

Heidegger

DiPs at *The Blue Mugge* pub, Mon 7th December 2015
Notes based on the ODD circle Tue 26th May 09 at *The Blue Mugge* Pub

1. When we discussed Kirkegaard long ago, a member of the group proposed – and was supported – that we should take a philosopher or philosophic topic quite frequently, maybe even once a month. Most present in the pub knew nothing about Kirkegaard but gained from discussion of his ideas. Fewer next Monday will know anything about Heidegger? The facilitator is no expert on the philosopher either – no matter...
2. Several will have read a little, via google...: ‘The Internet Encyclopaedia of Philosophy’: They will offer some biographical information; dates, where he lived and worked, what he wrote, his joining the Nazi party in 1933... with consideration of the paradox: Hannah Arendt, herself a distinguished (Jewish background) thinker on politics and the history of ideas, believed that throughout 20th century philosophy... Heidegger has been ‘the secret king of thought’?
3. “Heideggerians regard as crucial the argument of his work – which in essence, bears on one single topic: what he calls ‘the being of Being’...” “For Heidegger... constant fear of death and the anxieties of life, helped man ask this central question: ‘What is it to be?’... ‘Why is there being at all instead of nothing?’
4. Human existence, he argues, is in the first place always *being-in-the-world*: we are human subjects only because we are practically bound up with others and the material world... Human existence is a dialogue with the world, and the more reverent activity is to listen rather than to speak.
5. ‘H. argued in his work *Being and Time* that humans are distinguished from other beings by their capacity to put their own existence into question....Language allows us to conceive of our situation as a whole. Because we live by signs, which bring the capacity for abstraction, we can distance ourselves from our immediate contexts, free ourselves from the imprisonment of our bodily senses, and speculate on the human situation as such.’...
6. ‘Only where there is language is there ‘world’ in the distinctively human sense.’ From the Biblical “In the beginning was the Word” > ‘Language is the primordial poetry in which a people speaks being. Conversely, the great poetry by which a people enters into history initiates the moulding of its language’. Understood? Agreed?
7. Heidegger’s impact on existentialism will be outlined and discussed.
8. Heidegger felt that art, like language, is important evidence of existence – something real rather than a mere recreation of reality... When Van Gogh shows us a pair of peasant shoes H. asks ‘What is here? The canvas? The brush strokes? The spots of colour?’ We feel we know, urges H. that there is something else there... Steiner writes: ‘... the existential presentness of the painting, that in its existence which reaches into our being...’.
9. Steiner goes on to link music to the heart of the Heideggerian argument. ‘In music, being and meaning are inextricable. They deny paraphrase. But they ‘are’, and our experience of this ‘essentiality’ is as certain as any in human awareness’. This passage will be quoted in full, as it relates to the famous quote from Pater: ‘All art constantly aspires towards the condition of music’.
- 10 H. opposed technology which he believed caused alienation... ‘false technicity has edged the human race to the brink of ecological devastation and political suicide ... (we must) realize that salvation is possible... It is precisely because exploitative technology and the worship of allegedly objective science are the natural culmination of Western metaphysics after Plato, that the Heideggerian summons ‘to overcome metaphysics’ is... a summons to ‘the saving of the earth’... The fatality of technicity lies in the fact that we have broken the links between *techne* and *poiesis*. It is time we turned to the poets’

George Steiner *Heidegger* 1978