



*The Routledge Guidebook to*

# HEIDEGGER'S BEING AND TIME

Stephen Mulhall



## The Routledge Guidebook to Heidegger's *Being and Time*

*Being and Time* is considered to be one of the most important philosophical texts of the twentieth century and its influence can be seen in existentialism, metaphysics, postmodernism and more. But the author, Martin Heidegger, was a controversial figure and his writing can be very daunting for the first time reader.

*The Routledge Guidebook to Heidegger's Being and Time* offers a route through this classic text by exploring:

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# The Routledge Guidebook to: Heidegger's *Being and Time*

Stephen Mulhall

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## PREFACE

Martin Heidegger was born in Messkirch on 26 September 1889. An interest in the priesthood led him to commence theological and philosophical studies at the University of Freiburg in 1909. A monograph on the philosophy of Duns Scotus brought him a university teaching qualification, and in 1922 he was appointed to teach philosophy at the University of Marburg. The publication of his first major work, *Sein und Zeit* (*Being and Time*), in 1927 catapulted him to prominence and led to his being appointed to the Chair of Philosophy at Freiburg in 1928, succeeding his teacher and master, the phenomenologist Edmund Husserl. From April 1933 until his resignation in February 1934, the early months of the Nazi regime, he was Rector of Freiburg. His academic career was further disrupted by the Second World War and its aftermath: in 1944, he was enrolled in a work-brigade, and between 1945 and 1951 he was prohibited from teaching under the deNazification rules of the Allied authorities. He was reappointed Professor in 1951, and gave occasional seminars in his capacity as Honorary Professor until 1967, as well as travelling widely and participating in conferences and colloquia on his work. He continued to



write until his death on 26 May 1976. He is buried in the local graveyard of his birthplace, Messkirch.

This brief biographical sketch leaves much that is of importance in Heidegger's life (particularly his destructive and ugly relations with Nazism) unexplored; but it gives even less indication of the breadth, intensity and distinctiveness of his philosophical work and its impact on the development of the discipline in Europe. The publication of *Being and Time* transformed him from a charismatic lecturer, well known in German academic life (Hannah Arendt said that descriptions of his lecture series circulated in Germany as if they were 'rumours of a hidden king'), into a figure of international significance. A steady stream of lectures, seminars and publications in the following decades merely broadened and intensified his influence. Sartrean existentialism, the hermeneutic theory and practice of Gadamer, and Derridean deconstruction all grew from the matrix of Heidegger's thought; and the cognate disciplines of literary criticism, theology and psychoanalysis were also importantly influenced by his work. To some, his preoccupations – and, more importantly, the manner in which he thought and wrote about them – signified only pretension, mystification and charlatanry. For many others, however, the tortured intensity of his prose, its breadth of reference in the history of philosophy, and its arrogant but exhilarating implication that nothing less than the continuation of Western culture and authentic human life was at stake in his thought, signified instead that philosophy had finally returned to its true concerns in a manner that might justify its age-old claim to be the queen of the human sciences.

This book is an introduction for English-speaking readers to the text that publically inaugurated Heidegger's life-long philosophical project – *Being and Time*.<sup>1</sup> It aims to provide a perspicuous survey of the structure of this complex and difficult work, clarifying its underlying assumptions, elucidating its esoteric terminology and sketching the inner logic of its development. It takes very seriously the idea that it is intended to provide an introduction to a text rather than a thinker or a set of philosophical problems. Although, of course, it is not possible to provide guidance for those working through an extremely challenging philosophical text without attempting to illuminate the broader themes and issues with which it grapples, as well

as the underlying purposes of its author, it is both possible and desirable to address those themes and purposes by relating them very closely and precisely to the ways in which they are allowed to emerge in the chapter by chapter, section by section structure of the text concerned. This introduction is therefore organized in a way that is designed to mirror that of *Being and Time* as closely as is consistent with the demands of clarity and surveyability.

This book is not an introduction to the many important lines of criticism that have been made of Heidegger's book since its first publication. Those criticisms can be properly understood only if one has a proper understanding of their object; and their force and cogency can be properly evaluated only if one has first made the best possible attempt to appreciate the power and coherence of the position they seek to undermine. For these reasons, I have concentrated on providing an interpretation of *Being and Time* which makes the strongest case in its favour, that is consistent both with fidelity to the text and to the canons of rational argument. My concern is to show that there is much that is well worth arguing over in Heidegger's early work; but I do not attempt to judge how those arguments might be conducted or definitively concluded.

As Heidegger himself emphasized, no interpretation of a text can be devoid of preconceptions and value-judgements. Even a basic and primarily exegetical introduction to the main themes of a philosophical work must choose to omit or downplay certain details and complexities, and to organize the material it does treat in one of many possible ways. But my interpretation of *Being and Time* takes up an unorthodox position on a highly controversial issue in Heidegger scholarship; the reader unfamiliar with that scholarship should be warned of this in advance. Particularly with respect to the material in the second half of *Being and Time*, I regard Heidegger's treatment of the question of human authenticity as necessarily and illuminatingly applicable to his conception of his role as a philosopher, and so to his conception of his relation to his readers. In other words, I read his philosophical project not only as analysing the question of what it is for a human being to achieve genuine individuality or selfhood, but as itself designed to facilitate such an achievement in the sphere of philosophy. As will become clear, Heidegger does not conceive of

human authenticity as a matter of living in accord with some particular ethical blueprint; and to this degree, my interpretation cannot properly be thought of as a moralization of *Being and Time*. It does imply, however, that the tone of spiritual fervour that many readers have detected in the book is internally related to its most central purposes, and that Heidegger makes existential demands on himself and his readers. This is something that many careful students of *Being and Time* have been eager to deny. The legitimacy of my interpretative strategy must, of course, ultimately depend upon the conviction it elicits as a reading of *Being and Time*; but I feel it right to declare it in advance, and in so doing to declare further that I cannot otherwise make sense of the structure of the book as a whole, and of its unremitting concern with its own status as a piece of philosophical writing.

I would like to acknowledge the help various people have given me in the course of writing this book. My colleagues at the University of Essex – particularly Simon Critchley and Jay Bernstein – have generously allowed me to draw upon their extensive knowledge of Heidegger and Heideggerian scholarship; and Jay Bernstein also commented in detail on an early draft of my manuscript. The editors of this series – Tim Crane and Jo Wolff – kindly invited me to take on this project in the first place, and provided much useful advice as it developed. Two anonymous readers' reports on the manuscript arrived at a late stage in its preparation. Both helped to improve the book significantly, and I would like to thank their authors. Finally, I would also like to thank Alison Baker for her forbearance and support during my work on this project.

## NOTE

- 1 All quotations and references are keyed to the standard Macquarrie and Robinson translation of the original German text (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1962). The location of all quotations is given by specifying the relevant section and page, in that order e.g. (BT, 59: 336).

## PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

It is now more than a decade since I began work on the first edition of this book. Since then, I have continued to think about Heidegger's philosophical writings in general, and *Being and Time* in particular; and although I continue to believe that the fundamental aspects of my original interpretation of it are sound, I have gradually come to feel that various issues might usefully be explored in more detail or introduced into a discussion that wrongly omitted them.

First, I now realize that my original analysis of Heidegger's treatment of scepticism in Division One of *Being and Time* was importantly incomplete. In the first edition, I concentrated on drawing out his reasons for thinking that a proper understanding of Dasein as Being-in-the-world would render scepticism inarticulable, and thus eliminate what he called the scandalous fact of philosophy's endless and endlessly unsuccessful attempts to refute scepticism, by revealing its essential emptiness. More recently, I have come to believe that this line of argument in *Being and Time* is counterbalanced by a second, more recessive but also more radical one. This depends upon appreciating that scepticism can be understood as having not only a putative

cognitive content or thrust, but also (as with any mode of understanding, according to Heidegger's own analysis) a specific mood or mode of attunement – that of anxiety or angst. And Heidegger's argument in Division One is that angst is capable of pivoting Dasein from its lostness in 'das man' to an authentic grasp of itself, the world and Being. From this, it would seem to follow that philosophical scepticism is inherently capable of disclosing a vital dimension of Dasein's Being, and so of Being as such, and hence that Heidegger cannot avoid thinking of scepticism as an essential moment in any philosophical recovery of the question of the meaning of Being.

Second, I have come to see more clearly the peculiar nature, and the absolutely fundamental importance, of the relation Heidegger constructs between Divisions One and Two of *Being and Time*. The argument of Division Two begins from a sense that the analysis of Division One overlooks an essential aspect of the totality of Dasein's Being – its relation to its own end. This turns out to involve Dasein's multiple and determining relationship to its own nothingness, and hence to negation or nullity more generally; and by the time of his discussion of Dasein's conscience, it becomes clear that Division Two intends to draw out the full implications of the relatively glancing claim in Division One that angst reveals Dasein's Being to be essentially uncanny, or not-at-home in the world. I now think of this as Dasein's failure or inability to coincide with itself; and this in turn suggests that what Heidegger means by Dasein's inauthenticity is its various attempts to live as if it did coincide with itself – as if its *existential* potential coincided with its *existentiell* actuality. Hence, authenticity is a matter of living out Dasein's essential non-identity with itself; and, accordingly, any authentic analytic of Dasein's Being must manifest a similar failure of self-identity. Its construction or form must reflect the fact that any account of Dasein's Being must indicate its own inadequacy, its own ineliminable reference to that which is beyond Dasein's, and hence its own, grasp.

I would now argue that this is the function of Division Two in relation to Division One: the former is precisely designed to unsettle our confidence in the latter, our perhaps unduly complacent sense that it concludes with a genuinely complete, however provisional, account of Dasein's Being (in terms of care). In other words, Division

Two does not (or not only) amount to a deeper exploration of the structures established in Division One; it is also an attempt to reveal the ways in which those structures in fact point towards Dasein's essential dependence upon that which exceeds its own limits – and in particular the limits of its own comprehension. One might say that it ensures that *Being and Time* as a whole does not coincide with itself, and thus meets the criterion it establishes for authenticity.

If this view is right, then Division Two cannot be dismissed as concerning itself with more or less marginal matters of ethics and theology – the essentially optional existential side of Heidegger's phenomenology. In particular, the idea that one can give an account of the core of the whole book while limiting oneself to the material of Division One (as Hubert Dreyfus's highly influential commentary, *Being-in the-World*,<sup>1</sup> in effect does) becomes completely untenable. A proper appreciation of that fact alone would radically put in question the ways in which Heidegger's early thought has been appropriated in the Anglo-American philosophical world. It would also illuminate the degree to which the insights of *Being and Time* prefigure the claims Heidegger makes at the beginning of the 1930s (in, for example, his famous inaugural lecture, *What is Metaphysics?*<sup>2</sup>) about an internal relation between Being and 'the nothing' – claims sometimes taken to herald a fundamental turn in his thinking. And, as a result, it would significantly alter our sense of the internal relation of Heidegger's early work to that of Sartre; for if this way of understanding *Being and Time*'s purposes is correct, then a book entitled *Being and Nothingness* might come to seem far less distant from its acknowledged source than is often assumed to be the case.

The publication of this second edition has given me the chance to revise the whole of my commentary in the light of these two main shifts in my thinking about *Being and Time*. This means that Chapters 4, 5 and 8 have been very significantly revised and expanded, and that many matters of fine detail in Chapters 6 and 7 have been slightly but importantly altered to accommodate a very different way of viewing Division Two as a whole. I have also taken the opportunity to correct a number of minor flaws throughout the book – almost always, I believe, matters of style rather than of content. In the end, then, this is a very different text to that of the first edition; but these

discontinuities in fact grow rather directly from the main emphases of my initial reading of the text – most obviously, from its insistence that the results of Heidegger's existential analytic of Dasein must necessarily apply to its author and his philosophical activities, and hence will directly inform his conception of the standards against which his own writing must measure itself, and of the transformation it must aim to effect upon its readers. In that sense, I would like to believe that the second edition of this book is essentially a more authentic version of the first.

Stephen Mulhall  
New College, Oxford  
January, 2005

## NOTES

- 1 Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1991.
- 2 In D. F. Krell (ed.), *Basic Writings*, 2nd edn (San Francisco, Calif.: Harper, 1993).

## SERIES EDITOR'S PREFACE

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AJG

October 2012





# INTRODUCTION: HEIDEGGER'S PROJECT

(*Being and Time*, §§1–8)

## THE QUESTION OF BEING

According to Heidegger, the whole of *Being and Time* is concerned with a single question – the question of the meaning of Being. But what does he mean by the term 'Being'? What, if anything, does it signify? It is no accident that Heidegger provides no clear and simple answer to this question – neither at the opening of his book nor at any later point within it; for, in his view, it will take at least the whole of his book to bring us to the point where we can even ask the question in a coherent and potentially fruitful way. Nevertheless, he also takes a certain, preliminary understanding of Being to be implicit in everything human beings say and do; so it should be possible, even at this early stage, to indicate at least an initial orientation for our thinking.

Late in William Golding's novel *The Spire*,<sup>1</sup> its medieval protagonist – a cathedral dean named Jocelin – has a striking experience as he leaves his quarters:

Outside the door there was a woodstack among long, rank grass. A scent struck him, so that he leaned against the woodstack, careless of his back, and waited while the dissolved grief welled out of his eyes. Then there was a movement over his head. . . . He twisted his neck and looked up sideways. There was a cloud of angels flashing in the sunlight, they were pink and gold and white; and they were uttering this sweet scent for joy of the light and the air. They brought with them a scatter of clear leaves, and among the leaves a long, black springing thing. His head swam with the angels, and suddenly he understood there was more to the appletree than one branch. It was there beyond the wall, bursting up with cloud and scatter, laying hold of the earth and the air, a fountain, a marvel, an appletree. . . . Then, where the yard of the deanery came to the river and trees lay over the sliding water, he saw all the blue of the sky condensed to a winged sapphire, that flashed once.

He cried out.

'Come back!'

But the bird was gone, an arrow shot once. It will never come back, he thought, not if I sat here all day.

(Golding 1964: 204–5)

Jocelin, as if for the first time, is struck by the sheer specificity of the appletree – its springing branches and trunk, the cloud and scatter of its leaves and blossom, everything that makes it the particular thing that it is. He is struck by what one might call the distinctive mode of its existence or being. The kingfisher, in the singular sapphire flash of its flight, conveys rather a sense of contingency, of the sheer, transient fact of its existence or being. Together, then, the appletree and the kingfisher impress upon Jocelin a fused sense of *how* the world is and *that* the world is; they precipitate an immeasurable astonishment and wonder at the reality of things, at the fact of there being a highly differentiated world to wonder at. It is just such a sense of wonder that Heidegger thinks of as a response to the Being of things, a response to Being; and he aims to recover in his readers a capacity to take seriously the question of its meaning or significance.

For some philosophers, the fact that a passage extracted from a novel can so precisely articulate the ground of Heidegger's questioning might suggest new ways of connecting philosophy, literature and everyday human experience, and of recovering the sense of wonder with which the ancient Greeks held that the true impulse to philosophize originates; but for many others it suggests that to take such questioning seriously is to succumb to adolescent Romanticism. Despite these widespread qualms, however, it is perfectly possible to detect in Heidegger's own introductory remarks a way of providing a more obviously 'legitimate' derivation or genealogy for his question – a more philosophically respectable birth certificate.

In everything that human beings do, they encounter a wide variety of objects, processes, events and other phenomena that go to make up the world around them. Taking a shower, walking the dog, reading a book: all involve engaging with particular things in particular situations, and in ways that presuppose a certain comprehension of their presence and nature. In taking a shower, we show our awareness of the plastic curtain, the shower-head and the dials on the control panel, our understanding of the way in which they relate to one another, and so our grasp of their distinctive potentialities. We cannot walk the dog – choosing the best route, allowing time for shrub-sniffing, shortening the lead at the advent of another dog – without revealing our sense of that creature's nature and its physical expression. Enjoying a thriller on the beach presupposes being able to support its bulk and focus on its pages, to grasp the language in which it is written and the specific constraints and expectations within which novels in that particular genre are written and read.

In short, throughout their lives human beings manifest an implicit capacity for a comprehending interaction with entities as actual and as possessed of a distinctive nature. This capacity finds linguistic expression when we complain that the shower curtain *is* split, or wonder aloud what Fido *is* up to now, or ask where our novel *is*. Since this comprehending interaction seems to be systematically registered by our use of various forms of the verb 'to be', Heidegger describes it as an implicit understanding of what it is for an entity to be, and so as a capacity to comprehend beings

as such, to comprehend beings *qua* beings. In other words, it is a capacity to comprehend the Being of beings.

Many of our cultural practices in effect amount to rigorous thematizations of particular forms of this comprehension and its corresponding objects; they constitute modes of human activity in which something that is taken for granted, and so remains undeveloped in other parts of our life, is made the explicit focus of our endeavours. For example, our everyday concern for hygiene may lead us to explore the cleansing properties of water, soap and shampoo, and so to a more general study of the structure of matter. Our life with pets may lead us into a study of domestic species and then of animal life more generally. Our ordinary reading habits may lead us to examine a particular author's style and development, and then to investigate the means by which aesthetic pleasure can be elicited from specific literary genres. In other words, such disciplines as physics and chemistry, biology and literary studies take as their central concern aspects of phenomena that remain implicit in our everyday dealings with them; and the specific theories that are produced as a result go to make up a body of what Heidegger would call *ontic* knowledge – knowledge pertaining to the distinctive nature of particular types of entity.

However, such theory-building itself depends upon taking for granted certain basic ways in which the given discipline demarcates and structures its own area of study; and those foundations tend to remain unthematized by the discipline itself, until it finds itself in a state of crisis. Relativity theory precipitated such a crisis in physics; in biology, similar turmoil was caused by Darwinian theories of natural selection; and, in literary studies, theoretical attacks upon prevailing notions of the author, the text and language have recently performed an analogous function. Such conceptual enquiries are not examples of theories that conform to the standards of the discipline, but rather explore that on the basis of which any such theory could be constructed, the *a priori* conditions for the possibility of such scientific theorizing. In Heideggerian language, what they reveal are the ontological presuppositions of *ontic* enquiry.

Here, philosophical enquiry enters the scene. For when physics is brought to question its conception of matter, or biology its concep-

tion of life, or literary studies its conception of a text, what is disclosed are the basic articulations of that discipline's very subject matter, that which underlies all the specific objects that the discipline takes as its theme; and that is not, and could not be, within the purview of intra-disciplinary enquiry, because it would be presupposed by any such enquiry. What is needed is a reflection upon those articulations, an attempt to clarify the nature and validity of the most basic conceptualizations of this particular domain; and such a critical clarification is the business of philosophy. In these respects, philosophical enquiry is at once parasitic upon, and more fundamental than, other modes of human enquiry. There could be no philosophy of science without science, and philosophy has no authority to judge the validity of specific scientific theories. But any such theory is constructed and tested in ways that presuppose the validity of certain assumptions about the domain under investigation, assumptions that it can consequently neither justify nor undermine, and which therefore require a very different type of examination. The scientist may well be the best exponent of the practices of inductive reasoning as applied to the realm of nature; but if questions are raised about the precise structure of inductive reasoning and its ultimate justification as a mode of discovering truth, then the abilities of the philosopher come into play.

This is a familiar view of the role of philosophical enquiry in the Western philosophical tradition, particularly since the time of Descartes – at least if we judge by the importance it has assigned to the twin ontological tasks of specifying the essential differences between the various types of entity that human beings encounter, and the essential preconditions of our capacity to comprehend them. To learn about that tradition is to learn, for example, that Descartes' view of material objects – as entities whose essence lies in being extended – was contested by Berkeley's claim that it lies in their being perceived, whereas his view that the essence of the self is grounded in the power of thought was contested by Hume's claim that its only ground is the bundling together of impressions and ideas. Kant then attempts to unearth that which conditions the possibility of our experiencing ourselves as subjects inhabiting a world of objects. Alternatively, we might study the specific conceptual

presuppositions of aesthetic judgements about entities as opposed to scientific hypotheses about them, or interrogate the distinctive presuppositions of the human sciences – the study of social and cultural structures and artefacts, and the guiding assumptions of those who investigate them as historians rather than as literary critics or sociologists.

In a terminology Heidegger sometimes employs in other texts, such ontological enquiries broadly focus on the what-being of entities<sup>2</sup> – their particular way or mode of being. Their concern is with what determines an entity as the specific type of entity it is, with that which distinguishes it from entities of a different type, and grounds both our everyday dealings with such entities and our more structured and explicit ontic investigations of the domain they occupy. Such a concern with what-being is to be contrasted with a concern with that-being. ‘That-being’ signifies the fact that some given thing is or exists,<sup>3</sup> and an ontological enquiry into that-being must concern itself with that which determines an entity of a specific type as an existent being – something equally fundamental both to our everyday dealings with it and to our ontic investigations of it, since neither would be possible if the entity concerned did not exist. A general contrast of this kind between what-being and that-being is thus internal to what Heidegger means by the Being of beings; it is a basic articulation of Being, something which no properly ontological enquiry can afford to overlook. And, indeed, the Western philosophical tradition since Plato has not overlooked it; but the way in which that tradition has tended to approach the matter has, for Heidegger, been multiply misleading.

With respect to the tradition’s investigations of what-being, Heidegger will quarrel with the poverty and narrowness of its results. For, while human beings encounter a bewildering variety of kinds of entity or phenomena – stones and plants, animals and other people, rivers, sea and sky, the diverse realms of nature, history, science and religion – philosophers have tended to classify these things in ways that reduce the richness of their differentiation. The effect has been to impoverish our sense of the diversity of what-being, to reduce it to oversimple categories such as the Cartesian dichotomy between nature (*res extensa*) and mind (*res*

*cogitans*) – a set of categories which, on Heidegger's view, obliterates both the specific nature of human beings and that of the objects they encounter. Similarly, the basic distinction between what-being and that-being has been subject to over-hasty and superficial conceptualizations. In medieval ontology, for example, it was taken up in terms of a distinction between essence (*essentia*) and existence (*existentia*) – a distinction which still has great influence over contemporary philosophical thinking, but which embodied a highly specific and highly controversial set of theological presuppositions, and which overlooks the possibility that the Being of certain kinds of entity (particularly that of human beings) might not be articulable in precisely those terms. And, of course, if this basic distinction has been improperly conceptualized, then the philosophical tradition's various attempts at comprehending the that-being of entities will have been just as erroneous as its attempts to grasp their what-being.

Accordingly, when Heidegger claims that the philosophical tradition has forgotten the question with which he is concerned, he does not mean that philosophers have entirely overlooked the question of the Being of beings. Rather, he means that, by taking certain answers to that question to be self-evident or unproblematically correct, they have taken it for granted that they know what the phrase 'the Being of beings' signifies – in other words, they have failed to see that the meaning of that phrase is itself questionable, that there is a question about the *meaning* of 'Being'. By closing off that question, they have failed to reflect properly upon a precondition of their ontological conclusions about the articulated unity of Being, and so failed to demonstrate that their basic orientation is above reproach; and this lack of complete self-transparency has led their investigations into a multitude of problems. As Heidegger puts it:

The question of Being aims therefore at ascertaining the a priori conditions not only for the possibility of the sciences which examine entities as entities of such and such a type, and in so doing already operate with an understanding of Being, but also for the possibility of those ontologies themselves which are prior to the ontical sciences



and which provide their foundations. *Basically, all ontology, no matter how rich and firmly compacted a system of categories it has at its disposal, remains blind and perverted from its ownmost aim, if it has not first adequately clarified the meaning of Being, and conceived this clarification as its fundamental task.*

(BT, 2: 31)

## RECLAIMING THE QUESTION

Nonetheless, apart from its earliest incarnation in ancient Greece, the philosophical tradition has tended to pass over this latter type of question in silence. As Heidegger begins his book by pointing out, 'this question has today been forgotten' (BT, 1: 21), largely because philosophers take themselves to have a multitude of reasons for dismissing it. Heidegger accordingly undertakes to counter each of those reasons; and, although he does so very briefly, the strategies he employs shed important light on his own, provisional understanding of what may be at stake in the question.

First, then, it might be argued that the question of the meaning of 'Being' can easily be answered; it is a concept just like any other, distinctive only in the sense that it is the most universal concept of all. In other words, Being is not a being, not a particular phenomenon we encounter in our active engagement with the world; rather, we arrive at our concept of it by progressive abstraction from our encounters with specific beings. For example, from our encounters with cats, dogs and horses, we abstract the idea of 'animalness'; from animals, plants and trees we abstract the idea of 'life', of 'living beings'; and then, from living beings, minerals and so on, we abstract the idea of that which every entity has in common – their extantness or being. What more need be said on the matter?

Heidegger is happy to accept the claim that Being is not a being; indeed, that assumption guides his whole project. He also accepts that our comprehension of Being is nonetheless bound up in some essential way with our comprehending interactions with beings. Being is not a being, but Being is not encounterable otherwise than by encounters with beings. For if Being is, as Heidegger puts it, 'that which determines entities as entities' (BT, 2: 25), the ground