

Heidegger and Derrida on Structure and Form.

As a subject constructs and organizes an object via a valuative account, the object is conditioned by this subjective activity. But if that were the end of it, we would not move past Kant's conditions of possibility. The subject must in turn be reciprocally conditioned by the object. The object grounded by the subject and the subject grounded by the object is a non-grounded grounding, or more precisely, an activity of reciprocal transformation. Philosophers in the post Hegel era, from Kierkegaard to Nietzsche, have recognized that Being, if it is to overcome metaphysics, must take into account, imply, differentiate from, structural beings while not being a structure itself. Heidegger was committed to forging a path of thinking integrating, without succumbing to, the dominant philosophical traditions of the 20th century (dialectical and Neo-Kantian subjectivism and positivist empiricism). Heidegger laid the groundwork for this path in *Being and Time*.

Being distinguishes itself as the unity of the mutual carrying out and trans-formative nature of beings-being. *BT*'s challenge was to formulate the Ontological-Ontic Difference in such a way as to avoid rendering Being as grounding condition of possibility for beings, as unconditioned master concept, a first principle. Via the ontological difference, "Being grounds beings, and beings, as what IS most of all, account for Being. One comes over the other, one arrives in the other. Overwhelming and arrival appear in each other" (Heidegger, *Identity and Difference*). With the era initiated by the *Kehre*, Heidegger further developed a way to think the overcoming of the self-contradiction of a grounding concept that seeks to overcome objectification. *Ereignis* performs the unity of the difference between Being and Beings as differentiating event.

If Heideggerian Being takes into account, implies, differentiates from, structural beings while not being a structure itself, what does it mean for beings to 'have a structure'? Words like rote and mechanical depict the effects of structure as generator of process of repetition of a dominating theme. And this is what many scholars target in Heidegger's critique of technology and *Gestell*. But what is a structure in and of itself, prior to and outside of its production-reproduction? What is the meaning of structure as momentary state, before it is thought as programmatic process, as conversion, formulaic self-unfolding?

Writers endorsing a general account of meaning as non-recuperable or non-coincidental from one instantiation to the next may nonetheless treat the heterogeneous contacts between instants of experience as transformations of fleeting forms, states, logics, structures, outlines, surfaces, presences, organizations, patterns, procedures, frames, standpoints. When thought as pattern, the structural-transcendental moment of eventness upholds a certain logic of internal relation; the elements of the configuration mutually signify each other and the structure presents itself as a fleeting identity, a gathered field. The particularity of eventness is not allowed to split the presumed (temporary) identity of the

internal configuration that defines the structure as structure. History would be the endless reframing of a frame, the infinite shifting from paradigm to paradigm.

It is this presumed schematic internality of eventness, the power of abstractive multiplicity given to the sign, which causes experience to be treated as resistant to its dislocation, as a lingering or resistant form, pattern, configuration, infrastructure. Of the numerous philosophers since Hegel who have attempted to rescue the subject-object scheme-content relation from metaphysical domination (Kierkegaard, Gadamer, Levinas, Nietzsche), Heidegger and Derrida are the first to question and dismantle the very possibility of structure-pattern-scheme as subject or object. How so?

Let us examine the phenomenon of structure more closely. How is structure composed? What is the structurality of structure? Contemporary philosophical thinking outside of Heidegger and Derrida tends to think the spatial frame of structure as enclosure of co-present elements. It is an internality, full presence, a resting in itself and an auto-affection. Structure would be a pattern framing a finite array of elements. It would be a system of classification, a vector or center of organization. We can think pattern in abstract (the structure of democracy) or concrete (the structure of a house) terms. A structure has properties in the minimal sense that it is defined by its center, that which organizes and, determines it thematically as that which is the bearer of its attributes, that according to which its elements are aligned. Structure is plurality of the identical.

If a structure is an organization of elements, those elements themselves are structures. The object is structure in that it is self-presence, its turning back to itself in order to be itself as presence, subsistence, auto-affection, the 'this as itself'. Therefore structure would be irreducible. It would be the primordial basis of beings as objects (point of presence, fixed origin) as internality, space as frame, subsistence, pure auto-affection, representation, category, law, self-presence itself. Also value, will, norm. So much rides on where we begin from in thinking about beginnings.

In various writings Derrida deconstructs the notion of structure. He argues that structure implies center, and at the center, transformation of elements is forbidden. But he says in fact there is no center, just the desire for center. If there is no center, there is no such singular thing as structure, only the decentering thinking of the structurality of structure.

"Henceforth, it was necessary to begin thinking that there was no center, that the center could not be thought in the form of a present-being, that the center had no natural site, that it was not a fixed locus but a function, a sort of non-locus in which an infinite number of sign-substitutions came into play. This was the moment when language invaded the universal problematic, the moment when, in the absence of a center or origin, everything became discourse-provided we can agree on this word-that is to say, a system in which the central signified, the original or transcendental signified, is never absolutely present outside a system of differences." (Sign, Structure and Play, Writing and Difference p352)

“The iterability of an element divides its own identity a priori, even without taking into account that this identity can only determine or delimit itself through differential relations to other elements and hence that it bears the mark of this difference. It is because this iterability is differential, within each individual "element" as well as between "elements", because it splits each element while constituting it, because it marks it with an articulatory break, that the remainder, although indispensable, is never that of a full or fulfilling presence; it is a differential structure escaping the logic of presence..(Limited Inc p53)."

In their essence, Beings don't HAVE structure or constitution. There is no such THING as a form, a structure, a state. There is no trans-formation but rather a trans-differentiation, (transformation without form, articulation as dislocation) What is being transcended is not form but difference. Each of the elements in the array that define a structure are differences .They do not belong to a structure . They are their own differentiation. There is no gathering, cobbling , synthesis, relating together, only a repetition of differentiation such that what would have been called a form or structure is a being the same differently from one to the next. Not a simultaneity but a sequence. So one could not say that form of nature is the way in which nature transitions through and places itself into the forms and states that, from a schematic perspective, constitute the path of its movement, and nature turns into natural things, and vice versa. Nature would not transition through forms and states, Nature, as difference itself, transitions through differential transitions. Differences are not forms. Forms are enclosures of elements organized according to a rule. Forms give direction. Difference does not give direction, it only changes direction. What are commonly called forms are a temporally unfolding system of differences with no organizing rule, no temporary 'it'. The transformation is from one differential to the next before one ever gets to a form.

Schemes, conceptual, forms, intentions, willings have no actual status other than as empty ontic abstractions invoked by individuals who nevertheless, in their actual use of these terms, immediately and unknowingly transform the senses operating within (and defining) such abstractions in subtle but global ways concealed by but overrunning what ontically understood symbols, bits, assemblies, bodies, frames and other states are supposed to be , even if (and especially when) Ereignis as transformative event names the overturning of being as Ge-stell. The briefest identification of a so-called state is an unknowing experiencing of temporally unfolding multiplicity of differences. This is the ontological being of the ontic notion of structure, in the service of which Heidegger puts the old word to work as its deconstruction. In Heidegger's fundamental ontological 'forms' one finds nothing like a structure in any commonly understood sense, only what would be difference as the hermeneutical 'as', heedful association, 'being underway', producing, project, existing, care, the 'is', temporality, disclosiveness.

In BT, 'What is a Thing' and other writings, Heidegger describes a structure-thing as the bearer of properties and underlies qualities. A thing is a nucleus around which many changing qualities are grouped, or a bearer upon which the qualities rest, something that possesses something in itself. It has an internal organization. But Heidegger doesn't settle

for this present to hand account. In a gesture allied with Derrida, he thinks the structurality of structure as the Being of beings. But he doesn't do this by conceiving Being via the transitioning through and placing itself into, the turning toward and away from, structures, forms, schemes. This would be to pre-suppose the metaphysical concept of structure as present to hand state, and thus leave it unquestioned. It would not only leave it unquestioned, but confuse ontological-ontic difference with ontic-ontic difference. What I see Heidegger doing is locating transformation within structure, as Derrida does in his own way. Heidegger's discussion of propositional statements in BT sec 33 is key here. In this section he derives the apophantic 'as' structure of propositional logic from the hermeneutical 'as'.

As an "ontologically insufficient interpretation of the logos", what the mode of interpretation of propositional statement doesn't understand about itself is that thinking of itself as external 'relating' makes the propositional 'is' an inert synthesis, and conceals its ontological basis as attuned, relevant taking of 'something AS something'. In accordance with this affected-affecting care structure, something is understood WITH REGARD TO something else. This means that it is taken together with it, but not in the manner of a synthesizing relating. Heidegger instead describes the 'as' as a "confrontation that understands, interprets, and articulates, [and] at the same time takes apart what has been put together." Transcendence locates itself in this way within the very heart of the theoretical concept. Simply determining something AS something is a transforming-performing. It "understands, interprets, and articulates", and thereby "takes apart" and changes what it affirms by merely pointing at it, by merely having it happen to 'BE' itself. Heidegger's hermeneutical 'as' functions as Derrida's differential system of signs. Something is something only as differential. Articulation of the 'is' transforms in order to articulate. That is, articulation, hinge, IS the 'in order to'. Thus, the problem of the primordial grounding of the 'is', and the analysis of the logos are the same problem. Heidegger writes:

"...if the formal characteristics of "relation" and "binding" cannot contribute anything phenomenally to the factual structural analysis of the logos, the phenomenon intended with the term copula finally has nothing to do with bond and binding."(BT,p160)

"The "is" here speaks transitively, in transition. Being here becomes present in the manner of a transition to beings. But Being does not leave its own place and go over to beings, as though beings were first without Being and could be approached by Being subsequently. Being transits (that), comes unconcealingly over (that) which arrives as something of itself unconcealed only by that coming-over." "That differentiation alone grants and holds apart the "between," in which the overwhelming and the arrival are held toward one another, are borne away from and toward each other."(Identity and Difference.p.64)

This is the method of Heidegger's decentering thinking of the structurality of structure. The thinking of structure as a singularity implies a multiplicity of supposed 'parts' captured in an instant of time. But the assumption that we think this parallel existence of differences at the 'same time', as the 'same space', organized and centered as a 'THIS', must unravel with the knowledge that each differential singular is born of and belongs irreducibly to,

even as it is a transformation of, an immediately prior element . Two different elements cannot be presumed to exist at the same time because each single element is its own time(the hinged time of the pairing of a passed event with the presencing of a new event) as a change of place. Thus, whenever we think that we are theorizing two events at the same time, we are unknowingly engaging in a process of temporal enchainment and spatial re-contextualization. The assumption of a spatial frame depends on the ability to return to a previous element without the contaminating effect of time. How can we know that elements of meaning are of the same spatial frame unless each is assumed to refer back to the same 'pre-existing' structure?

The same goes for the fixing of a point of presence as a singular object. This pointing to, and fixing of, an itself as itself is a thematic centering that brings with it all the metaphysical implications of the thinking of a structural center. Heidegger's 'as'(which is not a structure in itself but a differential) explains, derives and deconstructs form, structure, thing before it can ever establish itself as a 'this'.

The issue here centers on the understanding of Heideggerian temporality. Is there a notion of transformation, transcendence, differentiation, event , performance that doesn't 'take time' but also avoids being a state, concept, intention, presence, structure? Is it possible to think of such a notion without inadvertently lapsing into metaphysical totalization? To fail to deconstruct the concept of structure is to conceive the 'both-together' of past-present-future as a conjunction of separate, adjacent phases or aspects: the past which conditions the present entity or event, and the present object which supplements that past. It is not that these these phases are considered as unrelated, only that they each must be presumed to carve out their own temporary identities in order to arrive at a notion of stricture-pattern-scheme as an identity. The association between past and present would be a fracturing, the fracture between Self and Other, between immanence and transcendence, rather than Heidegger's ecstatic unity. Ontological-Ontic difference is misread as difference between presences. As the overcoming-arriving difference of Heideggerian temporality, it is difference WITHIN presence.

Temporality as a 'split' within will, intention, presence is misread if it is thought as smaller bits of presence. Penetrating the veil of the formal permeating our language of the things within us and around us is not a matter of discovering smaller, faster, dumber, more interactive 'bits' within the unities of current approaches, for that would simply displace the issues we've discussed onto a miniaturized scale. It is a matter of revealing perhaps an entirely different notion of the basis of entities than that of the freeze-frame state. Being is not an interiority or enclosure(or in between enclosure and overcoming as the event of their differentiation). On the contrary, it exposes and subverts the presumed interiority of conceptuality, representation, will from within its own resources, in the same moment.

To read Being and Time starting from the 'is', not as conceptual binding but as the transit of 'overwhelming and arrival', de-thrones logos, structure, concept and representation, relegating them to where and how we actually find them in BT, as special derived modifications of the hermeneutical 'as'.

How are we to do we understand Heidegger's admonitions concerning the dangers of Gestell? What does one make of those who have not read Heidegger, who have not grasped what he was aiming at, who battle against what they see as the dangerous 'anti-science' relativisms of postmodern thinking, who contribute to the universal objectification of being? As Heidegger points out in *Identity and Difference*, "the manner in which the matter of thinking-Being-comports itself, remains a unique state of affairs. The inauthentic modes of the ready-to-hand, the present-to-hand, average everydayness, authentic Being, Ereignis all mark different factual experiences. Yet what is common to all possible modes of Being is a certain radical mobility. This means that there is, every moment, within the thinking of each individual who participates in the most apparently rigidly schematic orientations, a radical mobility WITHIN the will to conceptual schematism* that is easy to miss (and in fact has been missed for most of Western history, according to Heidegger). Even if the effect of this mobility is subtle enough that it appears for all intents and purposes as though the reign of the dominating objectivizing scheme were absolute, it is crucial to recognize that even in such situations that seem to exemplify the a priori neutralization of otherness, a more originary but radically self-dissimulating a priori, that of Being, is in play, always right now, this instant.

Within and beyond states, forms and structures, lies a universe of barely self-exceeding accents, modulations, aspects, variations, ways of working. Not variations or modulations of STATES but modulations of modulations. The worlds generated from (but never overtaking) this intricate process may be clumsily described via the terminology of patterned interactions between states, but at the cost of missing the profound ongoing internal relatedness and immediacy of this underlying, overflowing movement. Heidegger reveals Being as an interface both more intrinsically self-transformative and implicatively self-consistent than current views allow for. The belief in temporary discrete states stifles the intimately interactive potential of their approaches by making the whole works dependent on irreducible units of formal resistance and polarization.

Rather than originating in an invasive, displacing outside. of interactions between partially independent regions, the 'isness' of Being is already articulated as intersections of intersections, metaphors of metaphors(as metaphoricity itself), guaranteeing that the person as a whole always functions as an implicatory unity at the very edge of experience. Before there is self or world, there would be this single-split gesture, co-implicating continuity and qualitative transformation in such a way that existing maintains a unity which recognizes itself, at every moment, the 'same differently'. Aspects hidden within so-called present forms and structures, unique to the implicative thrust of my own existing, belong to me in a fashion that exceeds my own calculative grasp even as it transcends strictly shared social normativity. On the contrary, the radically inseparable interaffecting between my history and new experience exposes me to the world in an immediate, constant and thoroughgoing manner, producing every moment a global reshaping of my sense of myself and others outpacing the transformative impetus realized via a narrative conception of socialization.

I am not arguing that the meaning of social cues is simply person-specific rather than

located intersubjectively as an impersonal expressive agency. Before there is a pre-reflective personal 'I' or interpersonal 'we', there is already within what would be considered THE person a fully social site of simultaneously subjective-objective process overtaking attempts to understand human action based on either within-person constancies or between-person conditionings. Events understood as interaffectings of interaffectings, working within and beyond relations among presumed temporary essences (conceptual, affective-bodily, interpersonal), do not achieve their gentle integrative continuity through any positive internal power. On the contrary, they simply lack the formidability of static identity necessary to impose the arbitrariness of conditioning, mapping, mirroring, grafting and cobbling, on the movement of experiential process.

Most readings of Heidegger(Gadamer, Levinas) view the mutual carrying out and trans-formative nature of beings-being as implying, including, and carrying along with it rather than erasing the internal composition of a structure of a being-to-be-modified. Being for them is substance and movement . Being is nature itself as the transformative substance and movement that goes across and beyond formation. Being is the 'in between' the subjective conditioning of the object and the objective conditioning of the subject. So the array of elements that are organized and thought together, at once, thematically as this structure-form are carried into their trans-formation(we could also say trans-structuration).

But I have argued here that the purpose of Heidegger's investigation of propositionality is not to identify theoretical objects as ontological givens for Being, but to establish propositional object, concept, representation, Gestell, as ontic existents in order to reveal them more rigorously as grounded ontologically (in the sense of fundamental ontology) in primordial unconcealment. Most readings of Heidegger(Gadamer, Levinas) do the reverse, attempting to ground fundamental ontology, and all of the modal analyses which spring from it, in what for Heidegger is the ontic plane of propositional representation.

In other words, they reduce the ontological difference to a difference between two ontic determinations. Being conceived as the performative difference between schematism and existence is a difference between two ontic determinations and therefore is itself on the ontic plane of propositionality. It is a present to hand thinking masquerading as post-metaphysical.

When one begins from the subjectivism of representationality, the way of out of Kantian apriorism must stand as the absolute other to representation, that is to say, it must arrive in the guise of the performance of the differentiation between Subjective structuring and Objective determination. Only in this way can the empirically conditioned and contingent beginning of thought avoid being mistaken for a Kantian unconditioned ground of possibility. Heidegger and Derrida give us a way to avoid grounding fundamental ontology in the performative difference between schematism and existence as its condition of possibility.

*The will never has a grasp of itself that is not a being beyond itself. When we think of intention as grasping toward objects, we don't see the underlying alterity that always makes desire want otherwise than what it wants in the very instant of desiring. Desire is only a

willing of what it wills if thought of as a being-for-itself, auto-affection, the contingent self-identity of the moment of a program. Intention-will-desire must be thought this way as long as it thinks itself grounded via structure, form, and state. Only when thought in this way does the problem arise of extricating ourselves from the temporary solipsism of the event (We MUST keep reason in play). Heidegger's critique of Will to Power, as I see it, faults Nietzsche for not departing radically enough from a Levinasian thinking of intentionality as the 'grasp of the Will'