

A genealogy of Heidegger's metaphysics of science

A delineation of some key moments. Based on "Heidegger and Scientific Realism" by Trish Glazebrook.

1. Anti-idealism:
 - a) When analyzed appropriately (read as: phenomenologically), "appearances" alone lead us to Being.
 - b) The transcendental idealist's dichotomy between ["mere"] phenomena and noumena (the former from experience, the latter from the mind) is incoherent.
2. Naïve realism:
 - a) How can science work so well if the things it talks about aren't real?
 - b) The everyday world is real (in a way which doesn't necessitate proofs), because it's what makes *our* existence possible; and if chairs are taken as real, then why not electrons?
3. Anti-realism:
 - a) The scientific realism of modern technoscience is entrenched with logos idealism (criticized in #1).
 - b) The theoretical attitude (truth, objectivity, etc.) (and the physical reality and entities it uncovers/makes intelligible) is *metaphysically grounded* on Dasein's primordial disclosure of the world (the fore-structure of projective understanding, however, is no Kantian a priori structure); perception cannot be evidence for an external world.
4. The ontological difference:
 - a) Realism about entities: the "cosmos" and other things like Newton's laws exist independent of Dasein.
 - b) Anti-realism about Being (Being is itself not an entity but the "possibility of their intelligibility"): if there were no Dasein, there would be no Being.
5. Background realism:
 - a) A *skillful engagement* with things (for e.g., language) (this engagement doesn't construct, but makes intelligible) requires that there *really* be the things engaged with (for language, the beings—so, language gives us access to Being).
 - b) But here, "really" is something *immanent*, and no extra-theoretical relation; realism is not some "provable" thesis. However, the things already-given in engagement cannot be reflected upon by the engagement.
6. Plural realism:
 - a) The "independent, eternal" occurrentness of scientific entities is a *way of making them intelligible*; it is true, but "truth [and all intelligibility] is relative to Dasein", and without Dasein, their in-itself existence is neither true nor false, because "there is no intelligibility in itself".
 - b) The theoretical/scientific attitude does not give any *special* access to entities in reality (holding this is reductive and totalizing of nature; resisting it is "sheltering"); there are different ways of being-in-the-world, different worlds/world-views.

7. Robust realism:

- a) The pluralism relates to Dasein's continued struggle/tension with the ontological difference, made manifest in its projection of Being onto beings; this projection does not exhaust, but rather, actively lets the things be as they are, against Dasein's openness to their already-availability.
- b) Realism is, finally, neither of appearances, nor of things-in-themselves, but of things; the world (as the site of ontological intelligibility) and the universe (as the transcendent actuality of the entities/things) coexist in a unity.