are talking about actually reside, were indeed merely an interest in subjectivity, then epistemology would simply amount to the tautology that the subjectively constituted aspect of our knowledge is, precisely, subjective. But it is just here, I believe, that we find the source of what I would call a misinterpretation of Kant" (pg. 96)
    - "**while they [e.g., German Idealists] all seek a certain absolute, a certain objectivity, namely the absolute as spirit, they discover this objectivity within themselves, so to speak; they encounter it within the realm of subjectivity upon which the increasingly subjective and self-reflective thought of the modern age has been thrown back**" (pg. 97)
    - "...it is the analysis and understanding of *Dasein* – in a certain sense a subjectively oriented analysis – which is supposed to provide the categories that then prove decisive for the analysis of being. It is this very moment that Heidegger later abandoned..." (pg. 97)
    - "Now the ψεύδος [pseudos] or mistake in [Heidegger's] ontological interpretation of Kant, it seems to me, and the thing which also reveals the problematic character of his own way of doing philosophy, is precisely the moment that I would describe in Hegelian terms as the subjective mediation of objectivity" (pg. 98)
      - "**What we find in Heidegger...is that subjectivity has become the scene or arena, as it were, of ontology**. And this kind of thinking, for which being appears or manifests itself only in *Dasein*, naturally still harbours something of that earlier subjective moment. At the same time it loses what was so decisive for this earlier form of thought – that is, for this earlier form of modern subjectively directed thought. In other words, it loses that moment of subjectivity which appears in Kantian philosophy under the name of spontaneity and in Hegelian philosophy under the name of labour" (pg. 98)
        - "...subjectivity is actually introduced as a kind of pure receptivity. And that is what I meant here when I spoke of a 'scene'. **Subjectivity becomes that to which being manifests itself**, yet without that moment of activity, or that 'function', as Kant also occasionally puts it, properly being acknowledged at all" (pg. 98)

- **"the age in which Heidegger's philosophy is conceived is one marked less by the power than by the powerlessness of the subject.** And one of the functions served by this philosophy, and not indeed the least, is to transfigure this powerlessness, as it were, inasmuch as the latter here appears as the reflection of something higher and better. For **this is the objective truth which appears to the subject,** and is none other than this: the now powerless subject, which has long since forfeited its capacity to determine itself by appeal to its own reason, has been brought down in the most literal sense, has been reduced simply to a site of reception or registration which duplicates what has objectively come to pass" (pg. 98-99)
  - "...we see how this defect, namely the way the subject renounces the task of thinking itself through and thus also the task of thinking through what confronts it, is chalked up as a credit, and a dearth is made to yield to a metaphysical profit" (pg. 99)
    - "...this dearth – the fact that the subject really no longer has the strength to think through the world and its contradictions and to think through itself – is turned to advantage through a kind of fraudulent bookkeeping. The subject is thereby vouchsafed a higher truth which can only be distorted and obscured by thinking, but which 'gives itself' purely and immediately as such" (pg. 99)
      - ◆ **"For 'being', since it already involves *Dasein*, is also characterized...by the fact that it is ἀδιάφορον [adiaphoron] – in other words, 'being' is indifferent to the distinction between subject and object, and these two moments cannot really be distinguished within it. And this inseparability, if you want to put it like that, this indifference of subject and object within 'being', is indeed specifically claimed by this philosophy, like every other lack or στερήσις [sterēsis], as its unique prerogative"** (pg. 99)
- "My intention, therefore, is to lend greater weight to this engagement with Heidegger, to save it from what we might describe, with an expression of Kafka's, as an 'empty happy journey', precisely by addressing a range of problems connected with the so-called *ontological need*. In other words, I shall try and bring you closer to the questions under discussion here by exploring the needs which have inspired them" (pg. 100)
  - "I believe I certainly owe it to you to present fully developed analyses of the decisive concepts which are involved, and thus above all of the concept of being itself." (pg. 100)
- "Germany never really arrived at Enlightenment and that, even when it finally began to approach it, this Enlightenment was immediately commandeered by a movement that describes itself as counter-Enlightenment – and indeed it also makes sense to ascribe existential ontology to this movement. What I mean by this can be explained as follows. Even in a historical situation where theological ideas are no longer really experienced as authoritative, but where people still see themselves as belonging to a particular positive religion, it is impossible to say anything or talk about anything unless it is dressed up and sanctified as something more than it simply is. This hallowed thinking par excellence, **this thinking that promises at every moment to be more than it is,** although it requires no more actual content from anyone than could be required of any lively young man in enlightened times, **furnishes as I believe one of the essential moments which many people find so alluring about this philosophy"** (pg. 102)
  - "For here, with very little effort, we can invest ourselves with the semblance of something higher, of something metaphysical, without really needing to transcend the merely factual conditions to which we are bound by the nature of our own work. Thus we might well come to think that the influence exerted by the new ontology, and the ontological need in the somewhat primitive form in which I am introducing it here, is the perfect complement to positivism" (pg. 102-103)
    - "In other words, we can see on one side how people are compelled through the reification and objectification of the world to deal with nothing but facts, while separately and independently of this they nonetheless possess what we could call, in a rather crude way, a sense for 'higher things'. And the most felicitous way of combining this sense for something higher with the fetters of facticity, with a sober reality devoid of imagination, is for mere facticity, without intrinsically changing at all, to be presented in a manner which creates the semblance that it is more than it is, that it is already 'possessed of meaning'" (pg. 103)
- **"everything merely factual and particular is always more than merely itself precisely because it is also a moment or aspect of some further context that extends beyond it** – and it is certainly the task of philosophy to remind us of this moment, as Heidegger rightly recognizes. But the mistake, if I may use this rather pedantic expression once again, lies as it seems to me in the following. What I have just described as a 'moment', as this philosophical moment of transcending the particular, consists for philosophical reflection in the way the merely factual is never merely itself, is also always more than it merely factually is – but this is now immediately conferred upon the factual particular itself, and its own merely factual character is expressed in a way that makes it appear as if it were already more than it is. In this connection it is entirely characteristic that words which in the first instance point towards the sphere of mere factuality – such as the substantivized form of the copula 'is' or the expression *Dasein* – come to play such a distinctive role in this philosophy, and indeed make it possible in the first place" (pg. 103-104)
  - *\*the 'already' -> the 'ontologizing the ontic'. The author is mistaking that 'what's further' can be 'already' - i.e., what's 'already further' or what's 'already more'. It is a mistake to equate this 'moment' with the order of time such that it only must be 'further'.*
- Lecture 11 (pg. 106)
  - "for the first half of the nineteenth century, Germany remained so backward in terms of social development that the enormous power of social dynamics did not extend its influence into the very heart of thought. And thought was therefore able to flourish in the rather private and limited sphere which corresponded to the German social and cultural climate in the period around 1800" (pg. 109)
    - "There is also of course another phenomenon in play here, the full cultural and intellectual significance of which has not yet perhaps been considered as closely as it should have been. I am talking about the emergence of Marxian materialism, and especially of the claim which this philosophy has sometimes raised in an admittedly crass form, namely its claim to liquidate philosophy as such and replace it with praxis" (pg. 109)
      - "I certainly believe that in Germany, and in the general consciousness of the German middle classes, which have effectively monopolized the realm of philosophy, the fact of Marxism itself has acted as an enormously powerful means of diverting philosophical attention from such questions. In other words, almost everything of philosophical relevance that was advanced during this period was itself, whether openly or covertly, already apologetically directed in one way or another against this materialist claim" (pg. 110)
      - "in the wake of Kantian philosophy we see how the concept of autonomy, the idea of the self-determining individual, which has no meaning without the establishment of a free society and which was still conceived by Kant and also Hegel in the context of human beings acquiring their freedom as citizens within a free society – how this concept of autonomy was indeed retained, but now without the remotest connection with a society of free individuals, and thus a free society itself, without that implication which it still enjoyed in Kant and the German Idealist thinkers..." (pg. 110)
        - **"In other words, people still continue to talk about an assumed autonomy on the part of self-determining beings in a world where nothing of the kind exists any longer as a social reality"** (pg. 110)
    - "on account of our respect for Kant's enormous achievement, and for what is generally called the Copernican Turn – namely the turn to the subject, to the knowing subject itself, on the part of philosophy – I believe that it is very easy for us to miss just what is lost through this turn<sup>14</sup> as far as the need of philosophy is concerned" (pg. 114)
    - "Philosophy has promised, as it were, to pronounce the magic word, or at least, once it became less naive, to provide the language, and the insights, which might dissolve the semblance that the world is indeed what it presents itself to be. **It is this claim, or this hope, to discover the essence which philosophy has still failed to fulfil.**" (pg. 116)
      - "We could say that philosophy has turned itself into a merely methodological arrangement that enables the reflective and informed consciousness simply to reproduce what the scientifically educated person, or I would say even the ordinary person with a modicum of common

- sense, already knows" (pg. 116)
  - "this unsatisfactory state of affairs, for which I have mentioned a number of reasons, and in particular some specifically philosophical reasons which are rooted in the form that thought has come to assume, has effectively led, if not exactly to the new ontologies themselves, then at least to the *need* with which you are now familiar" (pg. 116)
    - *\*i.e., the ontological need.*
- Lecture 12 (pg. 118)
  - "...amongst the German Idealists it was actually Schelling...who has most in common with existential philosophy..." (pg. 118)
    - "...Kierkegaard...in a sense can be seen as the godfather to this whole philosophical movement..." (pf. 123)
  - "the denser the web of existing societies becomes, the more their power extends and the more this power reaches into the life of individual subjects, all the greater is the tendency on the part of such societies not so much to challenge the schools and movements that oppose them as to absorb them" (pg. 119)
  - "...Ernst Bloch once rightly said...that Heidegger is the Professor of Anxiety, Care and Death. And this perfectly captures the paradox which I am trying to bring out for you here, for what we are clearly witnessing is the transformation of the most urgent and pressing things that there are into little more than problematic titles – in other words, into questions posed by objectifying thought" (pg. 120)
    - "I have already suggested to you that this supposedly radical questioning, which reaches out beyond all beings, beyond everything that actually is, thereby no longer catches hold of anything. **We can indeed question in such a radical way, and immerse ourselves so deeply in the origins, that any conceivable answer to such a radical question is utterly indifferent or irrelevant in relation to the reality in which we exist**" (pg. 120)
      - "Here we are talking about the way this kind of thinking presents itself: as if in commemorating a truth that has fallen into oblivion – namely 'being' – it reveals itself as a form of thought which conserves or preserves. And **Heidegger has expressly and repeatedly characterized his thought in just these terms, as a thinking that preserves 'being'**. Yet in reality this preserving thought, this conservatism, tends to end up, I have to say, in a kind of barbarism precisely because the tradition of European rationality has simply been cast overboard. In other words, this preservation proves extremely intolerant towards everything that really needed to be preserved in our epoch: towards reason, towards autonomy, towards the thought that human beings might be able to determine their fate on their own behalf" (pg. 121)
        - ◆ "...as is well known, Heidegger says that ἀλήθεια [alētheia] is that which 'unconceals itself', in other words, is self-unconcealing being. Reinhardt himself regarded this derivation as complete nonsense. And I think it is regrettable that philology, through its own impoverished positivism, now clutches at the straws of this philosophy and evidently forgets the clear-sighted critique of such philological claims which earlier philologists such as Reinhardt were still capable of providing" (pg. 122)
    - "Kierkegaard essentially wanted to be a Protestant theologian, as we can clearly see from his directly Christian writings rather than his pseudonymous ones. And his central concern is the Protestant concept of faith, which essentially makes the salvation of the believer a matter of faith, that is, a question of the subjectivity of the believer rather than of the objectivity of dogma. While this represents an extraordinary radicalization of the theological claim directed at the individual, it also involves a critique of dogmatics and the philosophy of religion which eventually led Kierkegaard at the end of his relatively short life into a violent controversy with the established Lutheran Church of Denmark, his own country" (pg. 123-124)
      - "**what Kierkegaard is fundamentally concerned with is the character of 'existence'**" (pg. 124)
        - "Now in Kierkegaard the concept of existence does occupy centre stage. His basic thesis is that Hegel's doctrine is essentially a doctrine of essence, of 'the Idea' which unfolds objectively on its own, as it were, behind the backs of human beings, in a process which neglects the human individual as a finite, sensuous and mortal being, and in which man cannot possibly see an expression of himself" (pg. 124)
      - "Kierkegaard attempts to 'construct' existence itself, as we might put it in Schelling's language. In other words, he tries to unfold the fundamental determinations which actually characterize existence as existence, namely the categories of existence which specifically resist the claims of system" (pg. 124)
        - "Now these categories closely resemble what is presented in *Being and Time* as the 'attunements', or *Befindlichkeiten*, of Dasein, such as **the concept of dread or anxiety**, to which Kierkegaard dedicated an entire book and which appears in Heidegger as the fundamental attunement; **the concept of decision** which sounds extraordinarily like Heidegger's notion of 'resoluteness'; and **the concept of despair** which is evidently closely connected with 'being-towards-death' in Heidegger" (pg. 124-125)
      - "...all these categories appear in his work as categories or fundamental constitutive concepts of existence rather than as psychological structures which can be observed in terms of individual human beings. This is connected with the fact that, for Kierkegaard as the theologian that he was, none of these concepts were regarded simply as properties, structures or dynamic determinations of the finite human being but were all led back to the issue that essentially interests the theologian, and particularly the Lutheran theologian. And **this is the relationship between man as a finite being to the infinite, to God, and in particular man's relationship to himself as a being that is at once finite and infinite in a specific metaphysical sense**" (pg. 125)
        - "At this point Kierkegaard is simply continuing the German Idealist approach that he otherwise violently condemns. For there, too, subjectivity involves both of these poles: it is at once a finite sensuous being and an intelligible character" (pg. 125)
          - ◆ "there is a sense in which we can say that Kierkegaard represents at once a nominalistic or psychological and a theological transformation and reformulation of Fichtean philosophy" (pg. 125)
            - ◇ "Since these determinations of existence, while they appear immersed in the concrete life of human beings, are really determinations which belong to the essence of the human being as at once finite and infinite, and since the relationship between these dialectical moments is conceived in absolute terms, **we can in a sense already describe the basic intention of this philosophy as objective, or, if you like, as ontological in character**" (pg. 125)
              - ▶ "in my old book on Kierkegaard I already made an attempt...to show that this extremely anti-ontological philosophy does implicitly contain an ontology" (pg. 125)
        - "**Kierkegaard was really the first person to shift the concept of truth in a genuinely radical way** from its old definition as *adequatio rei atque cogitationes*, namely from the conception of truth as the agreement of thought with its object. For Kierkegaard directly challenged this idea..." (pg. 126)
          - "For Kierkegaard, at any rate, it is clear that truth can no longer be regarded as something lying out there over against the subject. Truth in his sense is no longer understood as the truth which belongs to the scientific judgement or proposition, for **it is essentially nothing other than the relationship of the finite being to itself as subject, insofar as this relationship implies the infinite dimension of the subject**. And I should perhaps just remark in passing that this concept of truth ultimately amounts to a tautology, to a mere doubling of the subject itself" (pg. 126)
            - ◆ "Yet I would like to point out that this remarkable double character on the part of truth and *Dasein* or existence also recurs in both Heidegger and Jaspers, and that we can find some quite astonishing formulations in Heidegger regarding Dasein as the 'same' as being itself which repeat this very tautology in Kierkegaard" (pg. 126)
          - "**to the extent that the subject in Kierkegaard is defined as at once finite and infinite, we can say that it is supposed to be both ontic**

**and ontological" (pg. 126)**

- ◆ "Now the ontological movement certainly sensed as much, and undertook to read this ontological interest in subjectivity, this transition from the subject to the domain of objectivity, out of Kierkegaard's work. But the analysis of existence itself, the determination of existence as a relationship between the finite and the infinite – in Heidegger's terms a relationship between being and beings – now becomes an ontological interpretation of existence. In other words, **the thesis that Dasein is that particular being which also possesses the distinctive quality of being ontological, this fundamental thesis of Heideggerian philosophy, is already precisely prefigured in the definition of the human being as an existing finite being which intrinsically relates itself to the infinite.** Thus, in spite of the subjectivism involved here, the principal thesis or point of departure for ontological objectivism is already implicitly present" (pg. 125-126)
- "the claim that subjectivity is truth...is not to be understood as any kind of psychological relativism, as if it somehow implied that there is simply no truth other than subjectivity" (pg. 126)
  - "On the contrary, it basically implies the Heideggerian thought that **Dasein, namely the existence of the human being, by virtue of its own awareness, already transcends itself and points beyond itself, and thereby participates in a truth which cannot be sought or discovered outside of ourselves,** a truth which is harboured within man himself understood in terms of this very process and relationship. And Heidegger's thesis...that in philosophy everything depends on the question rather than the answer is itself a relatively precise reproduction of what Kierkegaard means with his thesis that subjectivity is truth" (pg. 126-127)
- "Kierkegaard is one with the young Hegelian, left Hegelian and materialist critics of Hegel insofar as he emphatically denies that spirit is capable of defining the Absolute, although he does so in the name of theology, which rejects the possibility that by means of its own resources the human spirit can ever know the Absolute. And **this distinctive tendency to energize the concept of truth, this idea that truth lies in the question rather than the answer or that truth is subjectivity – all of this is intrinsically bound up with the thought that reason is ultimately powerless to grasp the Absolute,** that the truth can be found only in a particular mode of comportment on the part of subjectivity – a subjectivity which cannot of itself furnish the objective measure of truth and is modelled on the theological concept of faith" (pg. 127)
  - "Kierkegaard stands to the right of metaphysics, as it were, or perhaps before metaphysics, insofar as he denies that spirit is able to know the Absolute" (pg. 127)
- "Kierkegaard denies the possibility of providing such a rational account or projection of 'being' in any way that is commensurable with reason. But his **own approach is contradictory,** for the doctrine of existence which he himself presents – precisely because it attempts to interpret this existence in terms of fundamental determinations such as anxiety or despair, or decision and 'the leap', as I have already pointed out – is itself a covert ontology which is not aware of itself as such" (pg. 128)
  - "philosophers drew out this very point and turned what was a derogatory term in Kierkegaard, namely 'ontology', into the problematic title, as people love to say, for precisely what they want to pursue themselves" (pg. 128)
- "in Hegel, as already in Kant as it happens, ontology is basically a negative concept that is identified simply with metaphysics" (pg. 128)
- "Since Heidegger began by tracing back all the individual ontologies – namely the doctrines of the constitutive dimensions of the various domains of being – to the single question of a fundamental ontology or doctrine of being, he eventually came to the conclusion that something such as ontology, namely a rational articulation of being, was no longer possible at all. And in the end **what Heidegger himself (and not merely his imitators) called the question concerning being had completely replaced ontology**" (pg. 128)
- Lecture 13 (pg. 130)
  - "In our last session I said something about the relationship between Kierkegaard and existential ontology, or the ontological movements in philosophy generally, and outlined the way in which I think the function of philosophy has changed in the reception of these ideas" (pg. 130)
  - "I am trying to show that existential ontology or the things which came out of it actually have a tendency to neutralize their own original intentions. And if you reflect more closely upon this process of neutralization, as I have described it in relation to Kierkegaard...you will see that it ends up in a very marked form of anti-subjectivism. This anti-subjectivism is precisely what has emerged from a philosophy with a radically subjective orientation – and you will recall how I have already referred to Fichte in connection with Kierkegaard – and indeed you could also say that this is something which is highly characteristic of Husserl." (pg. 130)
  - "I would simply ask you to recall **Kierkegaard's assertion that subjectivity is truth.** This very nominalistic claim in Kierkegaard is connected, like the doctrine of faith in Luther, with a theological motif which doesn't expressly appear in the pseudonymous and apparently more secular philosophical writings that he dedicated to these ideas, but which of course ultimately stands behind everything that he composed" (pg. 131)
    - "As far as Kierkegaard is concerned, the problem of relativism only arises when the claim that subjectivity is truth is read without recognizing how this subjectivity is intrinsically related to the Absolute, or, as Kierkegaard would have no scruples in saying, to God – in other words, when we ignore that the subject's relationship to itself as something that is also infinite is synonymous with the paradoxical relationship of faith itself" (pg. 131)
      - "the thesis that all knowledge is relative to the subject is what Hegel would have called an extraordinarily abstract one" (pg. 132)
        - ◆ "And as soon as we engage with any particular discipline, and its particular subject matter, and work in detail on some specific problem, we actually find that this question of subjective relativity disappears. It exists only when we remain 'outside'...once we get inside a question, it generally exerts such force in terms of the alternatives that the simple assurance that all knowledge is merely relative no longer looks very persuasive" (pg. 132-133)
          - ◇ "as has often rightly been pointed out, it is actually impossible to develop relativism as a theoretical position precisely because it would be self-refuting if it were presented as a unified and consistent theory" (pg. 133)
    - "The whole fascination which emanates from the concept of being is indeed the fascination with the *Sache*, the thing par excellence, the matter itself, which is supposed to precede all and any conceivable subjectivity" (pg. 134)
      - "in the eyes of Kant (as I hope you all know) knowledge or cognition is divided in terms of form and content, of form and matter. And the form is ultimately nothing but the pure activity which connects the intellectual operations of my mind, or, as Kant expresses it, is simply 'the "I think" which accompanies all my representations' – in other words, is simply the fact that all the particular aspects or moments of my consciousness precisely qua thought are connected with one another in my individual consciousness. In this sense the concept of subjectivity in Kant is already so abstract, so emptied of all particular content, that it is very difficult to relate with the concept of the 'I' at all, for it lacks what, in later terminology, would be called 'egohood'.<sup>9</sup> But as soon as we consider this 'egohood' or 'I-ness', this feeling of 'I', of 'my consciousness', then we immediately move beyond mere 'thinking' and encounter something that actually exists, a moment of facticity, namely the individual consciousness which is here and now in space and time. On the other hand, in Kant, you also find what he describes as material, or the chaotic manifold of sense impressions. Now this chaos of sense impressions is supposed to be utterly and completely indeterminate. Any specific determinations that it comes to acquire, it acquires solely through the subject. This all seems rather comical. For it is actually as if, in Kant – to put this in a somewhat crude and pointed manner – zero times zero is supposed to produce something. This is a consequence which, even as I have just bluntly expressed it, has never really been sufficiently considered. For when something so indeterminate that ultimately nothing at all can be said about it is organized and worked over by something equally abstract and insubstantial, namely thought as such, we suddenly get the

- world. This is a remarkable and ultimately highly paradoxical construction which rather disappears behind the careful, reasonable and apparently commonsensical way in which the Critique of Pure Reason is presented in a series of steps. But I believe that if you really focus on these two poles of the work, and ignore everything in the material or the form which ultimately already goes beyond the pure concept of either, then you are actually left with something utterly indeterminate on both sides. In other words, Kant's transcendental subjectivity is afflicted from the beginning by what can be described with Kierkegaard – since we have already mentioned him – as a certain 'acosmism', namely as a loss or absence of the world" (pg. 134-135)
- "The Hegelian philosophy is the attempt to overcome acosmism in this very sense, to return the world to consciousness, as it were, the world which consciousness had relinquished precisely by reducing itself to pure consciousness" (pg. 136)
  - "...anti-subjectivism can be traced back to this: the thesis that the world as rational belongs to the subject, or the attempt to secure the meaning of the world by recourse to subjectivity, has ended in failure. In other words, this world is not rational, and our faith in the central place of subjectivity has thereby been shattered too" (pg. 136)
    - "if you look at Heidegger's earlier work – since the later Heidegger no longer really engages with these questions – you will find clear evidence of all this in the concept of 'thrownness' and all those negative determinations to which the subject is exposed in his thought. For here you will see how the 'situation' of man in the world (as they used to say) is essentially ratified as one that is not indeed meaningful, and that the idea of any such reconciliation between reason and objectivity has now come to seem obsolete" (pg. 136)
  - "...anti-subjectivism actually embodies an anti-ideological moment. For in one sense it implies...simply that the individual human subject is called upon to renounce its hubristic arrogance, to abandon the idea that it is the lord and master or the centre of the world" (pg. 139)
    - "this antisubjectivism also has something extremely authoritarian about it. For it always harbours the possibility that the subject, since it is not treated as the master of all reality, since it is not in command of the whole, is also regarded as essentially insufficient" (pg. 139)
      - "And this too has its truth moment, for a concept of reason which already acknowledges its own limitations thereby forfeits the claim to absolute logical purity which appears constitutive of the concept of reason itself. Thus a reason which limits itself as something finite and provisional thereby ceases to some extent to be rational" (pg. 139-140)
        - ◆ "...reason, once it becomes aware of its own limits, merely relinquishes itself, turns into the enemy, or simply abandons itself – as something 'thrown' or 'thrust out into the Nothing' – to what is Other in a purely attentive and listening posture. And this is more or less the situation with anti-subjectivism" (pg. 140)
  - "the negativity which the subject encounters in its relation to others and to the world is here transformed, as if by magic, into the positive. In other words, we find that the subject, rather than trying to engage in some way with the condition under which it suffers, only enhances this condition of its own meaninglessness, and even declares it meaningful by saying: the meaning of being is just this thrown and meaningless existence that is thrust out into the Nothing. And the subreption or ideological dimension with which I have charged fundamental ontology ultimately lies precisely here, in this hypostasis of subjectivity which transforms something negative into the positive and meaningful experience of being" (pg. 140)
  - Lecture 14 (pg. 141)
    - "In the last session I tried to unfold something of the dialectic which is implicit in this anti-subjectivist turn of philosophy in general" (pg. 141)
    - "...in terms of Heidegger's own central interest, we find that the concept of 'existence' retreats further and further into the background" (pg. 141)
      - "I think it is certainly worth noting that the influence of this philosophy sprang originally from the way its analysis of the essential character of human existence promised to provide an answer to those questions which, as I pointed out, inspire the ontological interest in the first place. In other words, questions about man's place in the world; about how man relates to the Absolute; about those aspects of experience which go beyond any merely psychological features, namely the *Befindlichkeiten*, or 'attunements', as they were called, which arise out of man's fundamental relationship to reality. This appeared to offer the possibility of developing a concrete concept of man and defining the a priori forms of human existence" (pg. 141-142)
        - "...the whole existential analysis – namely everything that promised to respond to those questions about human existence – was only ever undertaken with a view to elucidating 'being' itself" (pg. 142)
        - "on the one hand, you will find several formulations in which the analysis of *Dasein*, the existential analysis itself, is described simply as a stage on the way to the ontological analysis in the most emphatic and fundamental sense, namely the analysis of what 'being' really is. On the other hand, you also find in *Being and Time* that a crucial position is specifically ascribed to the subject, to *Dasein*, precisely as an ontological mode of being itself, as something that is at once ontic and ontological. For existence is something transparent to itself, as Kierkegaard puts it, and is thus itself ontological in character" (pg. 142)
          - "in this sense Heidegger, like his teacher Husserl, stands in the idealist tradition. Thus the idealist form assumed by the concept of being itself...is bound up with the way in which this philosophy starts out from the crucial character of subjectivity" (pg. 142)
            - ◆ "But I believe that it has not yet been sufficiently understood how this extreme objectivism, which effectively neutralizes the subject and transforms it into 'the questioner', or ultimately into the instrument (to put this in a deliberately exaggerated way) by which being questions itself, has led to a situation in which all of those aspects which originally provoked such interest in this philosophy have now completely retreated into the background" (pg. 142)
      - "this brings us back once again to the concept of the philosophical need. And I would just like to say a few more words about this question today" (pg. 143)
        - "...we think what we want to think, or just indulge in 'wishful thinking', as they say in English. Thus we are hardly capable of free thought, hardly capable of judging a phenomenon unless it somehow already answers to our own emotional and instinctual needs" (pg. 144)
          - "For without some need or other we cannot think at all. A thought which is not somehow really concerned about the object which it intends will never reach its object. I believe that the relationship between need or instinct and the object itself is rather more complex than it is presented here" (pg. 144)
      - "the fundamental structure of Heidegger's philosophy dictates that the impossibility of answering metaphysical questions – and Kant indeed had already recognized this impossibility – is itself substituted for the answer that it fails to provide" (pg. 144)
        - "Kant says: You cannot ask about God, freedom and immortality, or, rather: You can certainly ask about them, but if you try to think about these things, or make cognitive judgements regarding them, you are instantly entangled in contradictions, and these contradictions prove that your question, however unavoidable it may otherwise be, is actually an illegitimate question" (pg. 144)
        - "...a structural characteristic of the entire philosophy of being...is the priority of the question over the answer" (pg. 144-145)
          - "Philosophy of this kind expressly turns the impossibility of answering the genuinely metaphysical questions into its own content, or into the content of metaphysics, and transforms this very impossibility into some sort of positive interpretation of human existence" (pg. 145)
            - ◆ "The process of questioning thereby becomes a technique of thinking rather than a substantial metaphysical quantity in its own right. Yet it appears precisely as the latter in all ontology in its current phase" (pg. 145)
              - ◇ "...this is a kind of 'sour grapes' metaphysics. In other words, a metaphysics which inevitably realizes it is unable to answer its own questions, yet still insists on being metaphysics. Thus it simply glorifies questioning as such and makes that into a kind of metaphysics, turning itself into something that is already supposed to be meaningful and indeed supposed to be more than a

- mere question. This is how the question comes to assume a certain aura in Heidegger and Jaspers, as is evident from the way both thinkers address this entire problematic of 'the question'" (pg. 145)
- **"...philosophical questions in a very peculiar way imply their own answers"** (pg. 146)
    - "When we really think – and philosophical thinking is indeed very rare – we find that the rhythm of such thinking is quite distinctive. It is not as if there is something we don't know, and we just sit down at the desk, with our head in our hands, and think about the question until we arrive at the answer....For surely what generally happens is that thought grasps something in a rather immediate way – we will go into this in more detail next time – or that something strikes us, or that we clearly 'behold' something, as they liked to say thirty years ago, and only then, I would suggest, do we actually look for the questions which help to bring what we have just realized into the continuity of our conscious life." (pg. 146-147)
      - "We might also express this by saying that, in philosophy, the relevant answers are implicitly contained in the shape of the question..." (pg. 147)
  - "it seems to me that the ψευδος [pseudos] here – if I may avoid the cruder word 'mistake' – lies in the way that **Heidegger is misled by the distinctive shape of the philosophical question into devaluing the theoretical answer which is its correlate**. Since the question in philosophy addresses itself to experience, and since the question therefore already implies its answer in a way that is quite different from the special sciences, **he ends up by immediately ascribing something like the dignity of truth to the question itself**. But he fails to make it clear that the distinctive questioning character of philosophical thinking is substantiated only when we relate what has been disclosed to us, and which we go on to explore in our questions in a way that brings it into some rational continuity, into some context of justification, into some self-transparent and clearly motivated relationship. And **Heidegger one-sidedly ignores these achievements of conscious reflection and rationality in the context of philosophical experience precisely by hypostasizing the question**. But this means that the question is effectively turned into an absolute, and thereby becomes just as abstract and independent as that which supposedly corresponds with this wholly abstract and general question devoid of all determination – namely 'being' itself" (pg. 147)
    - "...you will see that the fact that certain questions are constantly talked about or 'thematized', as Husserl or the earlier Heidegger used to say, already becomes a splendid substitute for the fact that these questions are never actually answered" (pg. 148)
    - "In fact I would almost like to say – and would here agree with Heidegger – that it belongs to the very essence of philosophy to deny mere consolation. Yet it turns out in Heidegger, so it seems to me, that this nuance, even if it is only a nuance, constitutes the entire difference between truth and lie. Thus **when we talk about all these categories, about the finitude of man, about the 'thrownness' of Dasein, about the blind contingency and arbitrary character of Dasein, about the ineluctable and unconditional character of death...it appears as if the problems were already solved just by talking about them**" (pg. 148)
  - "...in the last lecture when I pointed out how the anti-institutional impulse, the revolt against the academic professionalization of philosophy, eventually became an academic profession in its own right" (pg. 149)
    - "now at last you will understand why I said that the questions which are raised by fundamental ontology and related movements of philosophy are all indices of a certain lack. I believe it is important that you grasp this state of affairs really clearly if you are to have any real chance of guarding against this wretched mechanism. For when people are so entangled in the completely prosaic and more or less mechanized business of life...it is all too easy for ontological philosophy to transfigure the prose of life with the products it has to offer the consumer" (pg. 149)
  - Lecture 15 (pg. 151)
    - "...existential ontology, the philosophy of existence as a whole, is to a certain extent the successor and inheritor of the philosophy of life – although it regards itself as higher or perhaps deeper because the underlying substance of the philosophy of life, namely the idea of life itself, remains bound up in the context of beings, whereas the philosophy of existence claims to uncover the constitutive factors behind the context of beings themselves" (pg. 153)
      - "But existential philosophy is by no means as radically new or as radically different in relation to the philosophy of life as it likes to present itself" (pg. 153)
    - "...in Heidegger...precisely through its intimate relationship to *Dasein* time becomes the category in which Dasein, and thus beings in general, are constitutively related to being, and vice versa" (pg. 154)
      - "this relationship between beings and the metaphysical principle, a relationship which is here grounded in time, is connected extraordinarily closely with that immanent transcendence...which belongs to life" (pg. 154)
      - "Heidegger's defence of the centrality of time, as specifically expressed in his book on Kant, is based on the idea that the ontological substrate in Kant's philosophy of knowledge, the dimension relevant to being, is to be found in the priority which is here ascribed to time. For it is time, as the medium of all the relations of consciousness, that makes knowledge possible in the first place" (pg. 154)
    - "[wisdom] is the capacity to appropriate experience, the capacity to realize the continuity of an entire life in terms of the actual consciousness that an individual has attained over time. I am talking here about the achieved unity between experience itself and the mental and spiritual capacities that develop and unfold in response to this experience. And that is what is no longer available today. For mental and spiritual capacity today consists more in the ability of human beings to adapt to constantly changing situations, to be flexible, to earn a living in different ways, to exploit the opportunities that present themselves, than it does, for example, in the ability to acquire knowledge and experience of some particular discipline over a period of many years, in such a way that their life continues to reveal the structure of this knowledge and experience" (pg. 155)
    - "we live in a state of society which can be described as one of universal fungibility, where the prevailing principle of exchange ensures that nothing exists for itself, for its own sake, but exists only insofar as it possesses exchange value, and we are elevated and consoled in such a world by this concept of being. For it would like to convince us that there is something else beyond this principle of fungibility, something more weighty and reliable" (pg. 158)
      - "And it is precisely this aura of reliability which lends **the concept of being** its incomparable and anachronistic contemporaneity. The very way it eludes direct confrontation makes us feel that this sterling quality, this well-crafted durability and reliability, will never be lost but can somehow survive in a realm beyond all criticism. For this philosophy avoids all contact or confrontation with the current state of experience" (pg. 158)
        - **"it confers worth or dignity upon something entirely abstract, which certainly possesses all the power of this solidity, of this impenetrability, of this 'thereness', but is also supposed to be something more than mere existence, namely something higher which is thereby protected from the disenchantment of mere existence**. In this way we somehow manage to preserve all these things while simultaneously protecting them from any kind of controversy, from any kind of possible criticism" (pg. 158-159)
          - ◆ "I should just say here that there is another concept which plays a significant and ambiguous role in Heidegger, namely the concept of meaning, which derives from the specifically phenomenological approach to the analysis of meaning" (pg. 159)
      - "Heidegger's entire philosophy characteristically suggests that, if we only attend to these concepts carefully enough, if we 'behold' them in a spirit of veneration, this suffices to reverse the disenchantment of the world. In other words, to repeat what I argued earlier, the thematization of these categories is already taken as a kind of fulfilment, and this makes it appear as if the real need in the face of the disenchantment of the world, a need which is generated by suffering under this disenchantment, had already been dispelled – as if the thing in question were ultimately guaranteed by appealing to the concepts which generally conceal it" (pg. 159)



- "...you should be very clear that this ideology is also extraordinarily clever. Thus we are not invited to contemplate some divine meaning; we are not regaled with stories about the eternity or immutability of being; we are not reassured in concrete terms that something of our actual life in time will never utterly be lost. Rather, the power of this philosophy lies in the way it actually manages to fulfil all the functions that I have analysed for you, even though it accomplishes all these things – and the concept of being is eminently well suited to ensure this, as I shall presently show – by exploiting invariant elements which enjoy the cachet of such invariance without ever really being tied down as such" (pg. 160)
    - "You are all well aware that Heidegger's philosophy likes to claim two things in particular. In the first place, it regards language itself as the organ of 'being' rather than simply, with nominalism, as a system of signs that lets us bring humanly defined and determined things to light θέσει [thesei] or 'in accordance with convention'. This is one particularly emphatic claim on Heidegger's part. And the other equally emphatic claim is that **the thinking of being is really at home in an area that we might describe as prior to or indifferent to the distinction between poetry and philosophy** as it has come to be established" (pg. 160)
- Lecture 16 (pg. 162)
  - "here I would like to pursue the particular thought to which I have brought you at this point, namely the question as to why this ontology is not in fact possible. I would express this as the thesis that it is the irreversible character of historical processes which has brought about the dissolution of traditional ontology" (pg. 164)
  - "I believe it is good for you to realize quite clearly here that philosophies cannot somehow be thought up out of the blue, that they cannot be thought independently of social relations and conditions, of the social structure, in which they arise..." (pg. 164-165)
    - **"The social conditions of the great medieval ontologies...are those of an essentially static and hierarchically organized society which is not exposed to constant change.** The articulated character of this society finds clear expression in the objective and hierarchical structure of the basic categories which have no need to be justified before the bar of reason. And the really static nature of this world reflects the fact that feudal society itself was not essentially dynamic but fundamentally traditionalist in orientation" (pg. 165)
      - **"...the two great ontologies that have come down to us from antiquity in the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle...attempt to legitimate a more or less static-aristocratic or elite-based society** at a moment when its social structure is still visible yet is already threatened by the bourgeois principle represented by the nominalism of the time – i.e. by the sophistic movement. But since these particular social relations no longer obtain today, and since the possibility of experiencing the world as a closed, unchangeable and objectively structured one which is independent of subjective labour and subjective value no longer exists, and since the static character which actually reveals itself in our society today is essentially different from the static character of the Thomist conception of things, **the very attempt to philosophize in an ontological fashion today is a fundamentally anachronistic one"** (pg. 166)
  - "If what has actually survived of the ontological philosophies is the thought that we must not be hindered from pursuing that which ultimately matters, that we should penetrate beyond the façade, that we should not yield to the merely apparent and superficial, that we should attempt to grasp the principles which govern the organization of the whole – if this claim still survives, then it can genuinely do so only in the form of critique, which has taught us that the attempt to grasp 'being' immediately is impossible" (pg. 167)
    - **"...I would say that the entire critique of ontology,** which was pursued in an extremely trenchant way by Kant and Hegel in particular, **is not something that can simply be banished from the world by reference to the alleged subjectivism or idealism of these two thinkers.** The significance of philosophical thoughts cannot merely be measured in terms of the system within which these thoughts stand, for these systems themselves arise essentially from a range of arguments and considerations with a certain logical compulsion." (pg. 167)
  - "[Heidegger] attempts to evade the controversy between the ontologies which have been historically handed down to us and the critique to which they have been subjected by recourse to a kind of thinking which could be described as preontological. In other words, this thinking contains none of the tangible and specific theses which philosophy has already criticized as ontology, such as the thesis regarding the eternal and immutable character of being or of whatever being was supposed to signify. His approach is so archaic, as I would put it, that he attempts...to reach back beyond the archaism of the Middle Ages, for example, and tries to avoid the charge of anachronism by claiming that the origins which he is talking about have nothing whatever to do with what is historically more ancient, that he is talking about origins in an essential rather than a temporal sense" (pg. 168-169)
    - **"...this form of thinking...cannot possibly express itself in anything but this archaic way.** The attempt to avoid the controversy regarding ontology means that Heidegger also tries to evade the controversy between the intrinsic being of essence and the question of its mediation in and through the thinking subject (which is what the entire controversy is ultimately about). And he evades it by claiming that the theses of philosophy, which can only be formulated in conceptual terms and indeed in Heidegger himself are conceptual in character, are themselves ultimately nonconceptual. And this leads him to that cult of the origin, or of renewal, which is by no means accidentally related or simply external to that sympathy with barbarism which appears in the history of his political engagement" (pg. 169)
      - "...in that cult of the origin, in that belief in renewal, in that belief that the power of being would now triumph over the power of darkness – in this entire nexus of elements we actually find the very real nexus of National Socialist ideology – so that we might in a certain sense read Rosenberg, *cum grano salis*, as a key to *Being and Time*" (pg. 169)
  - **"...if you look at Husserl's *Ideas* you will find that he really wants to get 'to the things themselves'.** In order to do so we have to proceed as follows: **we suspend or bracket the whole of the natural world,** we bracket ourselves as natural persons, we also bracket God and a range of other things, and finally we bracket all individual factual being over against the realm of essence. **And what we then have left is the 'things themselves', the field in which phenomenological philosophy is now free to roam around at will"** (pg. 170)
    - "...you get to the doctrine of essences simply by adopting a specific attitude to the world and omitting certain aspects or given features as you choose. And, once you have performed this arbitrary act, what remains is the truth..." (pg. 170-171)
      - **"Husserl took over this technique of reduction** from the tradition – namely **the idea that the object of philosophy is what is left, as it were, after the initial costs have been deducted, and that this is what truth is** – but he no longer grounds or justifies it" (pg. 171)
        - ◆ "Here I just wish to point out that, right at the beginning of the new ontological philosophy, we can already see how the seemingly heightened demand for 'objectivity' announced by the turn to 'things themselves' is simultaneously paid for by the arbitrary character of the attitude or position we are supposed to adopt" (pg. 171)
          - ◇ **"And we find this faithfully repeated in Heidegger with the concept of *Entwurf*, or 'projection'. For his philosophy attempts to 'project' being, or the structure of being, specifically through the analysis of *Dasein*,** though it fails to ask how the possibility of such projection itself is to be justified" (pg. 172)
            - ▶ "The apparently direct and utterly spontaneous character of this approach, the lack of concern for any accompanying epistemological reflection here, is doubtless extremely appealing to many but is actually nothing but an arbitrary act which exempts the philosopher's activity from reflective scrutiny and effectively avoids any engagement with critical reason" (pg. 172)
            - ▶ **"[such is] the most arbitrary aspect of his philosophy** – the idea that I set forth, that I project, that I sketch out in the broadest strokes, without concern for what has been already been thought, that which inwardly holds the world

- together..." (pg. 172)
- "...it is not I or we that is responsible for all this, and if we ask who it is that does the projecting, the answer is simply 'being'!" (pg. 172)
  - ◇ "Here you really have everything together: **the contamination of the archaic with the pure structure of being, the arbitrary positing and, finally, the justification of this arbitrariness as a structure of being itself**, or as some kind of 'destiny' – in short the mythologization of philosophy. Thus we actually find that *Being and Time* already contains at least something, on an incomparably higher level and with incomparably greater sophistication, of what another book on a far lower level once claimed to provide, namely the fiction of a myth for the twentieth century" (pg. 172-173)
- Lecture 17 (pg. 174)
    - **"...Heidegger's philosophy has a tendency to pass over into or revert to mythology"** (pg. 174)
      - "the real task is to glimpse the genuine myth itself at the heart of the false one, if there is indeed such a thing as genuine myth. The task is to recognize how the untruth of these mythical formations actually reproduces the old untruth which comes in a very distinctive way to permeate the new one, namely the fiction of a new mythological consciousness that no longer exists" (pg. 175)
        - "You may recall the passage that I read out for you last time, and which prompted me to speak of myth in this connection. That which 'projects', we were told, is not the human being but 'being' itself, and it is 'being' which 'sends [schickt] man into the ek-sistence of Dasein as his essence'. Of course Heidegger intends us to hear the concordance of schickt, 'sends', with Schicksal, 'fate' or 'destiny', for he constantly operates in a mechanical sort of way with pseudo-etymological connections of this kind. **The point here is fundamentally to ascribe the same quality to 'being' that is usually ascribed to 'fate'**. And we can say that **the concept of being which Heidegger develops here – precisely on account of its abstractness, its indeterminacy, its vague selfidentity – bears all the features of that concept of fate from which humanity has struggled with such tremendous effort to raise itself**" (pg. 176)
          - ◆ "In the first place this concept of being involves the concept of hubris, the idea that man fails to know his limits. In this connection this implies that man as a pre-eminent and sovereign being already rises up above this immediate context of nature as in himself a kind of spontaneous natural power. But he thereby actually falls victim to this natural context itself, thus becoming caught up in the guilt context of the living, as Benjamin once aptly and insightfully defined the concept of fate" (pg. 176)
            - ◇ "I would specifically like to point out here that you find this very concept of hubris in the doctrine that what ultimately 'throws' or 'casts' in the process of 'projection' is not man but 'being' itself" (pg. 176)
              - ▶ "it is as if the activity of human beings, involved as it is in such 'projection', were immediately transformed – without any further reflection or justification – into the objective voice of being itself. The mediating processes of subjectivity which can never be eliminated from the activity of thought are here simply deleted. This is the ultimate consequence of the basic contention of the entire phenomenological school that things present themselves to consciousness purely and simply as what they are – thus forgetting the subject to whom they present themselves, and forgetting the fact that they must presuppose a consciousness in order to present themselves at all" (pg. 176-177)
                - "...early on in these lectures I showed how this very concept of being, which is so suspicious of the subject and so ready to relinquish all subjective determinations, actually reveals itself to be an unwittingly self-imposed form of idealism or subjectivism that is blind to its own character" (pg. 177)
                - ▶ **"that which can be conceived only as spontaneity, subjectivity and thought is here relegated at a stroke to the side of being itself simply by appeal to language and the talk of thrown 'projection'". The subject which is at work here is silenced but is immeasurably intensified in the process, presenting its own work as if it had now escaped the limits of subjectivity, as if it were now immediately the object itself. Thus **it is the very anti-subjectivism of this theory**, the very claim that it is not some subjective expression of thinking, which inwardly reveals, as I would say, the heinous arrogance of the subject which **imagines its own thinking to be entirely free of subjective limitations and acts as if the Absolute itself were speaking through it**" (pg. 177)**
                - ◆ **"...what is ascribed to 'being' in this context bears all the marks of irrationality**. In other words, 'being' is characterized as something utterly obscure that may somehow be intimated and venerated, but about which nothing substantive can ever be said" (pg. 177)
- "In view of the blindness which is ascribed to being, and which requires nothing but what Heidegger elsewhere describes as *Hörigkeit*, or 'obedient hearkening', a hearkening to being which sounds like blind submission, it is not hard to understand why the concept of anxiety becomes such a decisive 'existential' in Heidegger" (pg. 177-178)
    - "we must be quite clear that this existential is not actually a fundamental dimension of being itself which is revealed in Dasein, as Heidegger maintains. On the contrary, this anxiety is itself mediated in the sense that it prevails and dominates in an absolute way only when thinking is unable to recognize any authority other than that of blind fate" (pg. 178)
      - "it was just such anxiety which philosophy and the great religions formerly undertook to dispel. And I am quite unable to understand...how modern theology itself, in what can only be seen as a symptom of its current insecurity, has completely failed to recognize this frankly pagan moment of Heideggerean philosophy, which is so fundamentally at odds with its own essential concerns" (pg. 178)
  - **"the very aspects or moments of his thinking which allowed him to identify the Führer with 'being' are already harboured in this concept of being itself, are necessarily involved in the constitution of his thought"** (pg. 179)
    - "the way this philosophy constantly changes back and forth between the ontic and the ontological... is precisely what lends it the semblance of life" (pg. 180)
  - "Wherever there has been any philosophy which really deserved the name it has never recognized this division between 'proper' philosophy on one side and 'mere' social philosophy on the other. And we fall below philosophy not when we engage with social thought but when we try and enforce a rigid and mechanical separation of both these two moments. The actual social consequence, as I already pointed out, of **this mythological aspect, of this understanding of being, which basically stands in for the kosmos as conceived by the philosophy of nature**, is that all we can ultimately do is blindly subject ourselves to something precisely because it is intrinsically irrational and impenetrable. In other words, it effectively demands that we submit to the blind course of history as the unfolding of the history of being" (pg. 179)
    - "this mythologizing philosophy – and this is surely part of its suggestive power, part of its theological seductiveness, if I may put it like that – essentially involves a kind of vagueness and indeterminacy which is rooted in its own irrational character, but which it actually ascribes to itself as if it were some special higher quality. Yet this philosophy is essentially abstract" (pg. 181)
  - "If you recall what I was trying to explain to you before about the origins of all those philosophies where you encounter the word 'existence' or 'existential' in the wake of Kierkegaard, you will also remember that one of the most essential and original motivations at work here was to escape the formalism of Kantian and of all post-Kantian theory. In other words, **all of these philosophies can be interpreted in terms of a longing for concreteness**. And, if you read Heidegger himself, you will constantly encounter in the language which is deployed here...innumerable expressions which certainly aspire to concreteness" (pg. 181)
    - "the concrete here is not actually what you conceive it to be but is something 'wholly other', and ultimately something abstract. It skims the

- cream off the concrete and gives us the feeling that we have something really tangible to hold onto and are not just being fobbed off. At the same time, however, it skims the cream off philosophy and tells us that it is not of course talking about that lowly concreteness you had in mind; rather, it is talking about something much higher and more essential, something that is bound up with eternal and immutable being. It thereby perpetuates the gesture of killing two birds with one stone." (pg. 181)
- "I pointed out before that this whole movement of philosophy was originally anti-formalistic in character. That is the point where Kierkegaard's critique of Hegel (though he was significantly misunderstood in this regard) essentially converged with Scheler's critique of the formalism of Kantian ethics in his famous early book on the subject. For both thinkers claimed that these earlier philosophers remained caught up in the domain of purely abstract concepts without being able to reveal what mattered as far as the real relations and essential interests of the actual human being were concerned" (pg. 181-182)
    - "Scheler sought to counter such abstractness with the idea of a material ethics of value, with a hierarchy of values, which no longer undertook to identify the universal principle of legislation in terms of the categorical imperative for example. His material ethics attempted instead to articulate and systematize, in an extremely precise and almost casuistical fashion, the various values that actually exist, from the very lowest to the highest, so that philosophy might then in a certain sense concretely tell us what is good and what is bad" (pg. 182)
  - "Now the concept of being you find in Heidegger is just as empty, indeed I would say even emptier, so that at the end of this whole movement of thought we find we are cheated of what we were authentically promised in the first place. This notion of the genuine or the 'authentic', of what is truly at stake, of that which previous philosophy failed to give but is now provided for us – this is here accomplished by **concepts which are defined or determined no longer in relation to other concepts** but simply through themselves, and which finally become little more than constantly invoked and endlessly repeated formulae" (pg. 182)
    - *\*this 'concepts being defined through concepts' is the underpinning to Adorno's dialectical theory.*
      - "You can only move *beyond* these things once you have been *inside* them, that is, once you have comprehended them. It is not enough for you just to say: I really wanted something concrete, but it turns out that it is not concrete at all. You must understand precisely why this cannot be concrete, for **only then is the power of critical thinking which is meant to take you beyond these things truly effective**" (pg. 183)
  - Lecture 18 (pg. 186)
    - "...Heidegger was far more deeply indebted to Husserl, and had far more in common with him, than he felt it wise to admit..." (pg. 186)
      - "...you could even trace the whole aporetic structure of Heidegger's philosophy of being back to this remarkable constellation of scholastic ontology and empiricism" (pg. 187)
        - "In terms of the history of philosophy I should point out that Husserl was a student of Franz Brentano, and Brentano's philosophy represented a very distinctive synthesis of features of the scholastic tradition – he was originally a Catholic priest, although he later abandoned the calling – with elements of empiricism, and especially with psychological and other empirical findings" (pg. 187)
    - "...Husserl's method consisted in intuiting the concept on the basis of the given being or entity, on the basis of the particular instance which we behold, and which is perceptibly 'given' to us in the usual epistemological sense – for in this respect Heidegger never really ceased to consider himself a follower of Husserl" (pg. 188)
      - "...all we allegedly have to do is to attend to any particular being or entity in its givenness in order to apprehend its essence in each case. But in Husserl this apparent immediacy, which is already implied in the concept of categorial intuition or the intuition of essences, has a moment or aspect which does not deny, and to Husserl's credit does not wish to deny, the activity or subjectivity which is involved in conceptuality. **According to Husserl, all you have to do, if you wish to intuit the essence of a particular object or comprehend its essential character, is something quite simple which amounts to a kind of abstraction, namely to bracket or ignore its facticity.** Thus if some object or other is 'given' before your very eyes, you simply need to cancel the thesis of its actuality, its individuated reality in space and time, and attend to the object precisely as it is given to you as the object of your thought, as the specific object of an 'intentional act', without undertaking to affirm anything at all regarding its spatiotemporal existence. What remains after this simple process of subtraction, in other words, what remains of this blackboard if you completely ignore its particular spatio-temporal character at this point in time in this particular lecture room – that is supposed to be simply identical with the essence of this blackboard. And this essence is supposed to be pure, to be binding and independent of all actual experience. Yet at the same time this essence – which is the whole point of this philosophy, which has derived the essence from just such a particular being or entity – is supposed to retain this very quality of givenness and perceptibility" (pg. 188)
        - "...these essences are also taken to be immediately accessible, to be immediate objects of primordial experience or, as Husserl himself usually puts it (although he also employs the expression 'primordial experience'), to be 'given in ordinary intuition'" (pg. 188-189)
          - ◆ "This is the constellation of elements which characterizes this entire school. And I would really emphasize that **this specific character actually provides the key for understanding what Heidegger means by the concept of being as such**, and how these mutually exclusive predicates of immediate givenness and intuitive immediacy on the one hand and purity and a priority on the other are both fulfilled at once" (pg. 189)
            - ◇ "...this same antinomic structure recurs in Heidegger's philosophy, and indeed especially in his doctrine of being. **What appears in Husserl under the name of purity, under the name of the intuited essence, or εἶδος [eidos] (which is just the old Platonic name for essence), is reproduced in Heidegger's concept of being, in the notion of the separation of being from the entire realm of beings**" (pg. 189)
            - ◆ "...the ambiguity we find in Husserl is simply perpetuated in Heidegger's philosophy, for, while 'being' is supposedly contrasted with and expressly distinguished from 'beings', it is not supposed to be a pure concept, or something else again. On the contrary, it is **supposedly something which precedes all this, which ultimately cannot be expressed at all, which is itself indifferent to the distinction between being and beings**" (pg. 189-190)
        - "I should also add that **this theory of subtraction, this process of abstracting from concrete individuation**, is not the only interpretation which Husserl provides in this regard" (pg. 189)
      - "you might object here...that the charge I have repeatedly levelled against Heidegger, namely that of ontologizing the ontic, is baseless precisely because he himself already expressly emphasizes the distinction between being and beings in his own doctrine of ontological difference. But this is merely an illusory claim" (pg. 190)
        - "...he sets up the concept of ontological difference only in order to do away with it" (pg. 190)
          - "...**he claims that the ontological difference itself, namely the difference of being and beings, can only be understood by analysing the meaning of being.** In other words, this difference lies in the character of being itself; it belongs to being to reveal itself or to appear in the context of beings. Thus the ontological difference which is announced with such a fanfare is simply reabsorbed by the indifferent concept of being" (pg. 190)
        - "it is quite clear from other passages in Heidegger that he **emphatically denies the conceptual character of what he calls 'being'**. On the one hand you have the claim that being is non-conceptual, the demand to acknowledge its immediacy, and thus the demand for a primordial experience of being in this regard. **We are repeatedly assured that everything depends on some such primordial experience...The process is**

- mythologized when we are told that whether we come to experience being lies at the disposal of being itself, that being reveals or unveils itself, that being lights up for us, and indeed only for us; and, furthermore, that **its hiddenness** – in other words, the impossibility of immediately perceiving it – **already belongs to its ontological character**. On the other hand, **being is supposed to be pure, or entirely independent of any individual or determinate being or entity**. In other words, being is supposed to enjoy every advantage of the conceptual in comparison with the content of experience, and every advantage of immediate experience in comparison with the conceptual." (pg. 191)
- "...the moment of subjective mediation, to which I have repeatedly drawn your attention, is already downgraded – as if it simply belonged to the superstructure of consciousness, as if it were something which a busily interfering and superfluous consciousness externally introduces and imposes, thus sacrilegiously disturbing or contaminating the purity or givenness of being itself" (pg. 191-192)
  - "that which is pure and free from all contamination by experience cannot actually be regarded as something immediate precisely because immediacy is experience itself, something which involves a kind of primary evidence. But that which is immediately present to us is not itself pure, is not something a priori – unless the subject, the moment of reflection, also comes into it, yet this further moment of subjective reflection is precisely what is repudiated by Heidegger and fundamental ontology. In short, **the construction of the concept of being, which is meant to meet these contradictory demands, cannot be redeemed if we apply a two-valued logic, which seems right only for a two-valued philosophy such as Heidegger's**" (pg. 192)
    - "I have shown, or I hope I have shown, that nothing determinate can possibly be thought here precisely on account of the contradictory character of the construction in question. For every determinate thought of what being could mean would inevitably compromise one or other of these demands – either the purity of being as distinct from beings or the primary experience or self-manifestation of being. Thus **the emptiness or inconceivability of the concept of being, what I have called the elusiveness of this concept, is not merely an intellectual error but something grounded in the very structure and approach of this kind of thinking.**" (pg. 192)
      - "**Heidegger's own procedure...is precisely to elevate the inconceivability or incompatibility of the moments that essentially constitute his concept of being** into a distinctive advantage and particular merit on the part of this concept." (pg. 193)
        - ◆ "...the characteristically aporetic construction of the concept of being in the sense that this very lack of determinate distinction, the lack in our inability to think being at all, is expressly claimed by Heidegger as the privilege of such being, as the privilege which belongs to this thinking of being over and beyond all our usual and merely reflective knowledge" (pg. 193)
    - "I do not even wish to deny that there is the kind of experience that he talks so much about in terms of the word 'being'..." (pg. 194)
    - "...I believe Heidegger is guilty of arresting and reifying a kind of experience which is graced and distinguished by its intrinsically fugitive character and can never become merely thing-like. **He zealously protests, of course, that 'being' is anything but a thing** – it cannot possibly resemble a thing or manifest thing-like features for there is not supposed to be anything remotely determinate about it – **yet he turns the truth we sense in the rustling of leaves or the flow of music, which lies precisely in its fugitive and perishable character, into something merely positive in the concept of 'being itself'** – into something that we can have and hold, into something which is, after all, essentially an object of thought. And it is in this move to positivity, where the content is thereby instantly converted to untruth, that the *πρῶτον ψεῦδος* [*prōton pseudos*] of this philosophy consists. For the truth of such experience is inseparable from its fugitive character. As soon as it is seized and arrested, as soon as it is transformed into a general structure, which is what Heidegger invariably does, it already becomes delusory, already becomes reified. And it is precisely here that we find a spurious aestheticizing of thought where forms of experience that are possible only in art, and then only by virtue of that semblance which belongs to art, are treated as if this semblance were immediately available to us in the realm of knowledge. And this parody of art in a false claim to knowledge is also the origin of false art" (pg. 195)
    - Lecture 19 (pg. 196)
      - "...you will have noticed that I like to speak as freely and spontaneously as possible. And there is a good reason for this. For I realize that, on account of the way I usually write, things can become so involved, *tant mieux que mal*, that they are not always particularly easy to follow" (pg. 196)
      - "Heidegger's philosophy, as you know, at least in the famous period of *Being and Time*, reveals an extraordinary antipathy to what he there describes as *das Man*, or 'the They'...as he attempted to interpret the sphere of 'the inauthentic', of 'the They', of 'idle talk', and all the categories which appear at this point, in expressly ontological terms, namely in terms of the 'forgetfulness of being'. In other words, these categories are now ascribed to the mythic and enigmatic fate or 'sending' which belongs to being itself" (pg. 196-197)
        - "But this strikes me as another expression of Heidegger's strategy for avoiding any genuine determinacy rather than as something that would change anything in the basic structure of his thought. And when he finally starts talking about the homelessness of thinking, and about a kind of thinking that might indeed find its way home, this is only an extension of the same old structure. That is why I feel I should draw your attention to something which perhaps emerges from the context of the deduction which I presented last time: **the deduction of the empty and tautological essence of the central Heideggerean category of being, an essence that can never indeed be fulfilled by thought**. In other words, Heidegger's philosophy resembles a highly developed system of credit in which one concept constantly borrows from another" (pg. 197)
          - "**That 'being' is neither fact nor concept exempts it from critique. Every kind of objection is branded as misunderstanding**. The concept borrows its air of concreteness from the factual, from the plenitude of all that is not the product of thought, in short, from the 'in itself'. But the realm of beings borrows from the synthesizing mind that aura of being more than it actually is, that sense of hallowed transcendence – and indeed at one point Heidegger specifically describes being as 'the transcendens par excellence'" (pg. 197)
            - ◆ "The only possible determination that remains for it [e.g., being] is precisely its indeterminacy" (pg. 197)
        - "**There is no intention that the latter [e.g., Heidegger's concept of being] should be regarded as anything like an objective thing, for a thing suggests something fixed and solid, something specific and clearly defined**. 'Being' has the distinctive merit of not being thing-like at all, of not possessing any such substantive or objective determinacy. It is this weariness with the subjective limitations of knowledge, with its mediated character, which leads Heidegger to assure us that what transcends subjectivity is something immediate for subjectivity, something that is not contaminated by conceptuality, by anything that is arbitrarily produced or fabricated by subjectivity..." (pg. 198)
          - "Where Heidegger's thought turns its back on subjectivity, as it were, hoping to cling directly to things as they show themselves to be, attempting to do material justice to things themselves in a way that seems at once archaic and soberly objective, he removes and withdraws every determination from what is thought – just as Kant once proceeded with the transcendent dimension of his philosophy, namely the thing in itself as the unknown cause of its own appearances" (pg. 198)
          - "...Heidegger effectively tries to unify contradictory demands. These demands suppress one another precisely through the relationship in which they are placed, leaving nothing behind. While there is no speculative exploration of what thought can accomplish here, it is equally impossible for anything actual to impinge on thought, for such a piece of the world could only compromise the priority of 'being'. Thought no longer trusts itself to think anything but what is wholly empty and abstract..." (pg. 199)
            - "It is to be reproached instead for proclaiming the nothingness of its highest word as something essentially positive" (pg. 199)
          - "**And the word 'being' lends itself perfectly to this**. That which belongs to mind or spirit is now translated into a given that is *sui generis*" (pg. 199)
          - "The Kantian question of constitution which would inevitably destroy the ontological thesis of the priority of 'being' is swept aside. **The core of rationality, the domain of the concept, is reinterpreted in terms of that which simply 'shows itself' and converted into the utterly irrational, which eludes all judgement on the part of reason...**" (pg. 199)

- "Haag puts it as follows: **'Ontology ends up by arbitrarily proposing "being" as the utterly immediate, although in its very purity it is precisely the opposite of pure immediacy, is mediated through and through, and is meaningful only in terms of mediations.'**" (pg. 199)
    - "That which is actually mediated is elevated to the matter itself, the thing *κατ' ἐξοχήν* [kat' exochēn], to something that, as I said, is no longer a thing or matter at all. Mind becomes simply receptive and spared all rational critique. But it is also spiritualized and elevated as 'being', accessible only to the pure gaze of thought, far beyond the multivarious *ὄντα* [onta] for which 'being' serves as a prius only through a kind of pre-established harmony" (pg. 199-200)
  - "This reciprocal dependency – which means that you cannot even express the aspect of synthesis or the aspect of correspondence independently of each other – is the very paradigm or classic case of what is meant by the concept of mediation. And perhaps this is the best context for bringing out for you the strict meaning of this concept. Indeed, when we reflect upon these things, the fact **we are never really sure whether to regard thinking simply as an activity or as an effort to respond and measure up to something is already an indication of this. Whatever we spontaneously think about is inseparable from the way it reveals itself.** Now Heidegger's emphasis upon this aspect, upon the way in which things actually appear or show themselves, his resistance to any reduction of this process of appearing to mere thought about things, would be a very welcome corrective to the standard philosophy of mind. Yet **he then isolates this moment of givenness**, of the *Sachverhalt*, or 'state of affairs', and **treats it just as abstractly...as idealism does**, in the opposite direction, when it isolates the moment of synthesis and treats that abstractly by separating it from that which is synthesized. Once it is hypostasized, this aspect or moment of correspondence *in re* **ceases precisely to be an aspect or moment and is reified** as a result – which is the very last thing that ontology intended in its protest against the division between conceptuality on the one hand and beings or entities on the other. The synthesizing consciousness really does have something receptive about it, and this moment was certainly acknowledged in the detailed descriptions which Husserl provided in his phenomenology of mental acts" (pg. 200-201)
    - "There is a sense in which you should regard a judgement not merely as something abstracted in comparison with other states of affairs but as something with an immediacy of its own where a specific state of affairs is 'evident' in this individual determinate judgement. **There is no need to dispute the immediacy of insight in this sense, to challenge the idea that there is such a thing as immediate insight. But we do need to challenge the tendency to isolate and hypostasize, or to bestow absolute significance, upon such insight**" (pg. 201)
      - "When we become directly aware of something in the specific object which is not universal, which does not belong to the 'species', this casts a very sharp light on the latter. It is this aspect or moment alone which leads beyond the tautology which tells us only how the species is already defined through the common feature which encompasses all its instances. Without this moment of immediate insight, Hegel's claim that the particular is the universal would be pointless. Phenomenology after Husserl has preserved this, though also at the cost of the complementary element. But the phenomenological intuition of essences involves contradictions which cannot simply be resolved on the side either of nominalism or of realism. On the one hand, **the intuition of essences is ideation, with its elective affinity to ideology, to the fraudulent importation of immediacy through something that is mediated, which it clothes in the authority of an absolute being-in-itself that is incontestably evident to the subject.** On the other hand, the intuition of essences captures something that is right and true, namely a physiognomic insight into states of affairs. It is legitimated by the fact that the mental or spiritual is not constituted by the consciousness which is directed towards it in the act of knowing but is objectively grounded in itself, far beyond the individual agent, in the collective life of spirit. The aspect or moment of immediate insight is adequate to that objectivity of spirit. As something already pre-formed in itself, it can also be intuited or perceived, as ordinary sensuous things can be perceived. **It is just that this intuition is not absolute and irrefutable, any more than the things of sense perception are absolute and irrefutable**" (pg. 201)
        - ◆ "[Husserl] wavers between scientism as a philosophical model and philosophy as the self-reflection of science. And the resulting confusion is responsible for the ideological misuse of categorial intuition" (pg. 202)
      - "**The ideating gaze rouses the moment of mediation which was ossified in the apparent immediacy of spirit as given.** You could even say that the intuition of essences is very close to the allegorical consciousness which awakens in images and objects what they used to be, awakens the intentions which formerly gave them life but now lie petrified within them. As the experience of what has already come to pass with things that are supposed to be no more than what they are, **such ideation, such intuition of essences, would almost be the very opposite of what it is taken for: not the obedient acceptance 'being' but a critique of being as the merely apparent, not the consciousness of the identity of thing and concept but rather a consciousness of the breach between them. What the philosophy of being insists on, as if it were the organ of something which is actually spurious, finds its truth in negativity**" (pg. 202)
        - ◆ "The more completely socialized the world becomes, the more densely its objects are enveloped in universal determinations, the more the individual phenomenon or state of affairs can distinctly manifest its universal character, and the more can be exposed through micrological immersion in the phenomenon. All this, indeed, is sharply opposed to the intentions of ontology, although it may well have prompted the doctrine of the intuition of essences in a way unknown to ontology itself. I am talking about the sheer sameness of the standardized and administered world – where we have only to scrutinize a particular aspect to discover what is effectively the principle of the whole – even if the philosophy of being has not really thought about this at all!" (pg. 202)
    - "Heidegger's emphasis on 'being'...is meant to be more than any mere concept..." (pg. 202)
      - **\*\*\*"The claim that 'being', prior to all abstraction, is not really a concept, or is at least a qualitatively unique one, fails to recognize that the moment of immediacy – which, as Hegel's Phenomenology already teaches, is constantly reproduced at every level of consciousness and in every process of mediation – is an aspect or moment rather than the whole of cognition. But no ontological project ever gets by without bestowing absolute significance on some particular aspect or moment that is singled out.** If cognition is the interplay of conceptual synthesis and that which is to be synthesized, where neither process is independent of the other, one cannot appeal to the kind of immediate commemoration that Heidegger stipulates as the only ultimate justification worthy of a philosophy of being – unless the activity or spontaneity of thought that he despises were directly involved. **If reflection would lack content without the moment of immediacy, the latter would lack any binding force, would remain entirely arbitrary, without reflection, without the thoughtful discriminating exploration of what self-showing 'being' allegedly means for a purely passive thinking that does not think.** And this is what gives rise to the artisanal tone of the *pronunciamenti* that 'being' illuminates or unveils. If the thoughtful exploration, determination and fulfilment of the primordial word, if the critical confrontation of this word with what is ultimately at stake, proves impossible, then all this talk of 'being' is fruitless. It has not properly been thought because it cannot be thought at all in the indeterminacy which it demands. And when this unthinkable is turned into a fitting expression of thoughtful reverence, this reverence resembles the attitude of the fox who claimed to find the grapes too sour. As I said, **it has not been thought because it cannot be thought at all in the indeterminacy which it demands.** But the way in which **the philosophy of being turns this inconceivability into unassailability, this exemption from rational examination into a form of transcendence beyond the reflective understanding, is a violent act that is as clever as it is desperate.** Heidegger wants to break out of the immanent sphere of consciousness more decisively than the phenomenology of Husserl, which stopped only half-way there. Yet he breaks out only into a mirror, as it were, being blind to the moment of synthesis in the substrate. He ignores the way that mind, which confessed itself identical to 'being' in this apostrophized philosophy of being, is already implied in what he presents as the pure 'Itself' which mind would allegedly have before it, namely as 'being'. Heidegger's critique of the philosophical tradition objectively becomes the opposite of what it promises. In underestimating the moment of subjective mind or spirit, and thus also

inevitably underestimating the task of exploring its counterpart, namely the material, the facticity, on which synthesis operates, in pretending to offer what is articulated in accordance with these moments as if it were somehow unitary or absolute, this philosophy fails the challenge of breaking the spell that human beings have made of their concepts; it ends up, to use Heidegger's own language, chasing something actually made or 'fabricated'. Instead of diagnosing human relations in the process, it conflates them with the mundus intelligibilis. It repeats and preserves precisely what it rails against, the intellectual constructions which, according to its own jargon, were the targets of 'destruction' – although they emerge rather well from this destructive impulse. Under the pretext of helping to reveal what they allegedly conceal, these constructions are once again unwittingly turned into the kind of reality 'in itself' which they have anyway already become for reified consciousness. What acts as if it were destroying the fetishes serves only to destroy the conditions which would allow one to see them as fetishes. The apparent breakout terminates in the very thing that it would flee. **The 'being' in which it issues is  $\theta\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\epsilon\iota$  [thesei] rather than  $\phi\acute{\upsilon}\sigma\epsilon\iota$  [phusei]. Heidegger's understanding with fascism and the ideology of the conservative revolution – the more elegant version of fascist ideology – was not a reckless act of thoughtlessness but lay in the content of his doctrine.** In ceding 'being', which is mediated by mind, to a kind of purely receptive vision, philosophy converges with the irrationalist vision espoused by the life philosophy which fundamental ontology treats with such disdain. Recognition of irrationality would not itself already be the same as philosophical irrationalism. Irrationality is the mark which the ineliminable non-identity of subject and object leaves behind in the knowledge that postulates identity through the mere form of predicative judgement. Irrationality here also represents the hope that the merely subjective concept might not be irresistible, the pledge that not everything which exists can be exhausted by conceptuality. **But, in turn, irrationality itself remains a function of ratio, specifiable in relation to the self-determination of the latter: what slips through the net is still filtered by it. The philosophies of irrationalism themselves cannot do without concepts and thereby involve a rational moment that gives the lie to their general thesis.** Heidegger evades the aporia which it was one of the intentions of dialectical thought to resolve in that he feigns a standpoint beyond – you could also say prior to – the distinction of subject and object, one where the inadequacy of ratio to what needs to be thought is clearly revealed. Yet this leap miscarries with the means of reason. **Thought is incapable of occupying any position in which the separation of subject and object that is involved in every thought, in thinking as such, could simply vanish.** And that is why the truth moment in Heidegger's philosophy is corrupted into an irrationalist world-view. Philosophy today, as in Kant's time, would be a critique of reason conducted by reason itself rather than the banishment or dissolution of reason." (pg. 203-205)

- ◆ **"By prohibiting thought, thinking sanctions what simply exists. The genuinely critical need for thought...is here arrested, channelled and redirected towards false consciousness.** Imbued with the culture that surrounds it, thought is discouraged from asking what all this is really for or, to put it loosely, from raising the question about the meaning of all this. The question vanishes behind the 'This is how it is and must be' of everything that claims, as culture, to evince real meaning. Beneath the burden of existing culture, it is not asked whether the meaning which culture claims to have is actually realized, or whether the meaning that it claims even has any truth of its own. And **fundamental ontology** now steps forward as the advocate of this interest in meaning. And this is not the least reason why it **directs its polemic specifically at epistemology or the theory of knowledge which deems such interest prejudicial.** Nonetheless, fundamental ontology cannot simply annul the theory of knowledge. In the doctrine of *Dasein*, of subjectivity, as the royal road to ontology, we see how the old *intentio obliqua*, the reference back to the subject, though humbled by ontological pathos, is still secretly at work. The invocation of the phenomenological method at least on the part of the early Heidegger shows how deeply this thinking is rooted in the tradition of Western philosophy even as it undertakes to disempower that tradition. The primordial impression which such thinking makes springs from the increasing loss of intellectual culture amongst those who are so enthused by this philosophy" (pg. 205-206)

- "The claim that the meaning of the word 'being' is immediately the same as the meaning of being is a spurious equivocation according to the generally accepted rules of logic, and also according to the distinctions developed in the second volume of Husserl's *Logical Investigations*" (pg. 206)

- Lecture 20 (pg. 207)

- "Ladies and gentlemen, you will remember that in the previous session I began by telling you something about the problems which are bound up with the concept of the meaning of being in fundamental ontology. **In Heidegger's work, as I explained to you, being is, in phenomenological terms, essence in something like Husserl's sense – that is to say, it is unconnected with the *facta* individuated in time and space, with the  $\acute{\omicron}\nu\tau\alpha$  [onta].** If true being is presented as radically separate from beings, as radically separate as it is presented in the programme of *Being and Time*, then 'being' is actually identical with its merely semantic, grammatical meaning. When being is so completely separated from any real or factual content, one has only, therefore, to give it the meaning of the essential in order to reach the meaning of being itself. Thus according to this schema **in Heidegger's work...we find that being is a pure essence which does not relate to anything factual at all, but (if you will allow me to put it this way) is simply exhausted in its intellectual content.** But then, in order to secure being itself, I no longer need to appeal to any *facta* which might be involved in 'being'; all I need instead is the meaning of this expression, of what is meant by it, and then I know what being itself is. **For being itself is a pure essence; in other words, it is nothing but a pure meaning, without reference to any actual beings.** But, with this schema, the attempt to break out of idealism which, as I said, all ontological philosophy once undertook is already revoked. **The theory of being regresses into a theory of thinking, that is, of pure meaning, and being is deprived of everything which would be more than mere thought. This manoeuvre obeys a need.** In order to find some meaning for being, of whatever kind – although it has already been decided negatively by the question of the meaning of being as precisely that which is absent – what is summoned up is something constituted in advance as the domain of meaning, that is to say, the theory of signification. **The fact that concepts have to mean something in order to be concepts at all becomes a vehicle for suggesting that what lies behind them, namely being itself, has meaning, because being is not given in any other way than as concept,** as linguistic signification" (pg. 207-208)
  - "Consolation is actually the magnet of fundamental ontology, going far beyond the latter's theoretical content. But, in this, fundamental ontology, with its delicate sensorium for intellectual power-relationships, adapts itself to the situation and protects itself from the kind of all-too-blank affirmativeness which hardly anyone would be able to believe in such dark times. On the contrary, its metaphysical instrumentarium resembles the political appeal to the necessity of 'blood, sweat and tears', which, even fifteen years after the war, and long after Churchill spoke these famous words, still serves a propagandistic purpose in enlisting the masochistic potential of the population at large. **The 'authentic' realities are transposed into a tragic minor key,** which encourages us to make sacrifices, even though we do not really know what they are made for – this is how it was, at least, at the stage of *Being and Time*; in the meantime, however, fundamental ontology itself has become much more cautious in this regard. That 'nothing' into which the aporetic concept of being readily changes at times also permits a gesture of brow-furrowing hopeless earnestness which no longer allows any suspicion of the official optimism to surface" (pg. 208)
- "...Heidegger attempts to turn his conception of project into that of being itself..." (pg. 208-209)
  - "...order, in itself, becomes a fetish for the ontological projects, right through to the 'structure of being'" (pg. 209)
- "In the later phase of Heidegger's philosophy, nothing remains of the embarrassing eternal values but the confidence in the sacredness of being as an essence which is elevated beyond all that is thing-like." (pg. 211)
  - **"Being must not, at any cost, be a thing, yet, as his metaphors indicate over and over again, it is supposed to be the 'ground', to be something**

- firm – this is precisely how it is formulated in the text *On the Essence of Ground*, which particularly emphasizes this aspect of the concept of being.** In reality, subjectivization and reification do not simply diverge from each other but are also correlated. The more that which is known is functionalized, and the more it becomes a product of cognition, all the more completely is the dynamic aspect in what is known turned into an activity of the subject, and all the more completely does the object, the result of the labour congealed in it, become something dead. For the reduction of the object to mere material, a reduction which precedes any subjective synthesis, as a necessary condition of that synthesis, sucks all of the object's own dynamism out of it; deprived of qualities, the object is closed down, robbed of anything of which movement as such might be predicated" (pg. 212)
- "At the beginning of this lecture, in analysing this talk about the meaning of being, I drew your attention to the fact that the schema (to speak amicably), the trick or the ψεῦδος [pseudos] (to speak less amicably) of this whole philosophical approach consists in a kind of hypostasis, in taking a kind of indistinct equivocation as a starting point. And indeed this goes very well with what I explained earlier when I showed you how this mythological thinking allows itself to invoke the sort of fusion or indistinctness against which the whole history of enlightenment, in the broadest sense, was directed..." (pg. 213)
  - "I told you that 'beings' and 'being' refer back to a grammatical unity; that the one is a participle, the other an infinitive of the same lexical stem – and this, indeed, not only in an etymological but also in a semantic sense. In other words, **they are syntactic or grammatical forms of exactly the same meaning-bearing word.** Now the word 'is', the copula, belongs to a similar context; and I believe that the really central considerations which should be addressed, in a critical sense, to Heidegger's philosophy must engage with the concept of the copula" (pg. 213-214)
    - "This 'is' thereby expresses something ontic...that is, a state of affairs which applies to that which is, which through this very 'is' becomes a being that is. At the same time, however, this 'is', taken purely for itself (that is, as a copula) signifies the universal categorial state of affairs of this synthesis and does not, therefore, to this extent, represent something ontic" (pg. 214)
      - "Certainly the 'is', as I have already said, corresponds to a state of affairs: to the simple fact that in any predicative judgement this 'is' has a meaning, just as do A and B, subject and predicate. But this meaning – and that is the decisive point here – is, as Kraus (I mean Oskar Kraus) puts it, not autosemantic, but synsemantic. For **it consists merely in the relationship between subject and object and is not something independent.** Yet, insofar as Heidegger mistakes this meaning for something beyond this interdependence, in which alone it finds its meaning, the thing-like thinking of the old pre-critical logic, against which Heidegger otherwise protests, wins out in his work" (pg. 214)
  - Lecture 21 (pg. 216)
    - "Last time we began to unfold what is really, in my unauthoritative view, the central analysis of Heidegger's concept of being through a critique of the hypostasis of the copula. You will perhaps recall how I said that there is a state of affairs – a categorial state of affairs – which also corresponds to the 'is' in the simple predicative proposition; that in every judgement the 'is' has its meaning, just as subject and predicate do. This 'is' is just as much a bearer of meaning as the A and B in the predicative judgement – otherwise we could simply leave the 'is' out. Its meaning is just that the relation between the concept of the predicate and the concept of the subject is established precisely through this 'is'. But – and this is what you must really hold on to here – this meaning is properly realized only in the relation between the subject and the predicate. It is not independent but is, as we say in the language of formal logic, synsemantic rather than autosemantic. Heidegger mistakes the meaning of the copula for something beyond that by virtue of which alone it comes to have meaning." (pg. 216)
    - "The word 'being' has a certain overtone which any merely arbitrary definition of it might miss; this overtone lends Heidegger's philosophy its distinctive tone colour. Any given being is more than it merely is, and 'being', in contrast to 'beings', reminds us of this. There is no being which, in being determined in some way or other or in determining itself in some way or other, does not stand in need of some other being which is not itself – since it could never be defined or determined in terms of itself alone" (pg. 218)
      - "What Hegel calls mediation is only another word for this way in which the determinate particular points beyond itself, just in being specific or determined in some way. Heidegger, however, attempts to keep this dimension of pointing beyond itself, while somehow discarding that which points beyond itself as rubbish on the heap of what is eliminated in the process of philosophical production. Entanglement turns, in Heidegger, into its absolute opposite, into a kind of graspable, static, thing-like essence, into the πρώτη οὐσία [prōtē ousia], precisely into a kind of primary being as 'being'. Even mediation is mediated, namely through what is mediated. You can no more hypostatize the category of mediation and turn it into an absolute than you can do the same with the mediating moments, for of course mediation as such possesses meaning only as the mediation of the mediated components. Heidegger's concept of being, however, is really nothing other than the absolutization of mediation, without regard to what it mediates" (pg. 218)
        - "Heidegger's transcendence is an absolutized immanence which is obdurately set against its own immanent character" (pg. 219)
    - "The fallacy, the paralogism here, lies in the conversion of this negative point...into something positive and into a state of affairs *sui generis*, into a state of affairs independent of its own moments. Heidegger approaches the verge of dialectical insight into the non-identity involved in identity but, undaunted, still applies the traditional logic of non-contradiction to the pre-logical or meta-logical realm of his philosophy. **The contradiction in the concept of being is not confronted but suppressed**" (pg. 220-221)
      - "Since the 'is' is neither a merely subjective function nor any thing-like being, since it has no objectivity in the traditional sense, it becomes, for Heidegger, a third, namely 'being'. But the logical step which leads to this conclusion changes the intention of the expression 'is' or that of the expression 'being'. **The recognition that the 'is' is neither merely a thought nor merely a being does not permit us to resettle the 'is' in some third region, transcendent with respect to both of those determinations. Every attempt to think the 'is' at all, even in the palest universality, leads back to beings and to concepts.** The constellation of these moments cannot be grasped in terms of some singular essence, because this constellation involves something which is not itself an essence. **The unity promised by the word 'being' lasts only as long as it is not truly thought, only as long as its meaning is not subjected to analysis, as Heidegger's own method would require. Any such analysis would reveal precisely what disappears where the ontologists hold forth so readily on the abyss of being**" (pg. 221)
        - "The absolute is supposed to be thought in terms of 'being', but it is the absolute only because – according to Heidegger's argument – it cannot really be thought at all. Only because the magical lustre of 'being' dazzles recognition of the moments involved does it appear beyond such moments. Because reason is unable to think at its best, reason becomes something bad in its own eyes." (pg. 221)
    - "I used the term 'restitution' earlier on in relation to Heidegger. His thinking is also restitution – namely the restoration of something older and past – in that it wishes, through a ritual of naming, to restore the power of the name" (pg. 223)
    - "Existential ontology deals with 'existence' in the same way as it deals with 'anxiety'. By treating matters thematically in a phenomenological manner, by summoning up a range of distinctions and descriptions, it appeases this direct interest while simultaneously deflecting us from it" (pg. 225)
  - Lecture 22 (pg. 227)
    - "The dialectic of being and beings means that being, thanks to its conceptual aspect, cannot be thought without beings, and that beings cannot be thought without mediation through the concept – and all this appears in Heidegger's work under the name of 'being'. But **this dialectic becomes essentially undialectical in Heidegger:** the moments here, which cannot exist unless each is mediated through the other, constitute an immediate unity for him, and he sees this unity as being in a positive sense. But the sums don't add up" (pg. 227)
      - "ontology thereby incorporates its own predicament: that it cannot dispense with what stands opposed to it, that it cannot dispense with the

- ontic. It absorbs the ineliminable scandal of ontology itself, namely the entanglement of the ontological principle with its own counterpart." (pg. 228)
- **"The ontological difference is eliminated precisely by conceptualizing the non-conceptual as non-conceptuality.** This ontologization of the ontic, however, proves useful not only for the ontic but also for the centre-piece of Heidegger's theory, the hypostasized word 'being'" (pg. 228)
  - "From the Eleatics, who first had to separate thought and being in order then to identify them, through to Aristotle, the task and effort of ancient metaphysics lay in enforcing the separation between being and beings" (pg. 229)
    - **"Demythologization is separation; myth is the deceptive unity which belongs to what has not yet been separated."** (pg. 229)
  - **"Heidegger is anti-intellectual for systematic reasons and anti-philosophical for philosophical reasons,** just as the contemporary renaissances of religion are inspired not by the truth of their doctrines but by the philosophy that it would be good to have religion." (pg. 229)
    - "The much extolled inseparability of essence and existence in 'being' is thereby named for what it is: the blind context of nature, the fateful interconnection of things, the absolute negation of that transcendence which quivers in the talk of being. **The illusory aspect in the concept of being is precisely this transcendence;** but it springs from the way that Heidegger's characteristic descriptions, which are abstracted from *Dasein*, and thus from the distress of real human history to this day, have forfeited their memory of this. They become moments of being itself, and thus of something which assumes precedence over existence. Their astral power and glory is cold before the disgrace and fallibility of historical reality, even as this historical reality itself is sanctioned as inalterable. What is mythical here is the celebration of what is meaningless precisely as meaning, the ritual repetition of natural relations in a symbolic particular, as if this elevated them beyond the realm of nature" (pg. 230)
    - "...consciousness as the universality of thought is constitutive for subjectivity. This ambivalence permits *Dasein* to be equated with a mode of being itself and allows the ontological difference to be analysed away. *Dasein* is ontic, thanks to its spatio-temporal individualization; as logos, it is ontological. What is false in Heidegger's inference from *Dasein* to being is that 'at the same time', which is implied by Heidegger's talk of the 'manifold priority' that '*Dasein*' enjoys 'over all other beings'. **The fact that consciousness is what makes the subject a subject does not mean that everything in the subject to which consciousness clings is also nothing but consciousness, is completely transparent, is 'ontological.'** The individual endowed with consciousness, whose consciousness would not exist without this individual, remains something spatio-temporal, something factual – remains a being rather than 'being'. That this actual being is capable of thinking does not suffice to strip it of its character of being a being, as if it immediately belonged to the realm of essence. It is precisely not 'in itself ontological', since this selfhood postulates just that ontic character which the doctrine of ontological priority expels from itself" (pg. 231-232)
  - **"The concept of 'the existentiell', which Heidegger prefers to subordinate to the already ontologized 'existential' of *Dasein* qua 'being', suggests the idea that the measure of truth is not its objectivity, however constituted, but existence, the way the thinker purely and simply is, purely and simply acts"** (pg. 232)
    - "Subjectivity, the principle of mobility itself, becomes something absolutely solid, as is already implicit in Kant's theory of transcendental unity, which is ultimately nothing but what we might call the objectified lawfulness of the pure conceptual determinations of logic. **But truth, the constellation of subject and object where both interpenetrate each other, can no more be reduced to subjectivity than, conversely, it can be reduced to 'being', whose boundary with subjectivity Heidegger endeavours to blur.** What is true in the subject is unfolded in its relationship to what it is not itself, not through the production of a blank identity with itself. Hegel knew this, and said so repeatedly, as did Goethe; but the schools of repristination find this uncomfortable. If truth were really subjectivity, if thought were nothing but a repetition of the subject, thought would be nugatory. The existential elevation of the subject eliminates, for the sake of the subject, everything which might concern the subject. It thus delivers itself over to that relativism which it imagines far beneath it and debases the subject into the opaque contingency of its just being as it is" (pg. 232-233)
      - "Existence, which thereby declares itself to be the criterion of thinking, is already the lie of a self-appointed elite. **Lacking anything beyond itself, anything to which it might open itself, it confers validity on its own decrees in an authoritarian way,** just as, in political practice, the dictator confers validity on his own world-view. Through this reduction of thought to the thinker, the flow of thinking, through which alone it can become thinking at all, and in which alone subjectivity can live, is arrested. Subjectivity, precisely as the heavily trodden ground of truth, is objectified. All this can already be overheard in the word 'personality'. Thinking thereby becomes whatever the thinker already is, a tautology, a form of regressive consciousness. The utopian potential of thinking, however, would be for thought, mediated through that universal reason which is embodied in individual subjects, to break through the limitations of thinking individuals. The strength of thinking would be to surpass the work of weak and fallible thinkers. Thinking has been paralysed by the existential concept of truth, ever since Kierkegaard developed this idea for obscurantist ends, and has served to propagate narrow-mindedness as if it were the strength for truth; this is why the cult of existence, in all countries, flourishes so well in the provinces" (pg. 233)
  - "[existential thinking] obeys the most fateful prejudice from the history of philosophy (which it has dismantled or dismissed, like an employee surplus to requirements), namely the Platonic prejudice that the unchanging must be the good..." (pg. 234-235)
  - "I believe that I have done what I promised you – that is, to practise immanent critique. In other words, I have treated the ontological problematic in itself in such a way that the motifs of dialectical thinking have emerged from this very problematic and from the questions that arise with regard to its own truth. I have, then, tried **to extract the dialectic which is implicit in ontological philosophy,** if I may put it that way" (pg. 235)
    - "Foundational philosophy, πρώτη φιλοσοφία [prōtē philosophia], necessarily involves the primacy of the concept; an approach which resists this primacy of the concept must also relinquish the form of philosophizing which appeals to foundations" (pg. 235)
  - "The concept of beings or entities as such is only the shadow of the false conception of being, and is not superior to the latter" (pg. 237)
  - **"Dialectic could unfold by following closely the alteration of every category, including those of subject and object. The abstract polarity between subject and object is to be given content by confronting them with the play of forces latent in the concept, the interplay of concepts and things: by means of critique.** That subject and object are not last or ultimate things, that they are not rigidly antithetical entities, did not escape fundamental ontology" (pg. 237)
- Lecture 23 (pg. 239)
    - **"Subjectivity is not to be explained simply from itself, but from factual society, which as an interconnected context, as a totality, is itself admittedly much more than a tangible factual given.** But the objectivity of knowledge, in turn, is not to be explained simply from this dependence and is, above all, not relativized by this dependence." (pg. 239)
      - "Dialectical thought by contrast – as a philosophical approach, now, and not as an objective state of affairs – is the attempt, by means of cunning, the oldest medium of enlightenment, to unravel the knot of the paradox here, the inner bond between the mythical context of nature and the freedom which is wrested from that context" (pg. 240)
        - "...dialectical reason longs to transcend the blind immediate context of nature without imposing in turn its own domination, the domination of reason, on this context; in other words, it attempts to transcend nature without incurring that sacrifice and rage which would merely perpetuate the same context of nature. Dialectic does not try to establish some middle ground between relativism and absolutism. It seeks the objectivity of the concept nowhere else than through the nominalism which the situation of the epoch now dictates. Dialectic strives to think conceptually the qualitative element which eludes the concept; it attempts to break through to the particular precisely as the universal, by persisting with the particular rather than subsuming it beneath the universal. The essence of



dialectic is also something which has come to be, something mutable, like antagonistic society itself. It may not be falsified into some dialectic of being in itself" (pg. 240)

d. Further Readings:

- On the Origin of Ethical Knowledge, by F. Brentano
- Against Epistemology: A Metacritique, by T. Adorno  
<http://www.edarcepelago.com/classici/AdornoTheodor/Adorno,%20T%20-%20Against%20Epistemology%20%28Polity,%202013%29.pdf>
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