



**Weekend Retreat and Workshop,  
Heidegger, Being and Time  
Graduate Seminar, Lotz  
Nov 21-Nov 23, 2008  
Seminarpage**

O you profound teachers of simplicity, should it not also be possible to find *the moment* when one is speaking? No, only by being silent does one find the moment. When one speaks, if one says merely a single word, one misses the moment—the moment is only in silence. Because a person cannot keep silent, it rarely happens that he really comes to understand when the moment is and to use the moment properly. He cannot be silent and wait, which perhaps explains why the moment never comes for him at all. He cannot be silent, which perhaps explains why he was not aware of the moment when it did come for him. Although pregnant with its rich meaning, the moment does not have any message sent in advance to announce its coming; it comes too swiftly for that when it comes, and there is not a moment's time beforehand. Nor does the moment, no matter how significant it is in itself, come with noise or with shouting. No, it comes softly, with a lighter step than the lightest footfall of any creature, since it comes with the light step of the sudden; it comes stealthily—therefore one must be absolutely silent if one is to be aware that “now it is here.” At the next moment it is gone, and for that reason one must have been absolutely silent if one is to succeed in making use of it. Yet everything depends on the moment. Indeed, the misfortune in the lives of the great majority of human beings is this, that they were never aware of the moment, that in their lives the eternal and the temporal are exclusively separated. And why? Because they could not be silent.

**Participants:**

Brown, Michael  
Caseldine-Bracht, Jennifer  
Chamberlin, Steven  
Echterling, Terence  
Guajardo, Ivan  
Johnson, Matthew  
Melendez, Carlos  
Proctor, Shannon  
Schoonover, Steven  
Stramondo, Joseph  
Vick, Sophie  
Wallace, John

Lotz, Christian (MSU)  
Kuperus, Gerard (USF)  
Nichols, David (MSU)  
Oele, Marjolein (USF)  
Painter, Corinne (WCC)

**Program:**

**Friday, Nov 21**

12pm Arrival

1pm-3pm Session 1: Introduction, Angst/Care (§§39-40) and Being-towards-Death 1 (§§46-53) [CP: Guajardo, Wallace, Proctor]

3-3:30pm Break

3:30-5:30pm Session 2: Being-towards-Death 2 (§§46-53) (CP: Caseldine-Bracht)

5:30-7:30 Dinner

7:30pm Evening session: David Nichols, History/Tragic in BT (§§72-76)

**Saturday, Nov 22**

9-11:30am Session 4: Conscience and Resoluteness 1 (§§54-60) [CP: Echterling]

11:30-1 Lunch

1pm-3pm Session 5: Conscience and Resoluteness 2 (§§54-60) [CP: Johnson]

3-3:30pm Break

3:30pm-5:30pm Text seminar: Gerard Kuperus, Selfhood and Temporality (§§61-66)

5:30-7:30 Dinner

7:30pm Evening session: Marjolein Oele, Aristotle and Heidegger on Pathos (§§28-30 + Aristotle, Rhetoric+Nic. Ethics)

**Sunday, Nov 23**

9-10am Session 8: Selfhood and Temporality (§§61-66) [CP: Stramondo, Schonover]

10-10:30 Break

10:30am-12pm Text seminar: Corinne Painter, Historicity (§74)

12-12:30pm Wrap up

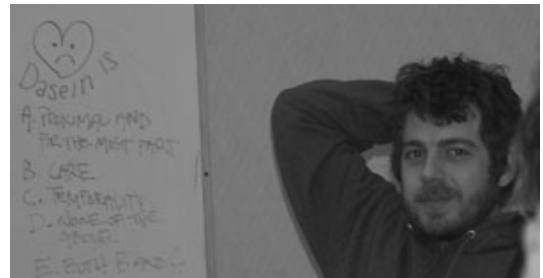
12:30pm Departure

**Contributions**

"This is Heidegger's way of getting at his new definition of the self through an argument by comparison to Kant's definition. Heidegger's concept of the self depends on phenomenon that the self never exists in total isolation from the world but rather "the 'I' is not just an 'I think' but an 'I think something.'" This "something" that the I is thinking must be something within-the-world and so the notion of the self "tacitly implies that the *world* has been presupposed." This presupposition of the world is what traditional Western philosophy has leapt over time and again with its radicalizations." (Stramondo)

"At the outset, it is important to note that resoluteness [Entschlossenheit] is closely related to disclosedness [Erschlossenheit], as attested by the German terms. This needs to be kept in mind because Heidegger formulates resoluteness in a variety of ways: "this reticent self-projection upon one's ownmost Being-guilty, in which one is ready for anxiety" (343); "the authenticity of care itself" (348); "authentic potentiality-for-Being, in its existentiell attestation" (340), " 'letting oneself be called forth to one's ownmost Being-guilty' " (353). Insisting that resoluteness is the authentic mode of disclosedness allows us to see the unity behind these various formulations of resoluteness. Disclosedness has something to do with the being of the 'there'. Dasein is thrown possibility, which means that Dasein is opened up to encounter the world which is there for it and it projects itself understandingly upon the possibilities that are there for it.

Disclosure, in its undifferentiated sense, was explicated in terms of attunement (§129), understanding (§131), and discourse (§134). In being resolute, Dasein discloses the being of its there in a particular way, i.e., in an authentic way. Resoluteness, as the authentic form of these undifferentiated modes, will have its own forms of disclosure: anxiety (attunement), conscience (discourse), and being-towards-death (understanding). Thus, we see that Heidegger has made good on his promise that "authentic existence is not something which floats above falling everydayness; existentially, it is only a modified way in which such everydayness is seized upon" (224)." (Johnson)



"One of Heidegger's examples is noise. When we hear a sound, primordially, we grasp the sound in terms of our thrownness, i.e. I hear a Harley, laughter, or broken window, and not simply an amalgamation of wavelengths that I then synthesize. This holds true as well for the words of another, that is, we already share understanding in relation to the primordial discourse of Being-with. "Only he who already understands can listen." (pg 208) This becomes important as Heidegger moves into the discussion of keeping silent. As Heidegger states, "Keeping silent authentically is possible only in genuine discoursing. To be able to keep silent, Dasein must have something to say—that is, it



must have at its disposal an authentic and rich disclosedness of itself." (pg 208) This can lead to transparency between Daseins. For example, when we experience the death of a loved one, many times the others who have experienced similar events and understand yet remain silent are those that comfort us most." (Brown)

"If we characterize Dasein at its end as present-at-hand, then the aim of interpreting death vanishes. In other words, the rationale for analyzing death was that it could reveal Dasein's character. This is precluded if we interpret death as the final "act" of Dasein or as that which when "added" makes Dasein whole (i.e., as the outstanding). Such an interpretation fails to recall that (as explicated in the analysis of care) Dasein is ahead-of-itself. It is already its end because it comports itself toward its possibilities; that which is possible is already a part of Dasein. Heidegger explains: "just as Dasein is already its "not-yet", and is its "not-yet" constantly as long as it is, it is already its end too" (289)." (Proctor)



"Heidegger believes that embracing this definition of death and developing an authentic being-towards-death is not a dismal project. It is not simply opening one's eyes to the reality of death even though it is painful and uncomfortable. Rather, Heidegger argues that we can define authentic being-towards-death as "anticipation reveals to Dasein its lostness in the they-self, and brings it face to face with the possibility of being itself, primarily unsupported by concerned solicitude, but of being itself, rather, in an impassioned freedom towards death – a freedom which has been released from the illusions of the "they", and which is factual, certain of itself, and anxious." (page 311)" (Caseldine-Bracht)

"Angst presents Dasein with the possibility of authenticity (self-ownership). It "makes manifest in Dasein its Being towards its ownmost potentiality-for-being—that is, its Being-free for the freedom of choosing itself and taking hold of itself" [232/188]. If anxiety removes me from my ordinary dispersion in the world; if it strips me of my embeddedness in a community and my reliance upon a world that has been publicly interpreted (the They); then it at the same time presents me with the opportunity to

take ownership or freely interpret who I am (confirm in my own way what the tradition will mean to me)." (Guajardo)



"Three other aspects of conscience need to be noted: The Call itself is: a wanting to have a conscience. Resoluteness: existentiell choosing the choice of being-a-self. Conscience as the call of care. (§§57)." (Echterling)

"The word, *cura* shows up in a parenthesis next to care. This Latin word, that care originates from carries the sense of "care for, give attention to, to take care of" (Wallace)



"The existential future of Dasein exists for Dasein and cannot be equated with a time which goes on independent of existential structures. That Dasein anticipates death is the recognition that 'our time' is finite. Thus, time conceived as an infinite series of moments cannot be equated with finite temporality—the former is a phenomenon which arises from the latter. Heidegger will see to show that "primordial time...[is] the condition which makes the everyday experience of time both possible and necessary." It is primordial temporality and not infinite time which is needed to explain Dasein as care. Dasein as care, therefore, is revealed as grounded on the possibility of Dasein's 'temporalizing', or understanding one's self as a being whose possibilities are finite." (Schoonover)

"Here there is another example of Heidegger claiming that his analysis is



neutral while it seems normative. He is careful to say in the beginning that he is not making moral judgments, but intuitively it seems that an exercise that involves superficial knowledge as opposed to genuine understanding would be something Heidegger opposes. For example, he claims that idle talk "discourages" and "suppresses" inquiry into the subject discussed (169/213). These words (and others) have strong negative connotations. Reading this, I get the distinct feeling that engagement in idle talk is to be avoided." (Vick)



### Conscience

[1] Knowing, [2] certainty, [3] consciousness and [4] conviction are preserved in the everyday use of the German word for "conscience" [Gewissen] and therefore it comes of no surprise that in the German philosophical tradition conscience is linked with self-consciousness.

St. Paul: "They show that what the law requires is written on their hearts, to which their conscience (syneidesis) also bears witness (Rom 2:15)." [Syn-eidesis = preposition "syn" ("with") and the noun, derived from the verb, meaning "to know" = "knowledge with" or "inner knowledge."]



"As regards Curiosity, understanding-as-seeing is manifested in "a tendency toward a peculiar way of letting the world be encountered."<sup>8</sup> This particular way of letting the world be encountered he characterizes as perceiving merely to have perceived and not in order to understand. In order to illustrate this point, Heidegger provides a description of circumspection that uses the concepts of care and concern. Though these concepts remain ambiguous to me, I will use them as Heidegger uses them in the circumspection-curiosity tale." (Melendez)

### From the first protocol (Lotz)

Three main responses can be given to the question of what *BT* is all about: [1] Being, [2] Dasein, and [3] time. Though "Being" and "Time" are announced in the title, it seems as if *BT* does not fully develop [1] and [3], especially since Heidegger moves, in the introduction, from the question of Being in general to what he calls the "Analytic of Dasein" and, in addition, the part that should deal with time "itself" was not published (though H. deals with time as Dasein's temporality in the later sections of *BT*). Accordingly, [2] is the most promising answer, but it needs further clarification. Lotz claimed that the main problem of *BT* (and the surrounding writings, such as the Kant-courses and the short writings between 1928 and 1930) is not Dasein as such;

rather, it is the problem of transcendence or openness, which not only allows us to connect [1] -[3], but also makes a synthetic view of *BT* possible, insofar as all central concepts, such as world, care, guilt, death, and temporality are based on transcendence as the ground of existence. Heidegger himself repeatedly points out after *BT* that transcendence is the major issue of *BT*.<sup>6</sup> Transcendence is finally laid out in terms of time.<sup>7</sup> For example, in *The Essence of Ground* he writes:

"Human Dasein – a being that finds itself situated in the midst of beings, comporting itself towards beings – in so doing exists in such a way that beings are always manifest as a whole."<sup>8</sup>



The absolute ground, we might say, according to Heidegger, is the fact that beings "are," i.e. are accessible, transparent, open, meaningful, etc (as a whole). In other words, the difference between Being/Beings, Being/phenomenon, Beings/World, Being/Meaningfulness is the core problem of *BT* and is, as Heidegger additionally claims, also the problem of the former history of metaphysics (which is especially visible in Heidegger's attempt to find a foundation for Husserl's concept of intentionality and Kant's concept of object relation [Gegenstandsbeziehung]). On the one hand, accordingly, we must think of transcendence as an ontological concept (ont. Difference, Being as *veritas transcendentalis*; for this see *BT*, 62), on the other hand, we must think of it as a transcendental concept (i.e. transcending, overstepping).<sup>9</sup> We (Dasein) are beings who are "opened up" to the "is" of what is: we are amidst beings (receptivity)

and we overstep beings as beings because the "is" as such is revealed, "light up" and intelligible (GA16, 424) to us – although it remains unclear at this point whether we produce the openness (which H. rejects), somehow are the openness, or find ourselves in it:

"The entity which bears the title Dasein is one that has been cleared [gelichtet] [...] in other words, that which makes it both 'open' for itself and 'bright' for itself – is what we have defined as 'care' in advance of any 'temporal Interpretation' (*BT*, 401-02; see also H. comments on the *lumen naturale* and the clearing; *BT*, 171).

With Heidegger's analysis of the problem of transcendence, which is an especially modern problem, Heidegger shows us that a proper ontology can only be carried out phenomenologically. In short, transcendence does not simply mean that we are opened up towards beings; rather, we are opened up toward the Being of beings – or towards

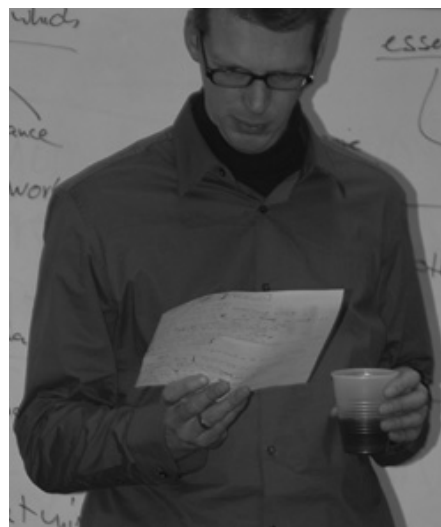


world/meaningfulness/significance. Heidegger's main thought is accordingly the following: the condition of the possibility of any object-relation whatsoever is transcendence (=world as the condition of object-relations):

"in its essence of its Being, is is world-forming, 'forming' in the multiple sense that it lets world occur, and through the world gives itself an original view [Anblick] (form [Bild]) that is not explicitly grasped, yet functions precisely as a paradigmatic form [Vorblick] for all manifest beings, among which each respective [jeweilige] Dasein itself belongs."<sup>10</sup>

"World as a wholeness 'is' not a being, but that from out which Dasein gives itself the signification of whatever beings it is able to comport itself toward in whatever way."<sup>11</sup>

During this seminar, we will come back to transcendence and world as the central concepts of BT. For now, we should keep in mind that both concepts indicate Heidegger's attempt to make the "wonder of all wonders" – that being is – transparent through a phenomenological analysis of the Being of ourselves: for us our existence is, while existing an issue.



### Heidegger's Transcendental Move



This "double move" of transcendence and transcending explains Heidegger's main strategy in the introduction of BT, namely the move from the question of Being in general to the question of the being of Dasein, which some commentators have taken as reason to speak of Heidegger as a transcendental philosopher in the Kantian tradition.<sup>12</sup> Establishing Dasein as the primary object of investigation establishes the thesis that the Being of Dasein is the condition of the possibility for addressing or referring to Beings at all. Lotz remarked that in a general sense he agrees with this take on Heidegger, but that we should be careful not to overlook the uniqueness of H.'s position, which is most visible in his claim that the tradition has misconstrued the Being of the one who not only raises but also whose Being is itself characterized by raising the question of Being and by having and understanding of our Being (BT, 32), i.e. the Being of the questioner is the absolute condition and must be clarified before we can go on to the general question of Being (BT, §1) or to specific ontologies (BT, §3). In this vein, as Lotz underlined, it is important to understand why Heidegger does not equate "Dasein" with "human beings" in BT and to understand why most of the commentators, including Sartre, fail to see this important point.

### Why "Dasein" and not "Human Being?"

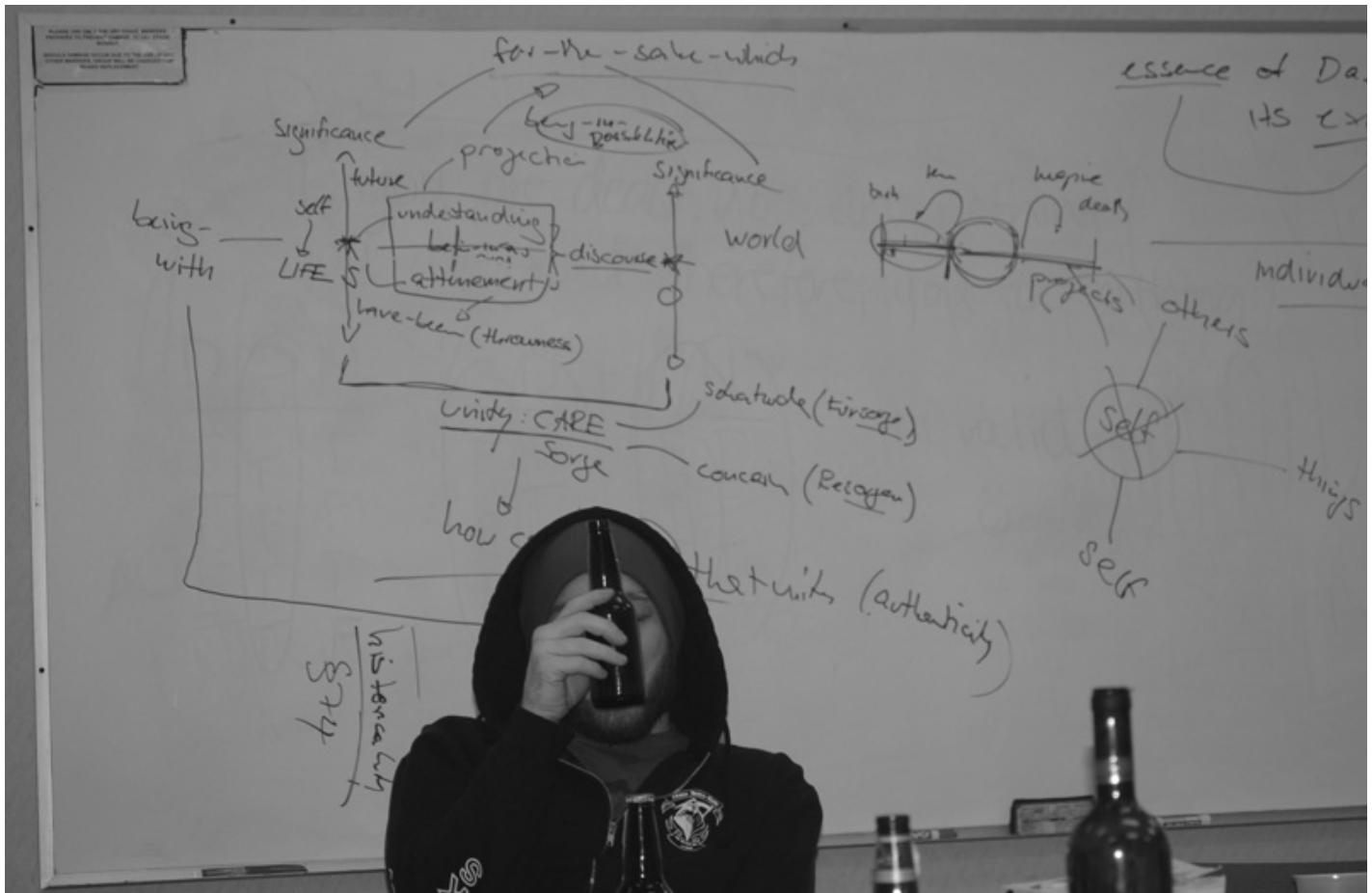
The question of Being, i.e., the question of what it means to be [a] for beings other than Dasein, [b] for beings in general, and [c] for Dasein is, according to Heidegger, an issue for Dasein (BT, 32; with [c] being the primacy focus). This is to say that the question of what it means to be is not something that philosophy or theory brings into the world; rather, philosophy can only pick this question up and make it transparent, for our Being is itself characterized by a certain being troubled with Being.<sup>13</sup> We respond to the question with everything we do and think because the question of what it means to be in our case (in the case of the questioner) is answered in terms of our existence (BT, 33). Consequently, Heidegger radically opens up the field of investigation in section 4 of BT, in declaring that he will give us a totally new interpretation of who we (i.e. the ones who raise and understand the question) are. Moreover, his interpretation will be phenomenologically appropriate, i.e., Heidegger will be speaking about us in a way that shows us as we are from ourselves (see §7). Because for Heidegger the Being of us is unclear and distorted by traditional answers, we should not identify "Dasein" with "human being." That we take our Being to "mean" human beings is the result and answer to the question of what it means to be for us. Taking ourselves as a "thinking thing" (Descartes), as a "zoon logon echon" (Aristotle) or as "selfconsciousness" (Hegel) are implicit answers to the question raised in BT and, according to Heidegger's claim, distorted views (see BT, 43). The tradition did not realize that they all give implicit answers to the ontological questions of both Being in general and the Being of Dasein.



In sum, we made clear that commentators who identify Dasein with human reality or being human as such, precisely miss Heidegger's point in BT, namely, that the Being of the one who raises the question of Being remains unclear and has to be worked out (=task of the analytic of existence). Identifying ourselves as human beings is already a specific answer to the question of what it means to be in our case and is in danger of taking over historically handed down prejudices and traditional interpretations (e.g., animal rationale, thinking thing, mind/body, etc.). Instead of starting with conceptual

structures that we take over from someone else, we start, as Heidegger underlines, with an interpretation of the averageness and everydayness of ourselves (BT, 69).

Finally, the following picture summarizes it all:



[Back to Homepage](#)