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Ways of Being

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1 Introduction

There are many kinds of *beings*—stones, persons, artifacts, numbers, pro-
positions—but are there also many kinds of *being*? The world contains a
variety of objects, each of which exists—but do some objects *exist in different
ways*?

The historically popular answer is *yes*. This answer is suggested by the
Aristotelian slogan that "being is said in many ways," and according to some
interpretations is Aristotle's view.[1] Variants of this slogan were championed
by medieval philosophers, such as Aquinas, who worried that God cannot
be said to exist in the same sense (or in the same way) as created things.[2]
Descartes alluded to the medievals' worry, but extensive discussion of the
problem of being disappeared from the central stage by the time of the modern
period.[3] However, in the early twentieth century, friends of ways of being
included Alexius Meinong (1910: 49–62), G.E. Moore (1903: 161–3), Russell
(1912: 91–100), Husserl (1901: 249–50), and Heidegger (1927).[4]

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[1] For a defense of the claim that Aristotle believed that there are ways of existence, see M. Frede
(1987: 84–6). For criticisms of M. Frede's interpretation, see Shields (1999: 236–40). Barnes (1995b)
and the first two chapters of Witt (1989) provide a good introduction to Aristotle and the question
of the meaning of "being." Brentano discusses Aristotle's views extensively in Brentano (1975); for a
much shorter and somewhat different treatment, see Brentano (1978: 20–2).

[2] McCabe (1969: 90–1), claims that Aquinas believed in ways of being. Aquinas discusses the notion
that "being is said in many ways" in many places; see, for example, *De Ente et Essentia* [Aquinas
(1993: 92–3)] and his *Commentary on the Metaphysics of Aristotle* [Aquinas (1961: 216–20)]. See also
Ashworth (2004) and Cross (1999: 31–9) for a clear and accessible account of medieval theories
concerning kinds of existence and senses of "being."

[3] See, for example, Descartes' 51st principle in the *Principles of Philosophy* (1992: 210). Then see
BT: 126 for Heidegger's take on this passage. Christina van Dyke has pointed out to me that the
philosophical work of Duns Scotus may well be responsible for shifting the problem of being off the
center stage.

[4] (Heidegger 1927, translated from German in 1962.) As was common in the days before Quine,
philosophers distinguished between the way in which an abstract object is—it *subsists*—from the way

In what follows, I develop a meta-ontological theory based on the work of Martin Heidegger circa *Being and Time*. I take Heidegger's work as my inspiration because of the historical importance of Heidegger's philosophy, and because Heidegger provides a particularly clear statement of the doctrine that there are many ways to be. I begin by carefully discussing and then formulating the relevant aspects of Heidegger's meta-ontological theory. Heidegger claims both that the word "being" has many meanings and that there are different ways in which things exist. Section 2 explicates the former thesis, as well as elucidates the connection between senses of "being" and quantification.

Most contemporary analytic metaphysicians believe that the idea that different kinds of beings can enjoy different ways of being is metaphysically bankrupt, and probably even meaningless.[5] They are mistaken. In section 3, I discuss the doctrine that there are ways of being, and show how we can understand this doctrine in terms of the meta-ontological framework defended by Theodore Sider. I then contrast Sider's views on existence with the Heideggerian position developed here.

In section 4, I compare and contrast this Heideggerian meta-ontological position with *quantifier variance*, a view inspired by Carnap (1956) and recently defended by Eli Hirsch (2002a).

In section 5, I abstract away from the particulars of Heidegger's theory and provide a general account for understanding what is for things to exist in different ways.

I conclude with a brief discussion of how accepting that there are different ways of being might impact ontological disputes, such as the dispute between nominalists and realists over mathematical entities and the dispute between actualists and possibilists over mere possibilia.[6]

2 Senses of "Being", Ways of Being

Heidegger is famous for raising anew the question of the meaning of "being." According to Heidegger, one will not successfully engage in first-order

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in which a concrete object is—it *exists*. We find variants of this distinction in the early works of Moore, Russell, Meinong, and Husserl.

[5] See Quine (1960: 242). Van Inwagen (2001) is a prominent neo-Quinean.

[6] In what follows, I do not distinguish between "existence" and "being" and "what there is." On the view to be articulated, everything that there is exists or has being, but existing things can exist in different ways or enjoy different modes of being. Any distinction lost by this terminological convenience can be recaptured in the framework defended in section 5.

ontological inquiry unless one engages in meta-ontological inquiry, and determines the meaning of "being." Determining the meaning of "being" is the ultimate goal of *Being and Time*.[7]

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: 31]

The straightforward reading of Heidegger's question of the meaning of "being" is that it is answered by an analysis of the word, "being." However, although a fully adequate answer will provide informative necessary and sufficient conditions for being an entity, the form of the answer will not consist in a mere itemized list of what there is, or even a list of ontological categories. In general, simply providing a list of things that satisfy a concept does not suffice as a clarification or an analysis of that concept. Nor does providing a list of kinds of thing whose members satisfy the concept. An answer to the question of being will tell us what it is *to be*, rather than merely tell us what there is.

This straightforward reading is strongly supported by the following passages:

The question posed by Plato in the *Sophist* … "What then do you mean when you use (the word) 'being'?" In short, what does "being" mean?—this question is so vigorously

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[7] See, for example, Mark Okrent (1988: 6–7), who writes, "[Heidegger] hoped to arrive at conclusions about what it means for an entity to be (that is, a statement of necessary conditions for being an entity), as well as conclusions concerning the ontological sorts of entities there are…"

On this view, Heidegger wants an account of "being," which will yield necessary *and sufficient* conditions for being an entity. Okrent (1988: 205): "The entire program of *Being in Time* is designed to explicate the meaning$_i$, or signification, of 'being.'" Okrent (1988: 67–8), tells us that meaning$_i$ is to be understood as "meaning in the more philosophically familiar intentional or linguistic sense of the semantic content of a mental act or assertion …" See also Kisiel (1993: 306–7), McInerney (1991: 118), and Witherspoon (2002: 91).

In the secondary literature, there is much disagreement over what Heidegger is up to in *Being and Time*. The disagreement over what Heidegger's fundamental ontology consists in seems to turn on what Heidegger's question of the meaning of "being" is. A popular interpretation is that by "being," Heidegger means something like "intelligibility." Hubert Dreyfus (1991: xi–xii): "*Sein* will be translated as *being* (with a lower-case *b*). Being is "that on the basis of which beings are already understood." Being is not a substance, process, an event, or anything that we normally come across; rather, it is a fundamental aspect of entities, viz. their intelligibility. … *Sinn* is usually translated as 'meaning' but that makes phrases like 'the meaning of being' sound too definitional. We use *sense*." Charles Guignon (1997: 203): "… any ontology must be proceeded by a 'fundamental ontology' that clarifies the meaning (i.e. conditions of intelligibility) of being in general." Taylor Carman (2003: 15): "Being … is more fundamentally the intelligibility in virtue of which we treat things as the things they are … Being is the intelligibility, or more precisely the condition of the intelligibility, of entities as entities." Although I can't hope to defend my interpretation of Heidegger here, I do so in McDaniel (ms–2).

Hermann Philipse (1999) defends the view that Heidegger's question of the meaning of "being" does not have a unique answer because there is not a unique question posed. Instead, there are a plurality of meanings to Heidegger's question of the meaning of "being," one of which is the question that I am interested in. I should note, however, that Philipse appears to grant that Heidegger did believe in ways of being; see Philipse (1999: 35).

posed, so full of life. But ever since Aristotle it has grown mute, so mute in fact that we are no longer aware that it is muted. … [HCT: 129]

The question asks about being. What does being mean? Formally, the answer is Being means this and that. The question seeks an answer which is already given in the very questioning. The question is what is called a *question of definition*. It does not ask whether there is anything like being at all but rather what is meant by it, what is understood under it, under "being." … We ("Anyone") do not know what "being" means, and yet the expression is in some sense understandable to each of us. … There is an understanding of the expression "being," even if it borders on a mere understanding of the word. The question is asked on the basis of this indeterminate preunderstanding of the expression "being." What is meant by "being"? [HCT: 143]

One might wonder whether determining the meaning of "being" is a task difficult enough to warrant the attention Heidegger calls to it. Perhaps the meaning of "being" is so simple that everyone already has an implicit but complete understanding. If this were so, Heidegger's project would be pointless. Heidegger brings up this worry at BT: 19–23, where he also discusses the objection that "being" must be indefinable since allegedly one can define a term only by providing non-empty extensions for both the term and its negation. How then does Heidegger respond to these concerns?

Heidegger's interest in the question of being was stimulated by reading Franz Brentano's *On the Several Senses of Being in Aristotle*, which contains an explication of Aristotle's doctrine that "being is said in many ways."[8] In *Being and Time*, Heidegger endorses the Aristotelian slogan:

…there are many things which we designate as "being," and we do so in various senses. [BT: 26]

The "universality" of Being "*transcends*" any universality of genus. In medieval ontology "Being" is designated as a "*transcendens*." Aristotle himself knew the unity of this transcendental "universal" as a *unity of analogy* in contrast to the multiplicity of the highest generic concepts applicable to things. [BT: 22]

In order to help us understand the claim that "being is said in many ways," Aristotle brought our attention to expressions like "health" and "is healthy."[9] Many things can be truly said to be healthy. Phil Bricker, a marathon runner, is healthy. His circulatory system is healthy. Tofu is healthy. My relationship

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[8] See D. Frede (1993), Philipse (1999: 78–98), and Safranski (1998: 24–5) for a discussion of the influence of Brentano's work on Heidegger's thought, as well as for interesting discussion on how Heidegger's project relates to Aristotle's. Mulhall (1997: 9–10) is also interesting and helpful.

[9] See for example, Aristotle's *Metaphysics,* book IV. See also Barnes (1995b: 76–7) and Witt (1989: 45).

with my wife is healthy. However, there is a strong temptation to say that the meaning of "is healthy" as used in these sentences differs in each instance. But the various senses of "is healthy" are not merely accidentally related to each other. Rather, they are *systematically* related to each other.

In the literature on Aristotle, an expression whose meaning is unified in this way is called "*pros hen* equivocal" or one that has *focal meaning*.[10] Something has focal meaning just in case it has several senses, each of which is to be understood in terms of some central meaning of that expression. The central sense of "is healthy" is the sense that applies to living organisms when they are flourishing. Phil Bricker is healthy in this sense, as is your pet turtle. But there are other senses of "is healthy." Food can be said to be healthy when its consumption contributes to the flourishing of its consumer. A proper part of an organism can be said to be healthy when it is properly functioning. And so forth. If "is healthy" has focal meaning, then either there is no sense of "is healthy" such that one could truthfully say that Phil Bricker and tofu are healthy, or at the very least, such utterances would be semantically defective.[11]

It isn't obvious that "is healthy" is *pros hen* equivocal. Perhaps there is a generic sense of "is healthy" according to which each of the items mentioned above counts as healthy. The predicate "is healthy" when used in this way is univocal, and "both tofu and Phil Bricker are healthy" is true and in good shape semantically. However, although each of these entities is healthy, the reason that they are each healthy differs from case to case. Each is healthy *simpliciter* in virtue of being healthy in the way that is appropriate for the kind of entity it is. Tofu is not healthy in the *way* that Phil Bricker is healthy.

If there is a generic sense of "is healthy," it is unified by virtue of a complex web of relationships obtaining between the various kinds of healthiness. An exhaustive list of actual and possible healthy things would provide necessary and sufficient conditions for being healthy. But this list would not constitute a proper *analysis* of healthiness. A proper definition of "is healthy" must illuminate the relations between these different kinds of healthiness.

On this view, "healthiness is said in many ways" just in case there are many different ways to be healthy. To put the point in Platonic terms, if a predicate F is "said in many ways," then there is no single Platonic Form of the F: there are many ways for a thing to be F.[12]

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[10] See, for example, Owen (1986).

[11] This isn't quite right—it might be that eating Phil Bricker will contribute to the flourishing of the organism that eats him in much the same way that eating tofu will. But set this aside.

[12] Barnes (1995b: 73), states the following formula, "In general, Fs are so-called in several ways if what it is for *x* to be F is different from what it is for *y* to be F." See, for example, Aristotle's rejection of a Platonic form of the Good in his *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1096a–b.

Brentano (1975) provides a second example of an expression "said in many ways":

… Language does not always proceed with … precision. She finds it sufficient that everything which belongs together and which is grouped around one is called by the same family name, regardless of *how* each belongs in this assembly. Thus we call royal not only the royal sovereign who bears the royal power, but we also speak of a royal sceptre and a royal dress, of royal honor, of a royal order, of royal blood, etc. … [p. 65]

Brentano appears to recognize a generic sense of "is royal." The phrase "is royal" applies to each of the objects Brentano lists: "each belongs in this assembly." But the reason why each belongs differs from case to case.

Many medieval philosophers called such expressions *analogical*. As far as I can tell, Aquinas holds that analogical phrases are *pros hen* equivocal, although I am certainly no expert on medieval philosophy of language.[13] I will borrow "analogical" from the medievals, but I won't use "analogical expression" to refer to expressions with focal meaning. Rather, I will call an expression *analogical* just in case it has a generic sense, which, roughly, applies to objects of different sorts in virtue of those objects exemplifying very different features. As I am using the terms, no expression is both *pros hen* equivocal and analogical. An expression might be analogical and highly equivocal: in addition to having a generic sense it might have several restricted senses. Alternatively, an expression might be analogical but have only one sense. But an expression is *pros hen* equivocal only if it fails to have a generic sense.[14]

It can be hard to tell whether a philosophically interesting expression is *pros hen* equivocal, polysemous, or analogical.[15] Consider is "is a part of." Many things are said to be parts: this hand is a part of that man, the class of women is a part of the class of human beings, this subregion is a part of space, this minute is a part of this hour, this premise is a part of this argument, and so forth. Some philosophers, such as David Lewis (1991: 75–82), believe that "is part of" is used univocally in these contexts, and that one fundamental relation is appealed to. On this view, "is a part of" is importantly like "is identical with." Everything that there is, is identical with something (namely

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[13] See Ashworth (2005: 85–9) for discussion of the medieval semantics of analogous terms. See Alston (1993: 148–53) for a discussion of Aquinas and analogy. Christopher Shields (1999: 107, footnote 4) points out, Aquinas's notion of analogical predication is not the same notion as what Aristotle calls "analogy."

[14] I take myself here to be following Heidegger's usage of the term "analogical," although I can't demonstrate this here.

[15] An expression is *ambiguous* if it has many meanings, but these meanings need not be closely related. An expression is *polysemous* if it has many meanings that are closely related, but these meanings need not be related by way of a central sense or focal meaning. Accordingly, an expression is *pros hen* equivocal only if it is polysemous only if it is ambiguous, but none of the converses hold.

itself). Propositions are self-identical, as are mountains and moles. The identity predicate is used univocally in these contexts, and the identity relation invoked is the same in each case. Things are self-identical in the same way; identity is not "said in many ways."

My view is that "is a part of" is analogical. I am a compositional pluralist: there is more than one fundamental relation of part to whole. The fundamental parthood relation that your hand bears to your body is not the fundamental parthood relation that this region of spacetime bears to the whole of spacetime.[16] But the ordinary word "part" is used univocally in sentences ascribing parts to material objects and to regions of spacetime. There is a generic sense of "is a part of" which is in play in both of these sentences. This generic sense corresponds to a non-fundamental parthood relation exemplified by objects of both sorts.

According to Heidegger, words or phrases like "being," "existence," "exists," "is an entity," and "there are" are analogical. There is a multiplicity of modes of being.[17] Heidegger reserves the term "existenz" for the kind of being had by entities like you and me, whom Heidegger calls "Dasein." [BT: 67] Other ways of existing include *readiness-to-hand*, the kind of existence had by (roughly) tools [BT: 97–8, BP: 304]; *presence-at-hand* or *extantness*, the kind of existence had by objects primarily characterized by spatiotemporal features [BT: 121, BP: 28]; *life*, the kind of existence had by living things [BT: 285]; and *subsistence*, the kind of existence enjoyed by abstract objects such as numbers and propositions [BT: 258–9, BT: 382].

However, there is also a concept of being that covers every entity that there is. Let us call this concept the *general concept of being*.[18] Heidegger employs this concept in many places, such as the *Basic Problems of Phenomenology*:

For us … the word "Dasein" … does not designate a way of being at all, but rather a specific being which we ourselves are, the *human Dasein*. We are at every moment a Dasein. This being, this Dasein, like every other being, has a specific way of being. To this way of being we assign the term "*Existenz*." … Therefore, we might, for example, say "A body does not exist; it is, rather, extant." In contrast, Daseins, we ourselves, are not extant; Dasein exists. But the Dasein and bodies as respectively existent or extant at each time *are*. [BP: 28]

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[16] I defend compositional pluralism in McDaniel (2004) and McDaniel (ms–1).

[17] See Caputo (1982: 41, 80) and Inwood (1999: 26–8, 128–30) for discussion.

[18] The general concept of *being* is systematically related to the general concept of an entity, which is also recognized in *Being and Time*. The same notion also makes a cameo in Heidegger's essay, "The Origin of the Work of Art," where it appears under the label "thing":

On the whole the word "thing" here designates whatever is not simply nothing. In this sense the work of art is also a thing, so far as it is some sort of being. [BW: 147]

The general concept of being appears early in *Being and Time*:

But there are many things which we designate as "being," and we do so in various senses. Everything we talk about, everything we have in view, everything towards which we comport ourselves in any way, is [a] being. [BT: 26]

If we have a Dasein and a table before us, we have two beings before us. Both Daseins and bodies are, although each of them *is* in a different way from the other. *The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic* contains an explicit discussion of the function of the general concept of being:

There is a multiplicity of modi existendi, and each of these is a mode belonging to a being with a specific content, a definite quiddity. The term "being" is meant to include the span of all possible regions. But the problem of the regional multiplicities of being, if posed universally, includes an investigation into the unity of this general term "being," into the way in which the general term "being" varies with different regional meanings. This is the problem of the *unity of the idea of being and its regional variants*. Does the unity of being mean generality in some other form and intention? In any case, the problem is the unity and generality of being as such. It was this problem that Aristotle posed, though he did not solve it. [MFL: 151]

Its function is to cover all that there is: no matter what kind of being something is, no matter what its essential nature, and no matter how it exists, it is a being. This is why Heidegger says that the term "being" includes the span of all possible regions.

This generic concept of being is indispensable. One might be very confident that something is, but be highly uncertain about which kind of being that thing enjoys. Consider biological species. We can be reasonably confident that they exist. But there is controversy over whether biological species are kinds of individuals or rather sums of individuals.[19] So what kind of being do species have? If they are *kinds*—which I take to be abstract objects—then they *subsist*. If they are mereological sums of living things, then they enjoy either *Life* or *extantness* (I'm not sure how Heidegger would decide between these options). We don't know which—but we can be sure that species *are* even though we can't say *how* they are.

Similarly, does a virus have the same kind of being as a rock or as a plant or as something else entirely? Do chimpanzees exist in the same way we do?[20] These are tough questions for someone who believes in Heidegger's modes of being. Yet whether there are viruses or chimpanzees is easy to

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[19] See Hull (1999) for a discussion of some of the issues involved in determining whether species are individuals or kinds.

[20] Okrent (1988: 18) notes this worry.

determine. We can be sure that some things *are* even when we are unsure *how* they are.[21]

Heidegger wants to know what unifies the generic concept of being:

How can we speak at all of a unitary concept of being despite the variety of ways-of-being? These questions can be consolidated into *the problem of the possible modifications of being and the unity of being's variety*. Every being with which we have any dealings can be addressed and spoken of by saying "*it is*" thus and so, regardless of its specific mode of being. [BP: 18]

As Heidegger notes, the question of the unity of being was also wrestled by medieval philosophers. Heidegger even employs some of their terminology:

When I say, for example, "God is" and the "world is,", I certainly assert being in both cases but I intend something different thereby and cannot intend the term "is" in the same sense, univocally … I can only speak of both God and the world as entities analogously. In other words, the concept of being, insofar as it is generally applied to the entire manifold of all possible entities, as such has the character of an analogous concept. [HCT: 173–4]

The last passage is excerpted from a discussion of medieval doctrines concerning the disparity between God's way of existing and the way in which creaturely things exist. Heidegger wants us to see that his concerns about the meaning of "being" are similar to the preoccupations of the medievals, as these passages from *Being and Time* and *Basic Problems of Phenomenology* indicate:

Here Descartes touches upon a problem with which medieval ontology was often busied—the question of how the signification of "Being" signifies any entity which one may on occasion be considering. In the assertions "God is" and "the world is," we assert Being. The word "is," however, cannot be meant to apply to these entities in the same sense, when between them there is an *infinite* difference of Being; if the signification of "is" were univocal, then what is created would be viewed as if it were uncreated, or the uncreated would be reduced to the status of something created. But neither does "Being" function as a mere name which is the same in both cases: in both cases "Being" is understood. This positive sense in which the Schoolman took as a signification "by analogy," as distinguished from one which is univocal or merely homonymous. [BT: 126]

The ontological difference between the constitution of Dasein's being and that of nature proves to be so disparate that it seems at first as though the two ways of being are incomparable and cannot be determined by way of a uniform concept of being in general. *Existence* and *extantness* are more disparate than say, the determinations of God's being and man's being in traditional ontology. … Given this radical distinction

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[21] This sort of argument was employed by Duns Scotus to show that "being" is not equivocal. See Scotus (1962: 6 and 23–4), as well as Ashworth (2004: 6) and Kenny (2005: 139–42).

of ways of being in general, can there still be found any single unifying concept that would justify calling these different ways of being ways of *being*? [BP: 176]

A proper definition of the meaning of "being" should provide necessary and sufficient conditions for being an entity that will illuminate whether and how the different ways of being are systematically related to each other.

The careful reader will note that Heidegger sometimes slides from talking about ways of being to senses of the word "being." This might lead one to worry that Heidegger commits what Gareth Matthews (1972) has called *the Sense-Kind Confusion*.

Consider the following pair of sentences:

(S1):   There are entities x and y such that x exists in one way, whereas y enjoys a distinct kind of being.

(S2):   There are several senses of the words "being," "there are," etc., each of which corresponds to some way of existing, some distinct kind of being. There is no other sense of "being," "there are," etc. besides these.

Note that, if (S2) is true, then (on the assumption that (S1) is a sentence in our language) (S1) is both equivocal and *false on every disambiguation*. For there is no sense of "there is" available to us on which (S1) comes out true. The Sense–Kind Confusion is the mistaken belief that (S1) and (S2) are jointly assertible and perhaps even ways of saying the same thing.

Here is a useful analogy to bring home the point that one will assert both (S1) and (S2) only if one is confused. Suppose someone asserts the following claims:

(S3):   There are exactly two kinds of banks: those that are made of sand and are near water, and those that are made of bricks and are filled with money.

(S4):   There are exactly two senses of the word "bank." One sense of the word "bank" is "sandy area near water"; the other sense is "brick building filled with money."

Given that (S4) is true of the language in which (S3) is asserted, (S3) has two readings, which are:

(S3.1):   There are exactly two kinds of sandy areas near water: those that are made of sand and are near water, and those that are made of bricks and are filled with money.

(S3.2):   There are exactly two kinds of brick buildings filled with money: those that are made of sand and are near water, and those that are made of bricks and filled with money.

It is clear that both (S3.1) and (S3.2) are false. (S3) and (S4) are not jointly assertible.

Heidegger does not succumb to the Sense–Kind Confusion. Since Heidegger recognizes a generic sense of "there is," he can easily claim that there are different kinds of being enjoyed by different kinds of entities.[22] In short, Heidegger rejects (S2). (If there were a sense of "bank" that covered both sandy beaches and brick buildings filled with money, there would be no problem with asserting (S3). But, if this were the case, (S4) would be false.)

Heidegger's position is also not threatened by a recent challenge of Peter van Inwagen (2001):

No one would be inclined to suppose that number-words like "six" or "forty-three" mean different things when they are used to count different sorts of object. The very essence of the applicability of arithmetic is that numbers may count anything: if you have written thirteen epics and I own thirteen cats, then the number of your epics *is* the number of my cats. But existence is closely tied to number. To say that unicorns do not exist is to something very much like saying that the number of unicorns is 0; to say that horses exist is to say that the number of horses is 1 or more. And to say that angels or ideas or prime numbers exist is to say that the number of angels, or of ideas, or of prime numbers is greater than 0. The univocacy of number and the intimate connection between number and existence should convince us that there is at least very good reason to think that existence is univocal. [p. 17]

As van Inwagen points out, there is some connection between being and number: claims of the form "there are *n* Fs (where *n* is a natural number)" can be represented by sentences that use only quantifiers, negation, identity, and *F*.[23]

One might respond to van Inwagen by arguing that numerals are also not univocal. Van Inwagen's targets include the view defended by Gilbert Ryle (1945: 15–16), according to which it is nonsense to say in one breath that the Pope and the number two exist, and are two things.[24] And one who is willing to claim that "being is said in many ways" is probably also willing to say that "oneness is said in many ways" as well as twoness, threeness, etc.[25]

Heidegger need not fear van Inwagen's argument, regardless of how effective it is against Ryle. Since Heidegger recognizes this general concept of existence, he is willing to say (and capable of saying) of two things that enjoy different

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[22] Matthews (1972: 151) recognizes that, if one has at one's disposal a generic concept of existence, no problem arises. See also Matthews (1971: 91–3).

[23] However, as Kathrin Koslicki has pointed out to me, mass-quantification does not seem closely related to number in the same way. We say, for example, that there is water or that gold exists in the hills, but it is hard to see how to associate these claims with a number.

[24] See also Ryle (1949). Matthews (1971: 93) attributes this view to Ryle. Ryle avoids the sense-kind confusion by refusing to assert (S1). According to Ryle, (S1) is not even meaningful.

[25] Aristotle in fact tells us that "oneness is said in many ways." See *Metaphysics* X 1052b [Aristotle (1984b: 1662)]. See also Berti (2001: 192–3).

kinds of being that they are two. Consider a human being, whose way of being is *existenz*, and $\sqrt{-1}$, whose way of being is *subsistence*. There is a sense of "being" according to which these two entities are *two* entities.[26] Just as there is a generic sense of "there is at least one x such that …," for each number n, there is a generic sense of "there are exactly n xs such that …"

But now one might worry that there isn't a real issue here, and that Heidegger's position is devoid of interest. Heidegger claims that being comes in many flavors, but recognizes a generic sense of "being." Someone like van Inwagen holds that "being" is univocal, but can account for the senses of "being" that Heidegger believes in. It is worth taking a moment to explain why this is the case, and consequently why a real puzzle for Heidegger arises. Solving the puzzle requires that we provide a metaphysically serious account of talk about ways of being.

The generic concept of being is represented in formal logic by the unrestricted existential quantifier.[27] This quantifier ranges over whatever there is, regardless of which kind of being the thing enjoys. For absolutely every thing there is, i.e., for all x, we can say truly that $\exists y \, (y = x)$. We can adequately represent the generic sense of "being" with the unrestricted quantifier of formal logic.

What is the best way to formally represent Heidegger's restricted senses of "being"? A clearly unacceptable procedure is to introduce constant symbols, e.g. proper names, to stand for the various kinds of being countenanced by Heidegger. We could then say, for example, that some things *have* existenz. This idea can be formally represented by introducing a *having* predicate—"H"—and a constant symbol to stand for existenz, "e":

$\exists x$ (x has *existenz*), i.e., $\exists x$ (Hxe).

And so forth for the various ways of being countenanced by Heidegger.

However, this way of articulating Heidegger's position definitely won't do, since this procedure identifies ways of being with *entities*. In standard first-order logic, constant symbols—informally, these can be thought of as names—are employed to refer to entities within the domain of the quantifier. Since the constant symbols can be replaced by first-order variables, we can derive from the claim that Dasein has existenz the claim that there is an *entity* such that Dasein has *it*. However, Heidegger clearly holds that this is an illicit inference.

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[26] Of course, on this view there is also a sense of "being" and its ilk according to which one cannot say that these are two. This does not seem to me to be problematic.

[27] I focus on standard first-order logic, since many ontologists (such as Quine) take the language of first-order logic as the canonical language for formulating ontological disputes.

Heidegger warns us that being is not *a* being, and that the various ways of existing are not themselves entities.[28]

Should we introduce special predicates that mark the relevant distinctions that Heidegger wants to make? This seems inappropriate, since this procedure assimilates attributing a way of being to a thing to predicating a property of that thing. *Being* is not a kind of super property, exemplified by everything. Nor is *being* a determinable property of which the various kinds of being, such as *existenz*, are determinates in the way that *being red* is a determinate of *being colored*. Ways of being are not merely special properties that some entities have and that other entities lack, and so are not most perspicuously represented by predicates.[29]

The generic sense of "being" is represented formally by the "∃" of mathematical logic, not by a special constant symbol or a special existence predicate. A natural thought then is that the specific senses of "being" also are best represented by quantifiers. The notion of a *restricted quantifier*—one that ranges over only some proper subset of that which the unrestricted quantifier ranges—is perfectly intelligible. Heidegger's senses of "being" are properly represented in a formal system by special restricted quantifiers.

Just as being is not a being—and in fact talk about being or existence can be represented by way of the unrestricted existential quantifier—so too no kind of being is a being, and so too talk about kinds of being is best represented by special restricted existential quantifiers, not by predicates. It's worth noting that Heidegger accepts that claims of the form "An F exists" are most perspicuously represented as "Something is an F."[30] Note also that there is no way of being recognized by Heidegger such that entities that have that way of being cannot be said to be in the generic sense of "to be." So for every special kind of being recognized by Heidegger, there corresponds a restricted quantifier whose domain is a proper subclass of the domain of the unrestricted quantifier, and that ranges over all and only those things that have that kind of being. So representing Heidegger's ways of being by restricted quantifiers—quantifiers that by virtue of their meaning range over only some proper subset of what the unrestricted existential quantifier ranges over—seems like an excellent way to

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[28] See, for example, BT: 26. Carman (2003: 200–1) contains a nice discussion of Heidegger's claim that *being* is not a being.

[29] See Philipse (1999: 41). It might be that claims about existence are perspicuously represented not by predicates that apply to first-order individuals, but by predicates that apply to properties.

[30] See Heidegger's discussion of this issue in BP: 41, where he seems to agree with Kant that "God exists" is more precisely expressed as "something is God." Heidegger calls this "Kant's negative thesis," and says on BP: 55 that it cannot be impugned, and that by this thesis Kant wishes to express the claim that being is not a being. (It's also worth keeping in mind that Heidegger was familiar with the logic of quantification developed by Frege and Russell-Whitehead.)

proceed. These restricted quantifiers each correspond to some sense of "being" recognized by Heidegger.

For example, consider the *existenzial* quantifier, which in virtue of its meaning ranges over all and only those entities that have *existenz* as their kind of being, and a *subsistential* quantifier, which in virtue of its meaning ranges over all and only those entities that have subsistence as their kind of being. We can represent these quantifiers with the following notation: "$\exists_{existenz}$" for the existenzial quantifier, and "$\exists_{subsistence}$" for the subsistential quantifier.

From a Heideggerian perspective, the existenzial quantifier and the subsistential quantifier are *prior in meaning* to the generic unrestricted existential quantifier. The unrestricted quantifier is in some way to be understood in terms of these restricted quantifiers (as well as others corresponding to readiness-to-hand, extantness, and life), not the other way around. Recall that Heidegger holds that an adequate account of the generic sense of "being" will explain how the various specific senses of "being" are unified.

If the restricted quantifiers are prior in meaning to the unrestricted quantifier, then they must be *semantically primitive*. A semantically primitive restricted quantifier is not a complex phrase that "breaks up" into an unrestricted quantifier and a restricting predicate. I borrow the idea of a semantically primitive restricted quantifier from Eli Hirsch, who writes:

> It seems perfectly intelligible to suppose that there can also be *semantically restricted quantifiers*, that is, quantifiers that, because of the semantic rules implicit in a language, are restricted in their range in certain specific ways. If the quantifiers in a language are semantically restricted, they are always limited in their range, regardless of the conversational context. [Hirsch 2005: 76]

The phrase "semantically primitive restricted quantifier" is not one with which I am entirely happy. There is a sense in which any semantically primitive quantifier is an *unrestricted* quantifier. If a speaker had grasped and internalized the meaning of *exactly* one of these semantically primitive quantifiers (and had no other quantifier in her language), this speaker would not be in a position to say or even to believe that there is anything more than what is ranged over by that quantifier.[31] Consider, for example, the subsistential quantifier, which ranges over all and only abstract entities such as numbers or propositions. A language equipped with only the subsistential quantifier is a language that is not only unable to express facts about material objects, but is also unable to express the fact that it is unable to express facts about material objects.

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[31] It is worth keeping in mind that the meanings for the semantically primitive restricted quantifiers Hirsch introduces are taken by him to be possible meanings for the unrestricted quantifier.

We can envision that these restricted quantifiers are equipped with a character that allows them to be tacitly restricted by contexts, so that, for example, one could say truthfully while using the subsistential quantifier that everything is divisible by one, but nothing is divisible by zero. (The tacit restriction in play in this context is that the subsistential quantifier has been restricted to numbers, which form only a subset of that which subsists.) This fact seems to help bring home the thought that these quantifiers are, in some sense, ''unrestricted.'' They are not to be understood as expressions ''defined up'' from a more general quantifier and special predicates.

Heidegger recognizes van Inwagen's genuinely unrestricted quantifier as a legitimate philosophical notion. However, Heidegger holds that the generic unrestricted quantifier is somehow to be defined in terms of the semantically primitive restricted quantifiers. How it is to be defined is not at all obvious, given that Heidegger does not seem to think that the generic sense of ''being'' is merely the disjunction of the various specific senses of ''being.'' Recall that ''being'' is instead ''unified by analogy.''

The difficulty in seeing what the proper definition of ''being'' is given that ''being'' is ''unified by analogy'' is what motivates the philosophical project of *Being and Time*. That it is not at all obvious how to ''define up'' the generic sense of ''being,'' doesn't show that ''being'' is semantically primitive. No one knows what the correct definition of ''S knows that P'' is, and few infer from this sad state of affairs that either ''S knows that P'' is in fact semantically primitive, or that we do not in fact have the concept of knowledge.[32] ''S knows that *P*'' is not semantically primitive—it is somehow ''defined up'' out of the notions of belief, truth, evidence, and who knows what else.

Van Inwagen should be willing to concede the intelligibility of a language that contains semantically primitive restricted quantifiers. But he will resist the notion that English is such a language. From van Inwagen's perspective, Heidegger's putatively primitive restricted quantifiers can be shown to be equivalent to *defined* restricted quantifiers in a perfectly obvious way:

x has *existenz*, i.e., $\exists_{\text{existenz}} \, y \, (y = x) =$ df. $\exists y \, (x = y$ and x is a Dasein.$)$[33]

x has *subsistence*, i.e., $\exists_{\text{subsistence}} \, y \, (y = x) =$ df. $\exists x \, (x = y$ and x is a number

or some other abstracta.$)$

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[32] Williamson (2001) is of course one of the few who takes the notion of knowledge as primitive.

[33] I'm tabling the question of whether Heidegger thinks that other entities besides Dasein have *existenz* as their way of being.

On van Inwagen's view, the unrestricted quantifier is prior in meaning to the restricted ones.

Given that both sides can in some way recognize the senses of "being" postulated, is there anything here worth worrying about? The question of the meaning of "being" might be interesting to a linguist, but why should a metaphysician care about it? The job of the unrestricted quantifier is to range over everything there is. As long as it does this, why care about the question of the meaning of "being"?

3 Theodore Sider Meets Martin Heidegger

Even though Heidegger recognizes van Inwagen's generic concept of being, and van Inwagen could in principle recognize Heidegger's various senses of "being," there is still a question about which is more *metaphysically fundamental*. In what follows, I discuss how one can make sense of the notion that one quantifier is more fundamental than another.

It is one thing to recognize an aspect of an object—it is another thing to hold that the aspect is *basic*, or *fundamental*, or—to use the terminology of David Lewis (1983) and (1986)—*perfectly natural*. Consider the property of having a charge of −1 and the property of either being loved by Angelina Jolie or having a charge of −1. Eddie the electron exemplifies both features. *1 charge* is a real respect of similarity between electrons, but it is bizarre to think that Brad Pitt and Eddie are similar in virtue of both being either green, being loved by Angelina Jolie, or having a charge of −1. We recognize a metaphysical distinction between these two features: the former property *carves nature at the joints*, while the latter is a *mere disjunction*.

Embracing Lewis's notion of naturalness does not require embracing a robust ontology of properties.[34] Regardless of whether there "really are" properties, there is an important metaphysical difference between predicates like "is an electron" and predicates like "is an electron if discovered before 2024 or is a positron." Theodore Sider (this volume) discusses several nominalistic accounts of naturalness. One account takes the notion of naturalness to languages rather than properties. Informally, a language is more natural than another language to the degree that its primitive (i.e., undefined) locutions match the joints of reality. Formally, the notion of one language being more natural than another is simply taken as primitive by the nominalist. A second account introduces a

[34] Lewis (1983) discusses ways in which the nominalist could account for naturalness without properties.

primitive sentence–operator N that can be prefixed to pairs of open–sentences. Sentences of the form "N (x is an F, x is a G)" are ascriptions of comparative naturalness: informally, they tell us that to be an F is more natural than to be a G.[35] Presumably there are other ways in which a clever nominalist could accommodate the notion of naturalness. The important thing is to account for the distinguished structure of the world. (This will be important later because Heidegger makes it absolutely clear that neither *being* nor *kinds of being* are to be reified.)

Accordingly, in what follows I will talk about natural *predicates* instead of natural properties. If there are natural *properties,* no harm is done: natural predicates are those that refer to natural properties.

The notion of a natural predicate appealed to here is not conceptually equivalent to the notion of a *physical predicate*, where (roughly) a physical predicate is true of only physical objects. For this reason, I will use the expressions "basic" or "fundamental" as well as "perfectly natural."

Does the notion of fundamentality apply to other grammatical categories? Can we distinguish natural from unnatural *names*? More saliently, what about quantifiers? Do some quantifiers carve reality closer to the joints than others?

Heidegger recognizes a generic sense of "being" that covers every entity that there is, but holds that it is not metaphysically fundamental: this generic sense represents something *akin to* a *mere disjunction* of the *metaphysically basic ways of being*. We need to determine the meaning of "being" in order to determine what unifies *being simpliciter*. Recall the earlier discussion concerning "is healthy." Although "is healthy" is true of both Phil Bricker and Tofu, the kind of healthiness exemplified by Phil Bricker and the (distinct) kind of healthiness exemplified by tofu are both less "disjunctive" or "gerrymandered" than *healthiness simpliciter*. (Healthiness simpliciter is not as unnatural as a *mere* disjunction, since it is unified in some way.)

The same holds for more philosophically interesting notions. The compositional pluralist admits that there is a generic parthood relation that encompasses every specific parthood relation, but holds that the specific parthood relations are more fundamental. If "being" is unified only by analogy, the kind of being had by Dasein and the kind of being had by a number are metaphysically prior to *being simpliciter*. The unrestricted quantifier is *metaphysically posterior* to the restricted quantifiers corresponding to the kinds of being recognized by Heidegger.

Just as mere disjunctions are less metaphysically basic than that which they disjoin, so too *mere restrictions* are metaphysically posterior to that for which they

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[35] It seems to me that it would be better to informally understand N as "at least as natural as," but nothing turns on this in what follows.

are restrictions. Consider *being an electron near a bachelor*. This is a mere restriction of being an electron because being an electron near a bachelor partitions the class of electrons into gerrymandered, arbitrary, or merely disjunctively unified subclasses.

Although this is not explicitly stated, van Inwagen (2001) seems to be committed to the claim that the ways of being that Heidegger favors are *mere restrictions* of the *metaphysically basic* notion of existence, the one expressed by the unrestricted existential quantifier. Regardless of whether van Inwagen is committed to this view, other metaphysicians certainly are. Theodore Sider (2001: xxi–xxiv; this volume) explicitly defends this position, which Sider calls *ontological realism*.

Ontological realism is an anathema to Heidegger. Not because all quantificational expressions are metaphysically on a par: the true logical joints do not correspond to the unrestricted existential quantifier, but rather to semantically primitive restricted quantifiers. They are the fundamental quantifiers.

Heidegger does not view his list of the various flavors of being as arbitrary. He intends his list to capture the real logical—perhaps it would be better to say *ontological*—structure of the world. There is not a way of being for *every* way of demarcating the domain of the unrestricted existential quantifier. There is not a way of being had by all and only those things that are either ugly or a prime number. There is not a way of being had by all and only those things that are either under three feet tall or believe in the existence of aliens from outer space. Heidegger thinks that the ways of being he calls to our attention to are metaphysically special: the restricted quantifiers that represent them enjoy a status unshared by most of their brethren. There are only a few, proud restricted quantifiers that are metaphysically basic.

Recall the worry mentioned at the end of section 2. To keep things simple, consider a meta-ontological theory that recognizes two ways in which entities can exist: the way in which abstract objects exist and the way in which concrete objects exist. According to the account offered here, there are two fundamental semantically primitive restricted quantifiers, represented symbolically as "$\exists_a x$" and "$\exists_c x$". Consider the domain of "$\exists_a x$". We can introduce a special predicate, "Ax" that objects satisfy if and only if they are members of this domain. Let "Dx" be a fundamental predicate that applies to some but not all entities within the domain of "$\exists_a x$". Now consider the following two sentences:

(1) $\exists_a x\ Dx$.
(2) $\exists x\ (Ax\ \&\ Dx)$.

The worry is that (1) and (2) are necessarily equivalent, and consequently seem to be equally good ways of expressing exactly the same facts about the

world. In what respect is (1) a better sentence to assert than (2)? If there is no metaphysical difference between these two ways of speaking, then the hypothesis that there are ways of being is idle.[36]

An examination of a parallel case should convince us that this worry is misguided.[37] Recall the following definitions introduced to us by Nelson Goodman (1955):

x is *grue* =df. *x* is green and is examined before the year 3000 A.D., or is blue and is not examined before 3000 A.D.

x is *bleen* =df. *x* is blue and is examined before the year 3000 A.D., or is green and is not examined before 3000 A.D.

Although "is grue" and "is bleen" are intelligible, they are highly unnatural, whereas "is green" and "is blue" are in far better shape. Now consider a culture that speaks a language much like ours, except that this language lacks the color-vocabulary we have in our language. Let's call this language *the Gruesome Tongue* (GT). GT has two semantically primitive predicates, "is grue*" and "is bleen*", which are necessarily equivalent to "is grue" and "is bleen." When speakers of GT first encounter us, they are bewildered by assertions that employ color-predicates. They ask us to define "is blue" and "is green", but since these terms are semantically primitive in our language, we can't do this. We point at things that are green or blue and hope that they will catch on, but they just don't get it.

Eventually, a clever linguist from their culture introduces terms in their language that allow them to state the truth-conditions for sentences in our language that employ color-predicates:

x is *green** =df. *x* is grue and is examined before the year 3000 A.D., or is bleen and is examined after the year 3000 A.D.

x is *blue** =df. *x* is bleen and is examined before the year 3000 A.D., or is grue and is examined after the year 3000 A.D.

"Is green" does not have the same meaning as "is green*", since "is green" is semantically primitive while "is green*" is capable of explicit definition. Nonetheless, "is green" and "is green*" are necessarily co-extensive. So the defectiveness of GT does not simply consist in its inability to describe possibilities that we can describe. But GT is defective nonetheless. A language is defective if its primitive predicates are not fundamental. It is certainly a mistake to think that language *must* mirror reality in the sense that one is guaranteed

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[36] I thank Josh Parsons for pressing me on this worry.
[37] I thank Jason Turner for suggesting the analogy employed here.

that there will be a correspondence between our words and the world. But it is no mistake to think that language *ought* to mirror reality.

Having primitive but non-fundamental predicates is one bad-making feature of a language. We can generalize. Call a language *ideal* just in case every primitive expression in that language has a perfectly natural meaning.

Heidegger holds that there are several senses of the word "being," each of which corresponds to a way of existing, as well as the generic sense of "being."[38] But he seems less committed to the linguistic thesis that "being" is polysemous than to the claim that "being" is analogical. This is important, because even if there aren't several senses of "being" in ordinary language, we can still make good sense of the claim that "being" is analogical. To claim that a univocal phrase is analogical is to claim that it *should not* be semantically primitive. According to the position explicated here, a language in which the generic quantifier is semantically primitive is not an ideal language. A language is better, at least with respect to its apparatus of quantification, if its generic quantifier is "defined up" out of those semantically primitive restricted quantifiers that do correspond to the logical joints.

Accordingly, the claim that there are modes of being is not refuted by the view that the meaning of "existence" or "being" is fully captured by the role of the existential quantifier of formal logic.[39]

Even those analytic metaphysicians suspicious about the notion of meta-physical fundamentality, and its corollaries *being a mere disjunction* and *being an arbitrary restriction*, should realize that their own view is a substantive meta-physical (or meta-ontological) claim, to which Heidegger's position poses a serious challenge. These metaphysicians hold that *no* quantifier expression is metaphysically special. Sider claims that exactly *one* (existential) quantifier expression is privileged. Heidegger holds that *many* but not all are equally metaphysically basic. Heidegger was absolutely right: we must theorize about the meaning of "being" in order to have a complete ontological theory.

The debate between Heidegger and Sider is not trivial or senseless. There is a *metaphysical* reason to care about the question of the meaning of "being." If "being" is analogical, then Sider's formulation of ontological realism is *false*.

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[38] Does Aristotle recognize a generic sense of "being"? Owen (1986: 181) attributes to Aristotle the thesis that the word "being" is ambiguous between the various kinds of being, and makes remarks that suggest that the early Aristotle did not recognize a generic sense of "being." Aristotle's argument that *being* is not a genus seems to presuppose the generic concept of being, since one of the premises appears to be that everything whatsoever (including differentiating characteristics) is a being. See *Metaphysics* III, 998b 1–20 [p. 1577]. See also Barnes (1995b: 73).

[39] Szabó (2003) suggests that something like this argument is what has led many to reject modes of being.

And we will see in section 6 how taking seriously the view that there are modes of being changes the contours of ontological debates.

4 Heidegger and the Ontological Deflationist

Recent meta-ontological inquiry has been motivated by worries that certain first-order ontological debates are merely verbal. Consider the debate over when some entities compose a whole. *Universalists* hold that composition always occurs: whenever there are some *xs*, those *xs* compose a *y*. *Nihilists* hold that composition *never* occurs. And there are obviously many moderate positions between universalism and nihilism. It seems like there is genuine conflict between these views.

According to the *ontological deflationalist*, there is no genuine disagreement here.[40] What the universalist means by ''there is'' is not what the nihilist means by ''there is.'' Here is a speech that the deflationalist might make: what the nihilist means by ''there is'' is determined by how the nihilist uses ''there is'': a meaning of a term fits use best when it makes more sentences using that term come out true than alternative candidate meanings. There is a candidate meaning for the quantifier that best fits the nihilist's use: call this meaning *nihilist-quantification*. Similarly, call the candidate meaning for the quantifier that best fits the universalist's use *universalist-quantification*. Since no single candidate meaning for ''there is'' can maximize fit with how the nihilist and the universalist use quantificational expressions, *nihilist-quantification* and *universalist-quantification* must be distinct. So the nihilist and the universalist must be talking past each other; they are not really disagreeing.

Moreover, the language spoken by the nihilist is just as a good as the language spoken by the universalist: there are no facts expressible in one of the languages not expressible by the other. So the nihilist and the universalist do not disagree, and moreover, there are no facts for them to disagree over.

The deflationalist speech is too quick. No one should think that fit with use is the only, or even the most important, factor in determining what our words mean. A second factor is how natural the candidate meanings are.[41] This second factor can trump fit with use. Of course, the deflationalist could concede this point, but insist that nihilist–quantification is as natural a meaning for the quantifier as universalist-quantification. This view is *quantifier variance*.

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[40] For a defense of deflationalism, see Hirsch (2002a, 2002b, 2005).
[41] See Lewis (1983) and Lewis (1984). I am sympathetic to the view that causation plays a role in determining reference as well.

Sider is no friend of quantifier variance. According to Sider's ontological realism, there is a perfectly natural candidate meaning for the unrestricted quantifier that fits how the universalist and the nihilist use it well enough to ensure that the universalist and the nihilist's quantifiers have this candidate meaning.[42]

What if the degree to which naturalness helps to determine meaning is not significant enough to trump our use of "being," "existence," and "there is"? If this scenario obtains, Sider recommends abandoning ordinary language, and then reframing the debate between the nihilist and the universalist in a language that Sider dubs "Ontologese." Roughly, Ontologese is a language in which "∃" is *stipulated* to stand for the fundamental quantifier meaning. (For further details, see Sider (this volume).)

Note that the fan of genuine disagreement can make similar responses without assuming that any candidate meaning for the unrestricted quantifier is fundamental. What matters is that there be a unique candidate meaning that is more natural than the others and natural enough to trump use. Presumably, even given the Heideggerian meta-ontology sketched here, there will be some candidate meaning for the unrestricted quantifier that is far more natural than alternatives to it.

Keep in mind that according to the friend of quantifier variance, there are many equally fundamental meanings for the *unrestricted* existential quantifier. This is why the variantist concludes that there is no privileged meaning for the unrestricted quantifier. The fundamental quantifier-meanings postulated by Heidegger are meanings for *restricted* quantifiers. There is still room for a privileged meaning for the unrestricted quantifier, one that ensures that the quantifier encompasses the domains of each of the privileged restricted quantifiers and adds nothing extra.[43]

Another option is for the Heideggerian to frame ontological disagreements in something like Sider's Ontologese. But according to the Heideggerian, in the fundamental language all quantificational expressions are semantically primitive restricted quantifiers. The appropriate language for doing metaphysics must have *each* of these quantifiers in order to mirror the ontological joints of the world.

Arguably, this is in fact what Heidegger does: abandon ordinary language, and move to a technical language in which new primitive terms are introduced along with accompanying remarks to aid the reader in grasping these terms. The accompanying remarks constitute a minimal use of the terms, but one that

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[42] See Sider (forthcoming), (2004), and (2001) for discussion and defense of ontological realism.

[43] This meaning for the unrestricted quantifier will not be perfectly natural, but it will be more natural than its competitors.

is sufficient for these terms to latch on to any ontological joints that might be in the neighborhood.

One can formulate interesting ontological debates using Heideggerian Onto-logese. Consider the kind of being had by those entities that Heidegger calls *merely-present-at-hand*. The merely-present-at-hand are, roughly, masses or aggregates of matter. We can represent the kind of being had by these entities with the "presence-at-hand quantifier", which, in symbols, looks like this: $\exists_{pah}$. We can now ask interesting metaphysical questions about the entities within the range of this quantifier. For example, we can ask whether Q is true:

$$(Q): \text{If } \exists_{pah} \; x = a \text{ and } \exists_{pah} \; y = b, \text{ then } \exists_{pah}$$

$$z \text{ such that } z \text{ is composed of } a \text{ and } b.$$

It is not hard to see that the compositional nihilist will say that Q is false and that the compositional universalist will say that Q is true.

5 Ways of Believing in Ways of Being

There are different kinds of existence *if* there are possible meanings for semantically primitive restricted quantifiers such that (i) each restricted quantifier has a non-empty domain that is properly included in the domain of the unrestricted quantifier, (ii) none of these domains overlap, and (iii) each meaning is at least as natural as the meaning of the unrestricted quantifier. On the Heideggerian view articulated here, there are restricted quantifiers that are even more natural than the unrestricted quantifier.[44]

One way to hold (i)–(iii) is by reifying quantifier-meanings. Suppose you hold that *existence* is a fundamental second-order property: a property of properties, or propositional functions.[45] Now consider someone who holds instead that this second-order property is akin to a *mere disjunction* of a finite list of fundamental second-order properties.[46] It seems to me that (i)–(iii) also follow from this person's beliefs, since these properties are well-suited to serve as the meanings of semantically primitive restricted quantifiers. However, we have also seen that one can make sense of (i)–(iii) without reifying meanings:

[44] Obviously, in order to state this thesis, I am employing the unrestricted quantifier of ordinary English.

[45] See, for example, Russell (1956: 232–3).

[46] One might hold that this property is less natural than the modes of being but is more natural than a mere disjunction—one might hold that this property is "unified by analogy."

one can believe that things exist in different ways without believing in entities that there are ways in which things exist.

Belief in the conjunction of (i)–(iii) suffices for belief in ways of being. But it is not necessary. In this section, I discuss views that seem committed to ways of being without accepting (i)–(iii).

First, there are interesting worries about the coherence of quantifying over absolutely everything.[47] Suppose you believe in sets; suppose you hold that whenever there are some sets, there is a set of those sets. You will be led to a contradiction very quickly if you assume then that you can quantify over all the sets there are. You might hold instead that, for every quantifier Q_1, there is a more inclusive quantifier Q_2 that ranges over everything Q_1 ranges over but not vice-versa. On this view, every quantifier is a restricted quantifier. Couldn't someone hold this view while still believing in ways of being?

Yes. Let's keep things simple, and consider the view that sets enjoy one way of being whereas concrete entities enjoy another. Consider now an infinite sequence of quantifiers, indexed the ordinals, such that the first member, Q_0, ranges over all and only concrete objects, while Q_1 ranges over all and only concrete objects and sets of concrete objects, Q_2 ranges over everything Q_1 ranges over as well as sets of things within Q_1's range, etc. Consider a second infinite sequence of quantifiers, also indexed to ordinals, Q_0, Q_{n-}, … where as before Q_0 ranges over all and only concrete objects, while each of Q_{1-}, Q_{n-}, … range over all and only the sets ranged over by $Q_1 … Q_n$. (In short, none of the domains of $Q_{1-}…Q_{n-}$ include concrete objects.) Basically, the first sequence is a sequence of increasingly expansive quantifiers that have both individuals and sets within their domains, whereas the second sequence is a sequence of increasingly expansive quantifiers that have only sets within their domains (save Q_0). We now claim that the perfectly natural quantifiers are Q_0 along with Q_{1-}, Q_{n-}, … rather than Q_1, Q_n, … We can make sense of the view that there are modes of being without believing in the possibility of absolutely unrestricted quantification.[48]

Another view worth considering holds that the domains of the fundamental quantifiers overlap. Such a view would be strange, for according to it, there is an x such that x exists in more than way. I know of no historical figure who has clearly embraced such a view, although Aristotle does discuss the possibility

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[47] See the papers in Rayo and Uzquiano (2007) for a discussion of the relevant issues.

[48] There is still the worry that, in describing this view, I am quantifying over everything. This is a real worry, but it is an instance of a more general worry: how can the denier of absolute quantification state her view without quantifying over everything? However this question is to be answered, I am confident that the friend of ways of being who is also a foe of unrestricted quantification can follow suit. See the collection of interesting papers in Rayo and Uzquiano (2006) for further discussion.

that some qualities might also be "relatives" in the *Categories*; see 11a37 [p. 17]. But I can envision how such a view could be motivated: consider the view that (i) particulars and universals exist in different ways, (ii) the actual and the possible also exist in different ways, and (iii) these divisions cross-cut. On this view, one thing can enjoy two ways of being.[49]

I tentatively suggest the following: one believes in ways of being just in case one believes that there is more than one fundamental quantifier expression. This is what the all the views elucidated here have in common. One interesting upshot of this proposal is that it classifies the quantifier variantist as a friend of ways of being. Whether this is desirable I leave the reader to judge.

6 Some Brief Remarks on Other Ontological Debates

In what follows, I briefly indicate some interesting lines of inquiry that could be fruitfully pursued given the framework articulated here.

6.1 Subsistence Revisited

Many of us have had the following experience. You are teaching an undergraduate philosophy class—perhaps it is an introductory class—and for some reason the topic of the existence of abstract objects has come up. Some student—often many students!—resists the claim that the number two exists in the same way that tables exist. The student is happy to say that there are numbers, and is happy to say that there are tables. But the student hesitates to say that they enjoy the same kind of existence. You are convinced that the student must be confused—everything that there is exists in the same way, after all, so either the student really wants to say that the number two does not exist, or the student mistakenly thinks that "to exist" really means something like "to exist and to be spatiotemporal." You experience frustration as you try to get the student to grasp the concept of a generic unrestricted quantifier. The student experiences frustration as well.

On the position that I have articulated, the metaphysical mistake is yours, not the student's. The student presumably has two non-overlapping existence-concepts, one of which ranges over concrete objects, while the other ranges over abstract objects. Each of these concepts hits a genuine logical joint. The unrestricted quantifier that you are desperately trying to foist on the

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[49] Another possibility is to hold that there are four modes of being, none of which overlap.

student is less natural than the restricted quantifiers your student currently (and successfully) employs. You do her a disservice by leading her to trade her more natural concepts for a less natural one.

How should we rethink the debate between realists and nominalists over mathematical objects if the student's quantifiers are fundamental? There is a perfectly natural quantifier that ranges over only concrete objects. So there is a very good sense in which there are no numbers. The sense of "there are" according to which there are both numbers and noses is less natural than the sense of "there are" according to which there are noses but no numbers. So nominalism seems vindicated. But there is also a perfectly natural sense of "there are" according to which there are numbers but no noses. So Pythagoreanism seems vindicated as well. This is somewhat puzzling.

6.2 Possibilism

Possibilism is the view that there are objects that are *merely* possible. Possibilism has enjoyed a recent resurgence thanks to the work of David Lewis (1986), who famously holds that the merely possible are ontologically on a par with the actual. Possible worlds, on Lewis's view, are spatiotemporally isolated physical universes, many of which contain human beings differing from you and me only in that they are much harder to visit. To be actual, on Lewis's view, is merely to be spatiotemporally related to me: *actuality* is on this picture merely indexical, just like *being here* [Lewis 1986: 92–6].

Despite its incredible ontology, impressive arguments for modal realism can be mustered. But no impressive argument suffices to overcome the following worry, succinctly stated by Phillip Bricker:

> The alternative for the realist is to hold that actuality is absolute, and that there is an ontological distinction in kind between the actual and the merely possible. In my opinion, this is the only viable option for the realist. Our conceptual scheme demands that actuality be *categorical*: whatever is of the same ontological kind as something actual is itself actual. To hold then, as Lewis does, that the actual world and the possible worlds do not differ in kind is simply incoherent. [Bricker 2001: 29]

Phillip Bricker accordingly holds that there is a primitive fact about which things in modal reality are the actual things. But he also correctly notes that this fact cannot consist in some things having a *quality* that others lack [Bricker 2001: 30]. In what then does this primitive fact consist? The obvious answer is that the merely possible exist in a fundamentally different way than the actual.

The epistemology of the possible and the actual is fundamentally different: for example, we can know *a priori* that there is a merely possible talking donkey, but we cannot know *a priori* that there is an actual talking donkey. The merely

possible are governed by a principle of plentitude that does not govern the actual: at the very least, for every way that something actual could be, there is something possible that is that way. The hypothesis that these epistemological and metaphysical differences are grounded in different ways of existing is both viable and intellectually satisfying.[50]

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