INTRODUCTION

The aim of this book is to provide a new account of the fundamental
concepts and arguments that define Heidegger's early work; specific-
ally, my focus will be on the period from 1919 to 1935. I am interested
in three sets of issues in particular, and in the interaction between
them. The first concerns the interpretation and validity of the various
philosophical theses which Heidegger advances. How, for example,
should we understand his theory of intentionality? In what sense, if
any, does he regard linguistic or propositional meaning as a secondary
phenomenon or even a distorting one? What exactly is Heideggerian
"understanding" or "anxiety" and what, if anything, do these ideas
imply for current debates over conceptualism or 'know how' or nor-
mativity? How do his views on these and other topics relate to those of
other phenomenologists, or to contemporary analytic research? The
second set of issues concerns the complex links between Heidegger's
own thought and his extensive and vastly detailed commentaries
on the philosophical canon. Why, for example, does he place such
emphasis on Kant's Schematism? How does the role of society in texts
such as *SZ* mirror or diverge from its role in Heidegger's predecessors
such as Hegel? Why are Heidegger's remarks on Plato, whether pages
or years apart, so often deeply conflicted, hedged, alternately hesitant
and overplayed? I will place particular stress on Kant, an author whom
Heidegger knew in huge detail and to whom he devoted more than
a thousand pages of intricate commentary: examining the tripartite
relationship between Heidegger himself, his reading of Kant and an
orthodox view of the Critical system will prove an important exeget-
ical tool, one which throws into relief many of the unspoken assump-
tions that underpin Heidegger's own thought. The third set of issues

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concerns Heidegger's distinctive conceptual apparatus and its connection to the development of his philosophy. What *exactly* does he mean by "being" and what are the implications of that answer for doctrines such as the ontological difference? What is the distinction between discoveredness [*Entdecktheit*] and disclosedness [*Erschlossenheit*], or between the different senses of temporality marked by "*Zeitlichkeit*" and "*Temporalität*"? What work is being done by those distinctions? Could they be articulated in another philosophical vocabulary – if not, why not? Similarly, what does he mean by "freedom" and how does he ultimately come to see it as "prior even to being and time"?[1]

My plan is to look in detail both at the core questions within each of these three sets of issues and at the interaction between them. I argue that the picture of Heidegger which emerges is radically different from that currently dominant, especially within the Anglo-American literature. To take a single case, I deny that Dasein's primary level of experience is nonconceptual: I defend this view against the widespread treatment of Heidegger as a pioneering nonconceptualist. I also argue, however, that the picture of Heidegger which emerges from my reading captures what is distinctive in his thought, what sets his theory apart from any other philosophical position. To stick with the same case, for example, I contend that whilst Dasein's primary intentionality is conceptual, it is *nevertheless* nonpropositional. I thus present Heidegger as attempting to mark out a distinctive logical space, one missed by both conceptualists and nonconceptualists in so far as they equate the conceptual and the propositional. Further, I show how his attempt to defend this move is closely tied to the unfinished, and I suggest unfinishable, project of *SZ*, and I chronicle his attempts to shore up that project in the years after 1927.

The structure of the book is as follows. I begin in Chapter 1 with Heidegger's theory of intentionality. I argue that this is best approached via two claims: that propositional intentionality is in some sense explanatorily derivative, and that propositional intentionality is in some sense linked to a particular ontology, that of the "present-at-hand". I canvas ten existing accounts of these two claims as defended by Dreyfus, Carman, Wrathall and others. I argue that despite their sophistication no existing account meets the twin criteria of exegetical and philosophical plausibility. In Chapter 2, I therefore offer a new interpretation of the supposed link between

1 Ga31: 134.

the propositional and the present-at-hand as sketched in texts such
as *SZ*§33. Locating Heidegger in relation to Russell and Frege, I
claim that his point does not concern propositional intentionality
itself, but rather only a subset of propositions, those that have been
subjected to a particular meta-linguistic analysis. I contrast my view
with those of Blattner, Dahlstrom, Carman, Wrathall and others
and argue for its advantages. In Chapter 3, I turn to the other claim
through which I approached Heideggerian intentionality, the claim
that propositional content is in some sense explanatorily derivative.
This chapter is the longest in the book, and it is the most complex.
The key to Heidegger's position, I suggest, lies with his idea of under-
standing 'something as something', or, as he puts it, understanding
'*a* as *b*'. To grasp his argument one needs to look closely at each com-
ponent here: the 'as' and the *a* and *b* variables. After discussing the
'as' in relation to Heidegger's work on meaning and on the idea of
a context, I address the *a* variable: I distinguish several distinct rep-
resentationalist theories of intentionality and I contrast Heidegger's
position with those, with the West and East Coast readings of Husserl
and with contemporary analytic disjunctivism and relationalism. My
main focus, however, is on the *b* variable, which I argue plays a foun-
dational role in Heidegger's system, determining his understanding
of concepts such as meaning, the ontological difference and the a
priori. I support these claims by looking closely at Heidegger's work
on Kant and on Plato: in both cases, I provide a new interpretation of
the relevant texts. My conclusion is a novel one: propositional inten-
tionality is derivative for Heidegger on a mode of experience with
a unique *grammar*, a mode of experience that is conceptual and yet
nonpropositional. I show, further, how his thinking on this issue is
decisively influenced by, and indeed constitutes a "repetition of", in
SZ's distinctive sense of that phrase, Kant's Schematism and Plato's
doctrine of ideas.

    In Chapter 4, I shift from intentionality to metaphysics in the broad-
est sense. I contend that Heidegger's work on truth and his definition
of "being" both mesh with my approach. I also argue for a realist
interpretation of his work and contrast my views on this with those of
Blattner, Carman and Lafont. But the results of this chapter do not, I
warn, change the fact that the underlying position which Heidegger
defends, the position set out in Chapter 3, faces significant philosoph-
ical problems. I propose, in Chapter 5, that we thus see a develop-
ment in Heidegger's thinking as he attempts to work through these

problems in the late 1920s and early 1930s.[2] This shift culminates in an increased emphasis on freedom: I argue that this emphasis is designed to articulate the central role of normativity within Heidegger's system and I show how this both fleshes out and extends strands present in *SZ*. I support my claims here by looking closely at Heidegger's work on Kant's philosophy of action: I stress the importance for both philosophers of the link between normativity and the first-person perspective. I close in Chapter 6, by showing how those questions of freedom, of the first person and of "mineness" link to authenticity. I contend that for Heidegger authentic agents possess a distinctive awareness of the limitations of normative space, of the "space of reasons" to use the Sellarsian metaphor. Heidegger refers to those limitations as Dasein's "finitude" and unpacks them through discussion of existential concepts such as death and guilt. I explain and critically assess the way in which Heidegger connects those discussions to issues such as perfectionism, *phronesis* and 'the one': I contrast Heidegger's position with Hegel's, and my account with those advanced by contemporary commentators such as Crowell and Carman. I end by indicating how the various lines of argument I have sketched might be brought together to overcome the problems which ultimately undermine texts such as *SZ*.

Heidegger's philosophy, as I see it, is an innovative and highly unusual one. My goal in this book is to try to set out and assess some of the distinctive inferences, assumptions, influences and errors that drive it.

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2 I regard claims about this shift as independent from more familiar debates about the *Kehre* as it is usually understood; for example, I make little appeal to texts such as Ga65. Generally, the time frame on which I focus means that I take no particular view on either the existence or nature of a 'later Heidegger', although I find any suggestion of a binary change extremely implausible. Where my arguments support or clash with some specific thesis regarding texts or terms after 1935 I will note this (see especially p. 254).

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EXISTING TREATMENTS OF HEIDEGGER ON INTENTIONALITY

My aim in this chapter is to argue against many of the basic assumptions that have come to dominate work on Heidegger's theory of intentionality, particularly within the Anglo-American literature. I will frame the debate around Heidegger's stance on the proposition. As I will show, Heidegger makes two claims repeatedly, claims which are typically and rightly taken as central to his work. The first is that propositional intentionality in some sense forces our understanding of entities into certain set channels, channels which at worst actively distort, and at best fail to capture, the true nature of our experience. The second is that propositional intentionality is explanatorily derivative on some prior, nonpropositional level of experience. I will argue that the dominant approach to early Heidegger is sustained in large part by mutually supporting interpretations of these two claims. I will further argue that those mutually supporting interpretations, and by extension the dominant approach that relies on them, are mistaken. But before we can get to grips with the issues in play, I need to begin by clarifying the terminology I will use. This is the task of §1.1.

1.1. Framing the debate on intentionality

Heidegger's terminology is notoriously hard to correlate with that of other philosophers. I argue, particularly in Chapter 3, that this stems from his reliance on a number of novel concepts, concepts which are extremely hard to define within other philosophical systems. To begin with, however, I want to present as neutral a terminological framework as possible. This is vital if we are to understand where Heidegger stands in relation to Kant, or to Husserl or to contemporary analytic

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philosophy of mind or philosophy of perception. The place to begin
is with "intentionality": I will use "intentionality" to denote a property,
typically attributed to mental states, whereby those states are directed
toward or about something. As Brentano famously put it:

> [I]n presentation, something is presented, in judgement something is
> affirmed or denied, in love loved, in hate hated, in desire desired, and
> so on.[1]

Heidegger himself introduces the term in similar fashion (Ga20:
37; Ga24: 80–1); this should not, of course, lead us to prejudge the
deeper issue as to how far his understanding of it mirrors or departs
from Brentano's own. I now wish to introduce a number of ter-
minological stipulations to allow me to discuss intentionality. First,
"bearer". One of the most influential moves in phenomenology is
to argue that the explanatorily primary ascription of intentional-
ity should not be to mental states, but instead to the body in some
extended sense of that term. In order to avoid prejudging this issue,
I will therefore use the term "bearer" to refer to whatever intention-
ality is ascribed to: Merleau-Ponty, for example, would thus be said
to deny that mental states are the primary bearers of intentionality.
Second, the word "content". I will use the unqualified term "content"
to refer to whatever it is that a given intentional state is directed
towards or about. Thus, by definition, all intentional states have con-
tent. There are, of course, a number of influential positions within
analytic philosophy of mind which deny that certain experiences,
for example my perceiving this table, have "content" in some sense
of the word: for example, they may deny that perception can be true
or false.[2] I discuss such accounts and their relation to Heidegger in
detail in Chapters 3 and 4. But for current purposes, I will categor-
ise such theories as accepting the intentionality of the experience,
in the sense it is still directed at the table as opposed to the chair,
and thus as recognising its "content" in the unqualified sense of
the term whilst denying that it possesses content in other more spe-
cific, more substantive ways: for example, Brewer's position denies

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1 Brentano 1973: 88.
2 See, for example, Brewer 2006 and Travis 2004. My use of the unqualified term "con-
tent" is thus thinner than, for example, Siegel's in that she defines content by its pos-
sible truth or falsity, whereas for me the claim that contents have truth conditions is
a substantive one (compare my definitions with Siegel 2010: 334–5). I explain why I
define "content" and related terms so broadly at the end of this paragraph.

that perceptual experience can possess "representational content".[3] Third, within analytic philosophy of mind "intentionalism" is sometimes reserved for theories which hold that the content of a state determines its phenomenological character in the sense of the 'what it is like' to be in that state: as Byrne puts it, the intentionalist holds that "there can be no difference in phenomenal character without a difference in content".[4] The issue at stake in such debates is that of qualia, i.e. of whether there exist nonintentional phenomenological properties of conscious experience which might thus float free of a change in content. I regard Heidegger as largely uninterested in such qualia, which he appears to associate with sense datum theories (Ga5: 10; *SZ*: 163–4). I will therefore use "intentionalist" and "intentionalism" in line with my definition of "intentionality": one may be an "intentionalist" in my sense by committing to the intentionality of some set of experiences whilst remaining entirely neutral on the debate which Byrne highlights. Fourth, within analytic philosophy of perception "intentionalism" is sometimes reserved for theories that oppose disjunctivism or relationalism in one form or another, or, where this may or may not be exactly equivalent, that oppose externalism in some form or another.[5] Again, I want to define the term in a manner which is entirely neutral on these issues; they are, of course, vital issues and I discuss them at length in Chapter 3, but I do not want to build any of these views into the meaning of "intentionality". The reason for this is simple. Due to the intellectual context in which he operates, Heidegger inherits at least some of the vocabulary of phenomenology, particularly Husserlian phenomenology. For example, he states that "intentionality belongs to the existence of Dasein" (Ga24: 224), that "phenomenology is the analytic description of intentionality in its a priori" (Ga20: 108), and yet that existing accounts of "intentionality" are radically inadequate (Ga24: 230). By opting for the thinnest possible *definition* of intentionality, I want therefore to leave open as many of the substantive exegetical and philosophical questions as possible: whilst Heidegger, or for that matter Husserl, obviously talk about "intentionality", it should be a matter of debate, not stipulation, where they stand on something like disjunctivism.

3 This terminological practice coheres with Crane's recent work on the Dreyfus–McDowell debate (Crane 2011: 232–3). For a summary of Brewer's position see Brewer 2006.
4 Byrne 2001: 204.   5 See, for example, Crane 2006: 135.

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   The second group of terms which I want to define concern possible accounts of the content of intentional states.[6] I will begin with "proposition": is, for example, the perception I currently have of this room a piece of propositional content? Obviously, there are multiple theories as to the nature of propositions. But the immediate problem in defining the term is the historical scope of Heidegger's work: he often suggests that he is correcting errors which have been committed, in one form or another, since the Greeks (*SZ*: 165). Indeed, he denies that even the modern revolution in logic has altered this basic picture (*SZ*: 88). One needs therefore to begin from some comparatively wide definition of propositionality: whilst it would be of interest to show that Heidegger has a position on, say, Russellian propositions specifically, he is clearly after a broader result. I therefore propose:

   (Def) "Proposition" = The content of a declarative sentence.[7]

To say that a mode of intentionality is propositional is thus to say that its content can, at least in principle, be accurately given by the sentential complements of 'that-' clauses: I believe that *p*, I judge that *p*, etc. Searle, for example, held this view of perception:

   The content of the visual experience, like the content of the belief, is always equivalent to a whole proposition … it must always be *that* such and such is the case.[8]

Heidegger often seems to equate the propositional not just with the content of a declarative sentence, but more specifically with the content

6 The recent analytic literature distinguishes between "content" or "absolute" and "state" or "relative" treatments of concepts and propositions. For example, on the state or relative view, very loosely, a thesis such as nonconceptualism is not a thesis about content per se but about the way in which an agent relates to content: some particular state of mind *M* of an agent *A* is nonconceptual just if *M* intends some item of content *C* without *A* possessing the concepts that would "canonically characterise" *C* (the idea of a "canonical characterization" is examined in Crane 1992). Whilst I agree with Speaks 2005 that the distinction between state and content accounts is an important one, I do not believe that any of the specific arguments in what follows turns on it: I thus employ the simpler content approach with respect to both propositions and concepts. I discuss Speaks on nonconceptualism specifically below.
7 This definition is intended solely to provide a starting point for the discussion by appealing to one widespread view of propositions. I assume that the relevant sentence will be in a natural language such as English or German, or some extension of such, but nothing in what follows rests on this. An alternative would have been to introduce propositionality by reference to truth value. Heidegger's complex attitude to truth, however, makes that tactic unsuitable for introductory purposes.
8 Searle 1983: 40.

of a subject–predicate sentence (*SZ*: 154). By extension, he seems to equate the prepropositional and the prepredicative (Ga9: 130/27). The assumption that the subject–predicate form is the primary form of propositionality was a common one: Kant, for example, endorses it.[9] But, again, I will not build the reference to predication into my *definition* of propositionality. There are theorists who Heidegger would surely believe are guilty of over-focus on the propositional and who yet reject the subject–predicate model: Frege, for example.[10] One might be concerned that my resultant definition of "proposition" is so thin that it risks making the propositional nature of intentionality trivial. But one needs no Heideggerian apparatus to see that this fear is unfounded. Take the case of intensional transitives, i.e. verbs that generate intensional contexts yet which can take a direct object, such as "love". As many commentators have observed, there is no obvious way to complete the right-hand side of the equation "Tom loves John if and only if Tom loves that …" in such a manner that it genuinely states an equivalence; prima facie such intentional attitudes are thus irreducible to propositional content as defined.[11] One can see also how the question of propositional content will interact in complex ways with the other considerations alluded to when introducing "intentionality": so, for example, one common argument is that the best explanation as to why given pieces of intentional content may possess truth conditions is that they are propositional.[12]

The next term to be defined is "concept". Here I face several problems. One is that Heidegger often employs words like "*Begriff*" and "*begrifflich*" in the following way: something is conceptual for a given agent if and only if that agent has an explicit or thematic or systematic understanding of it. It is in this sense, for example that philosophy constitutes the "theoretical conceptual [*begrifflich*] interpretation" of being (Ga25: 24; similarly *SZ*: 200; Ga24: 398). This use of "conceptual" is not, however, a good way to frame the debate about intentionality: it would entail, for example, that even the Kantian categories were non-conceptual for most agents. Another problem is that the contemporary analytic literature is itself characterised not just by a disagreement over whether intentionality is conceptual, but over the prior question of what a concept is. As A. D. Smith neatly puts it, there are "low" accounts

9 V-Lo/Wiener: 933.   10 Frege 1967: §3.
11 For recent discussion see Montague 2007 and Grzankowski (in press).
12 For discussion see Crane 2009: 457–61.

of concepts, and by extension concept possession, which allow, say, animal psychologists to talk routinely of animals as possessing concepts, and "high" accounts, Sellars's for example, which set a more demanding hurdle for concept possession.[13] A further difficulty is that I am going to argue that one of Heidegger's achievements is precisely to problematise the way in which the conceptual has been understood. These factors combine to make selecting a neutral definition of "concept" difficult. What I propose therefore is to cherry-pick aspects from one of the most influential treatments of conceptuality, a comparatively "high" account in Smith's terms, and one which Heidegger knew well: Kant's account. Specifically, I define a concept, at least preliminarily, as a piece of content which has the following features:

> (Def) "Concept" = A piece of intentional content where: (i) the content is intrinsically universal or generic: i.e. it represents a property, say being triangular, which is potentially common to many things; (ii) the content implies certain normative or inferential relations: to apply the concept <body> to something is to locate it in a normative space within which I am obliged to apply various other concepts, for example <weight>, to it; (iii) the content cannot be possessed by nonhuman animals (dogs, apes, whales, etc.); (iv) the content is not qualitatively rich or diffuse or fine-grained in a way that prohibits its expression in any declarative sentence.[14]

I will say more about all these requirements in both this chapter and Chapters 2 and 3, but I want to comment briefly on the fourth conjunct. One of the classic arguments for nonconceptual content is that certain experiences, in particular perception, are somehow so rich or diffuse or fine-grained that they cannot be captured in language. Thus, to take a famous example, Heck writes:

> Consider your current perceptual state – and now imagine what a complete description of the way the world appears to you at this moment might be like. Surely a thousand words would hardly begin to do the job.[15]

The fourth conjunct thus requires that conceptual content not differ from propositional content by being inexpressible in this manner;

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13 Smith 2002: 100.
14 For examples of Kant's endorsement of these conditions see with respect to (i) *Log.*: 91 and *KrV*: A320/B376–7; with respect to (ii) *GMS*: 412; with respect to (iii) V-MP-L1/ Pölitz: 275–7; and with respect to (iv) *KrV*: A69/B94.
15 Heck 2000: 489.