

Metaphysics of Emergence

A Strange Kind of Being Emerges

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Introduction

There are many books about the concept of Emergence, i.e. new levels of organization of things that have new properties that come into existence and cannot be reduced to their parts or precursors. But there are very few treatments of the Metaphysics of the possibility of Emergence within our philosophical and scientific worldview. So that is what we will venture upon here, a daring speculation about the role of emergence as a phenomena itself within our worldview. In many ways the story of our worldview itself is a story of many different emergences over time of various phenomena, some discovered in nature, some cultural, some social, some linguistic, and many other kinds of specific emergences of particular phenomena that together make up the history of the worldview and the things encompassed by the worldview which relate the story of the emergence of the Western worldview itself. However, our quest is different from

these historical or phenomena based accounts of emergences of this or that. Rather we want to know about the phenomena of emergence itself and its possibility within the worldview. This is of course a much more difficult topic because it relates to everything that has emerged in the history of the universe and the coherence of all that, and how it is possible for new things to emerge at all. We are not asking “Why there is something rather than nothing.” Rather we are asking the next question that occurs to us once we realize that reductionism does not work which is “Why do some things emerge rather than not emerging.” The first question takes for granted that things have emerged and then asks why they are there rather than not there. The deeper second question asks Why did emergence take place in the first place rather than not taking place. Whether things happen to be there, i.e. present in front of us or not is really not a fundamental question. The fundamental question is how is emergence possible at all and why do some phenomena emerge while others don’t and what is the relation of that meta-phenomena to our worldview and its articulation. We will bother with the deeper question and leave the more superficial question to others. What is interesting is that it is only recently that this deeper question has been possible to be framed because only recently did we realize that reductionism in science does not work, that there are ontic emergent levels to phenomena that are supervenient, i.e. cannot be reduced fully to the lower levels of ontic phenomena. Supervenience is a disputed term but basically we will use it to refer to the precise way that one higher emergent level over spills beyond a lower emergent layer of phenomena. Supervenience makes the point that the higher level must be dependent on the lower emergent level but the higher

emergent level brings us characteristics that cannot be explained away by the lower level of emergence. The term started out as an attempt to produce an isomorphism, but was expanded to include the non-isomorphic overflow of phenomena that needed the lower emergent level as a vehicle for the higher emergent level. Actually there are three cases. There is the case where isomorphism actually works in which reductionism is successful. There is the case of overflow where the higher level has different characteristics that cannot be explained away by the lower level phenomena. And finally there is the strange case where the higher level actually is less than the lower level. In the case of super abundance beyond the lower level we think of Emergence as an overflowing beyond the characteristics of the lower level by the higher level. In the case of infra abundance we see that the higher level is actually less than the lower level, a kind of deficiency. We will define this difference as one between genuine and artificial emergence. Genuine emergence establishes a higher level of phenomena built on lower levels of phenomena that have different characteristics that go beyond those of the lower levels of phenomena. But artificial emergence gives us ultimately less than the lower levels of emergence. This is different from de-emergence which takes apart the emergent higher level to give us the lower level parts. This is rather where the higher level is less robust than the lower levels on which it is based, which is a defect. What we will soon discover is that these phenomena where the higher level is less than the lower levels really describes nihilism. There is in effect negative characteristics produced that detract from rather than expand upon the lower emergent levels of the hierarchy of emergent phenomena.

Nihilism is a real phenomenon in our worldview, in fact Heidegger and Nietzsche saw it as the key phenomena in our worldview and I tend to agree with that assessment. Nihilism is when we think there are two extreme artificial opposites at war, which are actually the same. Once we realize that they are the same then that sucks meaning out of our world. This is what happened to Achilles in the Iliad. He realized that Agamemnon's taking of his war prize, a slave woman, was no better than Paris' taking of Helen, so the Greeks and the Trojans were really the same. This caused Achilles to give up fighting and his calling down the wrath of the Gods on the Greeks. The discovery of this lack of difference that makes a difference, significant difference, between the Greeks and the Trojans causes Achilles to respond by going into a state of inaction, which then causes his friend Petroclus to be killed wearing his armor, which in turn leads to a Berserker rage on the part of Achilles. Thus nihilism in meaning leads to nihilism in action, i.e. the production of extreme artificial opposites that seem to conflict. In the case it is inaction verses over zealous inhuman action. The whole of the Iliad can be read as a commentary on the generation and effects of nihilism within the Western worldview. It is a manual for how one deals with a worldview that produces nihilism which confronts us everyday. And that nihilism appears to us as real phenomena where meaning or humanity is sucked out of our world. Nihilistic phenomena appears as an emergent level over lower level phenomena, but this emergent level is artificial rather than genuine. Its artificiality means it is less than what it emerges over. We might call it anti-emergence. De-emergence is when you deconstruct a phenomena into its lower level phenomena, even if you lose characteristics in the process. Anti-

Emergence is when you have something that looks like an emergence but which actually is negative and brings negative results at the higher level that is less than a real emergence. Anti-emergence only occurs when the emergent process is aborted midstream. This is to say it is a defect, but a necessary defect because the myriad artificial emergences help us to recognize a genuine emergence when it occurs. In fact genuine and artificial emergence forms a kind of temporal gestalt because the emergent event can only be recognized because abortive artificial emergences proceeded and laid the groundwork for a genuine emergence that overturns everything and produces the positive characteristics of a complete reordering of the situation at the higher level of organization. That higher level is based on but reigns over the lower level. If we deconstruct the higher level we get a de-emergence. But the genuine emergence is based on many abortive artificial emergences previously that lets us know it is real because it perdures in its never seen before and unheard of new organization.

Science has been attempting to understand these emergent levels of phenomena that cannot be reduced for many centuries. However, it is only recently with some of the new advances in science that made us realize that complex things can come from simple beginnings, that we have realized that reductionism need not be the ultimate goal of all science. Rather we can have as our goal to reduce as much as possible but to recognize emergence when it slaps us in the face by refusing to be reduced. When we refuse to accept higher levels of non-reducible phenomena we actually allow meaning to escape from our view of the world, because we see real phenomena as epiphenomenal which is a dangerous illusion. False reduction, say that of Freud of everything psychological to sex, is a

form of nihilism itself because it creates a false dichotomy between the designated as real and what is real in itself beyond what we recognize as real. False reduction is the game that Science has been playing for a long time, which was an over reaction to the over zealous projections of other ways of looking at the world that attempted to read too much into phenomena that was not really there. Rather to escape this nihilistic over reaction to religion and other traditional ways of looking at the world now branded non-scientific we need to be judicious and establish rules by which a phenomena can apply for designation as real if it is genuinely emergent. That way perhaps our new sciences of complexity will escape the nihilistic dialectic that projects what is not there, or reduces what is there in the phenomenal world. In order to allow this to happen we really need to make a key distinction introduced by Heidegger between the ontic and ontological. This is called *ontological difference*, which is a difference that makes a difference of Being. We can describe the ontic as what is there beyond our projections and the ontological as the projections themselves. Science is trying to discover what is there beyond the projections themselves through reductionism as a tool. But we also need to consider the projection mechanism within ourselves as well and exert skepticism as well as reductionism. Skepticism is an internal corrective mechanism which makes us question our own assertions about the world. We need to be skeptical about everything that is not immediately obvious, and then be skeptical about what is immediately obvious as well. Skepticism is a pressure against ontology while reductionism is a pressure against over presuming concerning the nature of the ontic. When we separate the ontic from the ontological we make an immense step

forward because we also disentangle reductionism from skepticism. Both of these negative pressures are necessary for science to advance. However, if we apply too much of either of these pressures science also stalls because it does not recognize when it has actually discovers something important. How often are things that the experts said were impossible proven to actually exist in the end, and how long was science delayed by the lack of recognition of some phenomena. What is lacking is skepticism and reductionism pointed back at science itself. In other words, science needs to be skeptical of its own assumptions and expertise, but also we must recognize that science itself is an emergent phenomena which is very complex and it is necessary to attempt to reduce science to its essentials so that we do not inadvertently add in our personal philosophy into our theories when that is not called for. Finding the right balance is hard and we are constantly failing at that task. But science is a struggle with fads such as polywater and cold fusion which seem to be something real but in the end are discovered to be the fantasies of their authors. But when something like superconductivity or Bose Einstein condensates appear which break all the rules but are real phenomena, then we need to carefully take note of what prevented us from seeing that possibility before it was forced upon us by nature itself. In other words although we generally follow Bacon and end up torturing nature to get the truth out of it, we need to recognize when nature is instead forcing conclusions on us that we think are against nature, like in relativity theory or quantum theory, or other bizarre theories or phenomena that we find strange but true. There is in fact a strange counter pressure, sort of like the inverse Doppler effect recently discovered to be a reality in experiments, where nature

presses back in reaction to the pressures of reductionism and skepticism. When nature presses back we experience that as anomalies, exceptions, strange unexplained cases, and other things that do not fit our theories, assumptions, categories, or interpretations of Being. If we are in conversation with nature we need to recognize when nature is telling us something we don't really want to hear, because ultimately nature is going to win this debate, because nature constrains us, even though we might have fantasies that things work the other way around. However, if we were not here to observe nature then there would be no conversation to begin with, so it is necessary to give each side their due and recognize that both have their say. We project upon nature with the ontological and nature absorbs that projection and gives off emanations that we call ontic, which in some cases subvert and other cases confirm our projections.

Heidegger expressed this very finely in his essay on "The Origin of the Work of Art." He there explained the difference between earth and heaven. Earth is the quality that the physus has hidden within it. Heaven is the clearing that allows that is hidden to be seen and projected upon and covered up so what is really there is not seen. Heaven is a clearing in which views of earth can be made visible. Art is where we polish the earth so that more of its hidden nature becomes visible. By art Heidegger means *Arte*, excellence, including the excellence of Science. One way to read the essay is thinking of Art as something broader than science as it was in the Greek times. Our *Arte* or excellence, which can be traced back to RTA in the Vedas which meant cosmic harmony gives us our term Right today. What is right in our culture is the pursuit of Science, which has a right to unearth the truth of things. But in this

unearthing of the truth, where truth is not just verification, but a kind of alethia or uncovering, then we sometimes find that the earth when polished contradicts our facts, theories, assumptions, categories and interpretations of Being. When that occurs we discover properties of nature we did not expect or dream of in our wildest dreams. That is the polishing of the earth so that its hidden nature is made visible within the clearing of Being, by which Heidegger means the possibility of intelligibility. But in that essay Heidegger also harkens back to what Socrates said about the structure of the world in the mythopoeitic era and discusses another dichotomy, mortals and immortals. We are mortals but if we produce data, information, knowledge, wisdom, or gnosis then we have created something immortal, something that outlives us and is extremely durable, especially knowledge which is the most perdurent of all matters that human beings can realize and actualize. So we can think of science as a kind of striving for immortality, not just of our name for discovering some phenomena that will be named after us, but rather because knowledge perdures, i.e. lasts long after we are dead and gone. What is glorious is the memory within the society as a culture of the hero who does the deed that is glorious. For us that is the discoveries of science that yield knowledge. So science operates between Heaven and Earth and between mortality and immortality, and these are deep dichotomies in the Western worldview prior to the metaphysical era that science is building on as well as art and culture in general. When we talk about the ontic and the ontological we are really discussing this fourfold where the ontic earth which is physis is made manifest in the ontological heaven which is logos, and when that yields knowledge that perdures then we find the revelation of that

knowledge glorious and we consider that mortals have come as close to immortality as they might beyond passing on their genes which is the immortality of the physis to which the glory of knowledge is the proximal parallel in the logos.

The Search for the Essence of Being

This book is a story of the search of the Essence of Being. Here I will tell that story in a semi-autobiographical way in order to make it more interesting to the reader. When ever we are dealing with a subject of a thirty year or so research program there is obviously a lot of investment by the researcher into the subject of the research project. Reflecting on that investment might make more sense of why such a research project was fascinating and necessary for the researcher. Here we are going against the Western tradition itself of which we are apart which strives toward the anonymity of the researcher or scientist except for his name. There is a tradition that we should strive for objectivity and leave out personal accounts of the subjective involvement with the subject. This artificial production of academic distance from the subject is one thing that causes the meaning to seep out of our scientific literature. Instead I subscribe to the methodology of Heuristic Research championed by Clark Moustakas. In that method he eschews all artificial distance for a method that attempts to understand our involvement with the subject of our research. From that involvement we come to understand why it was important to the researcher to do what he has done and thereby perhaps understand why the subject should be important to others. But bringing to bear our understanding of the personal struggle of the researcher with the subject of his research it is then possible to give the research project itself a narrative, rather than an empty recital of facts and theories that we usually encounter in

academic texts. In order to combat nihilism that overwhelms much academic research because of the pretense of neutrality we will take a radically different tact and connect the tale of discoveries in the research project with the struggles of the researcher to understand himself and his world. So at this point we switch over from talking about oneself in the third person as is normal to a first person account.

I became interested in this topic concerning the essence of Being by a round about route. My undergraduate training was in East Asian Studies and Sociology. But the same teacher who taught me about Asian Philosophy and Religion also taught me about Heidegger and Husserl. And it was so clear that concern in the Western tradition with Being was just so different from the concerns of the Buddhists and Taoists. So when I went on to graduate school in England at the London School of Economics and went into the philosophical underpinnings of the Western Tradition in depth as many Sociologists were doing at that time, I came to the study with Eastern Models in mind and from a phenomenological point of view. All this made the whole concept of Being seem very strange and at that time there was an explosion of works coming from Europe and being translated that was about the nature of Being, which intimated that there were different kinds of Being. So in order to attempt to understand the nature of Emergence in the Western Scientific Tradition in light of these different views of Ontology I worked hard to develop a model that would allow me to understand what these various proponents of fundamental ontology were talking about. Eventually it occurred to me that the best way of doing this was to employ Russell's Theory of Higher Logical Types as summarized by Copi as a model for the

relations between the different kinds of Being. Once that realization was formulated it then became merely a question of attempting to understand how the various kinds of Being were actually meta-levels of the concept of Being in general. In this the work of Gregory Bateson was a natural starting point because he had attempted to apply the Theory of Higher Logical Types to various phenomena including Schizophrenia. Since Being is the most paradoxical and absurd concept in the Indo-European tradition, it seemed natural to apply the same method as was used to understand madness to the understanding of the various kinds of Being discovered by Fundamental Ontology. It turned out that this method that I devised of modeling kinds of Being with meta-levels was very successful. In other words it was fairly easy to categorize which meta-level the various theorists were talking about. They themselves did not understand they were talking about meta-levels but there was much in their work to suggest that the concepts they had developed about Being actually had this structure, and this allowed me to understand the relations between what various Continental Philosophers were talking about in relation to each other. It basically afforded a complete systemization of the results of Fundamental Ontology which did little violence to the material but instead illuminated it considerably. This is because meta-levels have very sharp boundaries with respect to each other. Thus suddenly all the fuzziness was taken out of the literature for me. Because it was merely necessary to figure out what meta-level of Being that a given theorist was talking about at any given time, and then there was a basis for comparing that crisp concept to the statements of other ontologists concerning the same meta-level. When I

was doing this there was very little interest in continental philosophy in England, rather philosophy of science was the rage. So I steered my dissertation research in that direction as well. But unlike other students of the philosophy of science I looked to the continental philosophers as a source as well as analytical philosophers. And what I discovered was that the Continental philosophers had much more to say about emergence than the analytical philosophers who were still pushing hard on the idea of reductionism and skepticism without realizing as yet their limitations as the Continental philosophers had done.

As a sociologist I was always interested in Symbolic Interactionism and the work of G.H. Mead. Mead had devoted himself to understanding the concept of Emergence and I wanted to understand that concept in the context of the Western scientific tradition following the lead of Kuhn with respect to Paradigms and Foucault with respect to Epistemes. What I discovered in my research was that once you understood the meta-levels of Being then there was an explanation for genuine emergence, i.e. emergent events that actually changed history and future possibilities of the tradition. I realized that a genuine emergence was one that traversed somehow all four meta-levels of Being. I also had the insight that there were only four meta-levels of Being and as Bateson had hinted at in *Steps to the Ecology of the Mind* all higher meta-levels were unthinkable. That unthinkability I associated with Existence rather than Being, and related to the interpretations of existence in terms of Void by Taoism and Emptiness by Buddhism. By this means I realized the first refutable ontology, which would be refuted if a higher meta-level of Being could be thought. Such a challenge would cause the world to be expanded. But try as I would I could not think this fifth

meta-level myself nor find anyone else who claimed to be able to think it. Looking for a refutation of the unthinkability of the fifth meta-level of Being took me far and wide within the Western tradition, but I have not yet been able to find any example of someone thinking the fifth meta-level of Being. What did not occur to me was what has occurred to me recently that perhaps there is a kind of Being that is unthinkable like the various forms of existence. But let's not get ahead of our story.

So the first exercise for the reader is to figure out what are the meta-levels of the concept of Being and to see if you can think each one in turn, and whether you can think the fifth and higher meta-levels of Being. It turns out that by applying the idea of higher logical type theory derived from the work of Russell and Whitehead in Principia Mathematica which was pointed at disarming paradoxes of all types, and even absurdities, that it is possible to disengage the question of the kinds of Being from Continental Philosophy which is anathema to Analytical Philosophers from Britain and America. Once we have disengaged the problem from Continental Philosophy we can attempt to answer these questions ourselves and see whether the answers that we come up with are equivalent to the answers that Continental philosophers have proposed. So that is a challenge left as an exercise to the reader. The best way to follow up this challenge is to get Copi's book about meta-levels of Higher Logical Types and to take the Idea of Being as the starting point and then produce each meta-level in turn looking for its emergent properties until you reach the fifth meta-level and then see whether it is thinkable for you or not. My strong claim is that it is not thinkable for anyone. My weaker claim that will be set out in detail in this book is that even though Being is unthinkable at the fifth meta-level there is

never the less a form of Being that exists at that level which is different from Emptiness or Void as yet another interpretation of Being.

When you have come back to this book after a long absence, where you have striven to define for yourself the meta-levels of Being and attempted to think each one of them up to and including the fifth meta-level and beyond, then you will be ready to attempt to absorb and appreciate perhaps what the tradition can do to help you in this regard. The hard problem is conceiving the different qualities of the various meta-levels of Being. But not only that but of understanding the length of the appropriate jump from one meta-level to the next. What changes as we jump across the intervening void or emptiness between the thresholds of the kinds of Being. What we discover rapidly is that it is not just above the fourth meta-level that void and emptiness of existence looms but that the interstices between the kinds of Being as meta-levels is also filled with this same kind of emptiness or void of existence. Thus we learn that Being is fragmented into kinds. But we also learn that there is a kindness of Being, in as much as Being is intelligibility itself of our world manifest as Heidegger suggests as a primordial familiarity in some sense. Slowly we realize that the fragments of Being that Fundamental Ontology unearths are something very strange. In fact, we quickly learn that this strangeness is unique to the Indo-European worldview. No other language has the concept of Being. Almost all other non-Indo-European languages only have variations on Existence. So the strangeness of the fragments of Being in turn becomes our own strangeness not only to others but to ourselves. To ourselves because although we don't know what Being is we have always thought of it as something total, unified, an all

encompassing plenum of perdurance. To discover that there are meta-levels that define discrete kinds of Being is something of a shock to us. It goes against the dogma of our tradition and challenges us to explain why Being is fragmented when we always were told that it was one matter for us that covered everything. This challenge of our own preconceptions that fundamental ontology has wrought is accompanied by the further challenge to understand the relation of Being to Existence and not just the different interpretations of Being that Heidegger describes but their relation to the various interpretations of Existence which appear at and above the fifth meta-level of Being. Also there we face unthinkability which is the biggest challenge of all because that is the limit of the clearing of Being we have constructed within our tradition. The whole question then becomes whether there is some connection between the uniqueness of Being in the Indo-European Tradition and the Colonialization and ensuing destruction of the Earth that we are now engaged in as part of Globalization of the Dominant Western Culture. This problem was breached by Morris Berman in his wonderful study of Heresy in the Western tradition called *Coming to our Senses*. There the Wild versus Tame distinction is highlighted as the basis for interpreting the world and how we only appear to be able to confront the Other by destroying the Other. And how this destructiveness that we confront other worldviews and even other species with is really a revulsion at the messiness of ourselves as living beings for which the simple solution is mass extinction and genocide. All these associations of the Fragmentation of Being with our uniqueness as world colonizers and globalizers of our culture and terraformers of our planet makes this whole study very poignant for us at this

time in planetary history when languages, species, habitats and cultures are all being wiped away by Western culture at an exponentially accelerating pace. My own drive to understand the Western worldview comes from the desire to come to terms with myself as part of the destroyers of the earth as Nietzsche did previously. In other words I know that I am culpable being part of Western Civilization despite my powerlessness to change its blind destructive effects on the world. But I feel that it behooves me to explore this unstoppable tide that I am part of and to understand it from the inside as best I can, so we can know why we were driven to such destruction. Nietzsche called the blind destroyer the Blond Beast with his side kick the Last Man who just blinks and does not understand. It behooves us to search our souls as to why we are destroying our only home the blue planet that hangs in the midst of the vastness of space unprotected. Why are we a people who fouls our own nest. This is the barbarism that Ghandi spoke of when asked what he thought about Western Civilization to which he replied that he thought it would be a good idea. We have a certain barbarism despite all our claims of civilization that is poignant because like the terrorist suicide bomber we are in our blind destruction of the planet through globalization of Western Culture, Society, Economics, Industrialization etc. taking everyone else with us down the road of utter destruction. We see our global enemy as the Islamic Suicide Terrorist. But in a certain sense that image is only a reflection of ourselves in the mirror of the world we have created by or imperial foreign policy. In a certain sense that image of the enemy on the global scale is an image of ourselves as we run headlong into the destruction of our planet and commit ultimate suicide for everyone of our species by destroying the

planetary equilibrium, eating up global resources unwisely, and destroying other worldviews, languages, habitats, species, and ways of existing that we do not understand but which have existed side by side for eons on the same planet that we ourselves inhabit. As we look back at the geological history of the planet we are discovering many discontinuous radical changes have happened in the past and the stability of the last 10,000 years is in fact an anomaly. Thus the possibility of disturbing this balance seems ever more likely by global warming. Our existence seems ever more tenuous as we discover past volcanic catastrophes that have destroyed whole civilizations and meteor impacts that have changed the course of evolution. So it seems that those who carry around placards saying the end is neigh are perhaps not so far from the truth. But, why are we a people that hastens that perhaps inevitable end and why are we so different from those people of the past who have perhaps hastened environmental catastrophes, because we are hastening it on a global scale and will take everyone with us if any of the worst case scenarios actually occur. So it behooves us to study ourselves and perhaps attempt to bring some self understanding into play if for nothing else so that we can know better why we are committing mutual suicide, genocide including that of ourselves, on a global scale.

So the reason is clear why such a study is important. If we are standing on the deck of the Titanic and we see the Icebergs to either side, and we keep on sailing because we think we are invincible, then there is the old problem identified by the Greeks as *hubris* that always is the root of Tragedy. And personally for the sake of my children, and their children, and the children of others, I would prefer a different fate. Perhaps self-understanding

might make a difference, even if it is a small difference in outcomes. They say that the flapping of the wings of a butterfly in China can change the Weather on the other side of the earth. So perhaps a small glimmer of self-understanding by the Dominant World Culture of the Indo-Europeans might make a difference to the global chaotic pattern of self destruction. Hope springs eternal in the human breast, even if it is just a fantasy in the face of certain extermination.

The Kindness of Being

In our search for the Essence of Being, i.e. the constraints on its attributes, we have an embarrassment of riches when we find too many essences, i.e. a whole series of them in the form of meta-levels of Being. In other words there is not just one essence but a series of essences each separated from the other which forms what might be an infinite series, but which practically we discover to be finite, ending at the fifth meta-level of Being on the shores of a phase change which we call existence. Existence we don't expect to be intelligible or thinkable but only there as what is found. Being we expect to be intelligibility itself and what is surprising is that there are different forms of intelligibility associated with the different kinds of Being. But in order to understand this properly we must place this whole question in a phenomenological framework. The real hero of our tale is Husserl. It was Husserl who attempted to create a rigorous transcendental idealism after Kant who had the brilliant idea of actually comparing our experience to what we claimed about the nature of the world and our interaction with it. Husserl developed phenomenology and in the process noticed something that no one had ever noticed before about our own thought processes, or consciousness, which was that Ideas are different from Essences. That is to say Essences are not

simple Ideas as had almost universally been claimed prior to Husserl's Logical Investigations. Ideas are abstract glosses that lose information about details in order to attempt to attempt to attain universality. Essences are the constraints on Attributes of things that confer kindness to those things that makes them part of a class of things in spite of individual variation. Being is an Idea in the sense that there is such a thing that Heidegger calls Ontological Difference, i.e. that beings and Being have a difference that makes a difference as Bateson liked to say. That ultimate universality of Being as the broadest Idea we have is projected onto all things. And everyone up to Husserl figured that this abstract gloss was the same as the Essence of Being, i.e. that it constrained the meager attributes of Being itself. However, what we soon discover is that the Essence of Being is fragmented into different kinds that represent different meta-levels, and each kind has its own specific characteristics that are different from the gloss of the Idea of Being. Husserl discovered that this was true of all things below the level of Being, that abstract glosses were different from their essences, and Heidegger just generalized this finding to Being itself and thus invented fundamental ontology, where Husserl did not yet venture to generalizing that insight to Being itself, still thinking that it was unified and total as all transcendentalists had done before him. We see Heidegger as transforming Husserl's Phenomenology from within. In other words in spite of Husserl's thinking that Heidegger's work was radically different from his own, we instead see it as a logical extension of the fundamental insight into essence perception, or eidetic intuition, that Husserl discovered. However, in spite of this insight into the foundations of fundamental ontology in

phenomenology we must concede that it was Heidegger that like Kant and Hegel changed the philosophical landscape completely by his work on Being and Time and what followed. That is why that book has been so influential within the Continental Tradition, because it draws the first distinction between two kinds of Being, between Pure Being without Time and Process Being which is involved in time. But Heidegger rightly did not express this difference as differences in Kinds of Being directly, rather he expressed it in terms of a difference in two modalities of being-in-the-world. This is because of the paradox that we are entities who in a kind of ecstasy project the world we live within, and thus we are different from all other kinds of entities. The modalities of being-in-the-world are differences in that projection process. In one of those modalities our emphasis is on the duality between plurality and unity, i.e. the present-at-hand mode while the other modality has an emphasis on the totality of equipment within the world which is the ready-to-hand mode. The dichotomy between unity and plurality supports the dualism between subject and object that we are familiar with as a major opposition throughout the history of the Western tradition. But underlying this atemporal view of things in the world, there is a more basic modality, in some sense, that sees things as caught up in time, and not just objective time but human time, and that relation to human time confers a certain understanding of the totality of the world which cannot be reduced to the dichotomy between unity and plurality. So the ready-to-hand modality supports our connection to the things in the world mediated by tools. From the point of view of science the present-at-hand is more basic, but from the point of view of ourselves as projectors of our own world the ready-to-hand is

more basic. Heidegger does not discount the reality of what science discovers as present-at-hand which is rendered as knowledge, but he says that prior to this rendering there is a binding of ourselves into Being though our relations to tools as a totality and by our immersion in time. The difference between these modalities of Being is not something out there in the world, but in us as beings-in-the-world, but since we are ontic beings as well that means that it is a fundamental difference in the out there that we are in here, i.e. prior to the arising of the subject/object dichotomy. Dasein is specifically what is prior to the separation of subject from object. In the ontic level of ourselves there is a non-separation from the ontic level of everything else despite our fundamental difference from non-dasein entities in the world. This non-separation despite difference at the ontic level needs a new way of talking and thinking in order to isolate it and Being and Time is Heidegger's valiant attempt to find that language, a problem he struggled with his whole life.

Once the difference that makes a difference between kinds of Being had been established then Pandora's box was opened, and the question became how many kinds of Being are there and what are their relations to each other. That leads to the flowering of Continental Philosophy which more or less leaves Analytic Philosophy in the dust of endless arguments over trivialities, while Continental Philosophy goes on to discover fundamental differences at the level of Being itself. Of course the Analytical Philosophers do not understand this and think it is silly because it goes against the whole tradition to think that Being can be fragmented into kinds, but mean while after Russell and Hilbert with the advent of Godel's proof the world of

the Analytical Philosophers falls apart as well because there is a fundamental undecidability at the heart of all axiomatic systems. So Analytical Philosophy finds itself in a dead end program having been dealt a death blow from which it has never recovered. And strangely this alternative universe of Post-Godelian philosophy looks a lot like the underside of Fragmentation of Being. The difference is that Analytical Philosophy takes as basic Reality, Truth and Identity, while Continental Philosophy take as basic Presence in Phenomenology. So all the same conundrums show up in Analytical Philosophy as have shown up in Continental Philosophy they are just much more difficult to isolate and recognize when they are playing off three aspects of Being rather than just one. Continental Philosophy could make progress where Analytical Philosophy stalled only because it was dealing with a simpler problem only looking at one aspect of Being rather than three at a time. But the nihilism of the triviality of Analytical Philosophy and the discovery of the Fragmentation of Being and thus its essential nihilism are really exactly the same matter for thought. Heidegger summed it up in What is Called Thinking with the question "Why are we still not thinking?" We are not thinking because our thought hits the dead end of Existence at the fifth meta-level of Being. What thinking we do is fruitless for the most part because the four meta-levels in which thought is possible are outweighed by the infinite meta-levels beyond them where thought is impossible. Our thought is just the tip of the iceberg which is for the most part submerged below the surface of unthinkability. Heidegger suggests we be thankful for what thinking we are able to do in the face of the overwhelming nature of the vast sea of existence that far outweighs the small clearing of Being that

we have constructed in our neck of the world.

Heidegger manages to make a distinction between what he calls the present-at-hand and ready-to-hand in Being and Time (1927). When we think of these as kinds of Being with different essences the we would call them Pure Being and Process Being, mainly because Pure Being is unmixed with time while Process Being is mixed with time. This is like the difference between the Being of Parmenides and Zeno which is static and that of Heraclitus which is dynamic and always flowing. We could also see it as the difference between Being as a Noun and Being as a Verb. We might say "Being Is" as a sentence that encompasses both types of Being and brings them together in what we might think of what Henry calls an Ontological Monism. Heidegger thought that ready-to-hand and present-at-hand encompassed all of Being and produced a monolith of Being which was all that needed to be said about the subject. Merleau-Ponty when on in Phenomenology of Perception to attempt to explain the modalities of Being in more concrete psychological terms in relation to *pointing* and *grasping* as ways of relating to things by the human being. In mathematical terms we can think of Pure Being as something like the calculus which produces derivatives and integrals of continuous lines determined by equations. That is why Kant's metaphysics, and surprisingly even that of Deleuze, is so focused and structured by the concept of the calculus as a architectural model. Process Being is more like probabilities and stochastic phenomena. It turns out that the great advances in the establishment of probability theory was occurring about the time that Heidegger was writing Being and Time spurred on by the discovery of Quantum Mechanics. It is the differences between continuous determinate functions

which can be described by the calculus which solves the problem of Zeno that is the model of Pure Being while it is probabilities that serve as the model for Process Being. An excellent example of a philosophy that attempts to focus for its basis utterly on process is Whitehead's Process and Reality (1929) which it then attempts to read that back toward the construction of the continuous and determinate world. Heidegger's tact is completely different from that of Whitehead because he does not believe in the subject/object dichotomy any longer. Rather he believes that we need to unearth what was prior to the unfolding of that dichotomy which he calls *dasein*, or being-in-the-world. The essences of Being are modalities of being-in-the-world of *dasein* because *dasein* projects the world. Heidegger calls them existentials rather than categories because they relate to *dasein* rather than non-*dasein* things found in the world. *Dasein* projects the world as an ecstasy and in this projection process time and being are all mixed together to produce a single spectrum rather than separated. This spectrum is similar to the kind of joining Einstein posited between matter-energy or space-time except more primordial because it was a joining of being-time. Once Heidegger recognized that both Parmenides and Heraclitus were right and that both concepts of Being were true and complemented each other then he could set about solving problems that traditional philosophy had been stumped by for its entire history up to that point. The rest of his career Heidegger applies the monolith of Being as the solution to myriad philosophical problems and as a way of opening up a new view of metaphysics which took the Continent by storm.

But once Pandora's box was opened the question became how many kinds of Being

were there and where if ever does this series end. It was Merleau-Ponty who was the main pioneer in this regard. Toward the end of Phenomenology of Perception he breaches the possibility of an expansion of being-in-the-world. He gives the example of an old blind man with his stick or someone playing the guitar where the instrument becomes part of the player's being. From these examples he extrapolates in The Visible and the Invisible that there are two further kinds of Being: Hyper Being which is the hyper-dialectic between Heidegger's Process Being and its antipode Sartre's Nothingness. Hyper Being is the expansion of being-in-the-world and we can call its modality "in-hand". We can relate it to fuzzy sets and logics mathematically. We can posit along with Levinas that its psychological concomitant is *bearing*. Opposite the expansion of being-in-the-world is the contraction of being-in-the-world that Merleau-Ponty calls Wild Being and which we can relate to a modality we might call the out-of-hand. It is related to chaos theory mathematically and especially the Mandelbrot set. Its psychological concomitant is encompassing. Merleau-Ponty identified both of these two higher meta-levels of Being. But we know that Heidegger also wondered about the difference between Pure and Process Being and realized that its being could not be the same as either of the other two kinds of Being, so he called this ~~Being~~ crossed out. Derrida capitalized on this insight and talked about this as the differing and deferring of *Differance*. He related this level of Hyper Being to trace-like phenomena. We can also go on to think of Wild Being in terms of propensities, tendencies, intensities, inclinations, dispositions, etc. Wild Being and Hyper Being are opposites to each other in a way similar to the way that Pure

and Process Being are opposites. But Hyper Being dwells in the realm of possibilities while Wild Being dwells in the realm of propensities. To produce an actuality it is necessary to combine propensity and probability in order to realize a probability. Given a determinate continuous ideal trajectory to the bulls eye, it is the propensities that throw things off to create the probability distribution around the bulls eye. The rings on the bulls eye denote the possibilities for non-actualized events. But when a dart is thrown at the target it is all the little propensities in the situation that throw it off so that a distribution of actualities is produced rather than hitting the ideal bulls eye every time. All four kinds of Being work together to produce an actuality out of the determinate ideal motion, the propensities of the situation, the possibilities of different motions, and the probabilities of actual events of darts hitting the target in different places. When the four kinds of Being come together this is called *a face of the world*. Each face of the world is unique like individual snow flakes yet each snow flake has a hexagonal pattern. Here the pattern is a minimal system of the interlocking of the four kinds of Being into a single tattva, a single unique configuration that works together to produce an effect in the world which is the result of our projection. All the kinds of being-in-the-world work together within the projection process that we throw out on the world as part of our own throwness. There are many examples of these faces of the world in theories and myths and other cultural configurations. They are in a way the measure of our human interaction with the world. They appear out of that interaction as the basic infrastructure of the world itself that supports our action in the lifeworld. The four kinds of Being as meta-levels of Being fit closely together and in

their difference reinforce and support each other to allow us to project our world on existence. But because they are so scattered across the literature of Continental Philosophy and do not have a clear relation to each other they have difficulty informing our understanding of the Indo-European worldview. It is fortunate that we can gather them together and think of them as meta-levels of Being. That suddenly makes clear their relations to each other and also makes them crisply defined because meta-levels have sharp edges in relation to their adjacent meta-levels. The key point I discovered when I was writing my dissertation at London School of Economics on *The Structure of Theoretical Systems in Relation to Emergence* was that the four meta-levels of Being discovered by Continental Philosophy but organized by the idea meta-levels from Russell, i.e. proto-analytical philosophy, was that in order for some event to be genuinely emergent it had to pass through all four kinds of Being on the way into the world. This is a fundamental idea that can ground the concept of emergence in our culture. An emergence is a full view of the face of Being in all its essences taken together as a quintessence. The test of an emergence is to analyze it to see if it is a face of the world, i.e. that it sports all four kinds of Being. If not then it is an artificial emergence, which is to say an anti-emergence, i.e. a phenomena related directly to nihilism production. That is because nihilism production is necessary to produce the background on which the gestalt figure of emergence is to be seen. Just like with the eye, there are several¹ kinds of movement that work together to produce our vision. If these movements are neutralized the image vanishes. In this way the several kinds of Being work together to produce the

¹ See <http://www.diku.dk/~panic/eyegaze/node16.html>

projection of the world. If they were neutralized the world would vanish. It is the production of erratic movement of nihilism that makes possible the presentation of the emergent event, i.e. the non-nihilistic distinction. Non-nihilistic distinctions must exist for nihilistic distinctions to exist and vice versa. Genuine emergent events are the appearance of non-nihilistic distinctions within the context of the Western worldview. There is this intimate connection between nihilism and emergence which is not normally understood, but which is important to us to understand. Part of that comes from the fact that faces of the world are infinitely unique combinations of the kinds of Being. The faces of the world can be the seed for a shift in the organization of some strata of the world itself. Such a shift might be the appearance of a new fact, new theory, new paradigm, new episteme, new ontos (approach toward Being), a new existence, a new actualization, or a new view of the absolute. Emergent events can occur spontaneously at any of these levels of our scientific and technological culture. In them a new predominant organization of the kinds of Being overwhelms all other organizations of the faces of the world. We can see this as a Highly Optimized Tolerance (HOT) cascade, like that of a spreading wildfire. Sometimes it only effects a small part of the world, but at other times it jumps all the fire breaks and reorganizes the whole world as in the change from the mythopoietic to the metaphysical eras of the Western world. Other times perhaps only a theory is effected, or a paradigm, or an episteme, or an ontos, etc. by the reorganization instead of the world worldview.

This view of the relation between the kinds of Being and the phenomena of emergence and nihilism was the main concern of my

research for my first dissertation in England at the London School of Economics. After finishing that degree I returned to the USA and began a career as a Systems and Software Engineer in Aerospace. In that process I realized eventually that these same kinds of Being were the basis for the organization of the computational metaphor and so I wrote a book called Wild Software Meta-systems about the relation between Software Engineering and Fundamental Ontology. This gist of that idea was that pointing and grasping were at the heart of the hardware construction, but that Software was organized on the pattern of Hyper Being, and what could not be contained in that pattern was assigned to Artificial Intelligence and Life and was from the providence of Wild Being. I continued my research as I worked in Aerospace over the years until around 1990 I discovered that the kinds of Being were the differences between the Vedic Gods. At that point I realized that these structures were not something new within the western worldview but something very old and something very persistent. I wrote a book on this subject called The Fragmentation of Being and the Path Beyond the Void which I completed about 1994. In the process of writing that book I discovered the existence of the Special Systems which separated the different kinds of Being from each other and I wrote about that in a book called Autopoietic Reflexive Systems Theory. From that Point onward I have attempted to present the concepts of Special Systems theory and Emergent Meta-systems theory at several conferences. These papers can be seen at <http://archonic.net>. But it was on the way home from the last of those conferences that I attended² that I had the idea that something that I had been denying for a

² See socialtheory.org

long time might be true. This is to say I began to think about all the anomalies that I had run into by denying that there was a fifth meta-level of Being and it occurred to me that perhaps I was wrong about that due to the persistence of these anomalies with respect to the application of my fundamental ontology to the understanding of myth and epic and other aspects of the worldview under the rubric of onto-mythology. Once this doubt crept in it was difficult to dislodge it. And slowly it grew until eventually I discovered how it might be possible for there to exist a fifth meta-level of Being without destroying the edifice of the hierarchy of the kinds of Being in the process and maintaining all the while the interface between Being and Existence at the fifth meta-level. That tumult in which my ontological views were turned upside down occurred as I was working on my second dissertation research project on General Schemas Theory³. So I thought I should take a sabbatical from that research work to write this book about the possibility of there being a fifth meta-level of Being after all. That possibility could not be adequately explored in the context of the work on General Schemas Theory and needed the context of a new work to sustain that thought process. Thus with Ultra Being, the fifth kind of Being, a strange sort of Being emerges at the fifth meta-level where existence and Being meet. Instead of two primary interpretations for Existence, which is Void from the Taoists and Emptiness from the Buddhists there is now a third interpretation of Being as the fifth kind of Being, a true quintessence which acts as the interstice between emptiness and void. Elsewhere we have posited that this kind of Being is what the world looks like from the outside, as if it were an existent itself. But if it is true that

there is a fifth meta-level of Being that turns the world upside down, because it rearranges everything, as an emergent event at the level of existence, that is beyond the level of the interpretations of Being that Heidegger talks about. It is not clear that Ultra Being exists. I always used the name just in case I discovered that it existed. But previously I thought it was an illusion or a mere empty unrealized possibility. Now I am beginning to think that it just might have some possibility of actualization. But you dear reader must be the judge of that. For my own part I remain skeptical, but need to present the case for the existence of Ultra Being because of its profound implications due to the anomalies that have occurred because its possibility have been denied for so long by myself.

The main reason I think that there is a possibility that Ultra Being might exist is because of the complementarity I realized between the Eras of Being, like the mythopoietic and metaphysical and those which came before them lost in the mists of time, and the fusion of four worldviews into the meta-worldview that we have today. Those four worldviews are those of Sumeria, Egypt, Semites and Indo-Europeans. My own research has been mostly aimed at the Indo-Europeans but slowly I realized that ours is really a meta-worldview made up of some strange combination of all four of these ancient worldviews that interacted in the Middle East. Ultra Being explains what happens to Being when all four kinds of Being completely collapse and then reassert themselves in a completely different pattern in a different world era. It also explains what the fusion material might be between the various other worldviews of which our meta-worldview is made. When a reorganization of our worldview into another era occurs the patterning of the four kinds of Being that held sway at the

³ See <http://holonomic.info>

level of ontos is completely wiped away and there is only existence left, but out of that existence arises a new patterning at the ontos level. What holds the seeds of the new worldview when the old worldview is effaced into oblivion, it must be something like Ultra Being, i.e. a kind of Being that is an interpretation of existence like emptiness and void yet different from them. The fact that emptiness and void are different from each other begs the question of what their difference might be, and Ultra Being provides an answer for that question. Similarly how does the Indo-European worldview interact with other worldviews that all have sorts of existence as their existential basis, it must be that Being can act like it was something existent. We do not see that at the level of the lower four meta-levels of Being so that must occur at the fifth meta-level. Notice that both the fusing of worlds into a meta-worldview and the change of eras in the western worldview are very rare events. Ultra Being only appears very rarely. Much more rarely than instances of Wild Being. And the key difference is that Ultra Being is still unthinkable, like the other forms of existence. This is the idea that allows us to understand Ultra Being. But this idea goes against all the assumptions of the whole western tradition. Being is by definition according to Parmenides and Heidegger thinkable. The idea of having an unthinkable kind of Being, like the unthinkable kinds of Existence is itself unthinkable, but there it is. A possibility that solves many anomalies at the level of fundamental ontology, but leaves us very uneasy, because we are not used to having an unthinkable kind of Being floating around loose. So in these pages we will pursue this strange kind of Being and attempt to understand the effect of its possibility on the metaphysics of emergence. This book will serve as a kind

of platform for presenting the arguments concerning the existence of Ultra Being so I can attempt to settle the question to my own satisfaction. It will attempt to leave a record of that Gigomachia, i.e. struggle between the gods over that Essential Idea of a quintessence of Being. I cannot promise what the outcome will be but I can promise that it will be interesting, at least to myself.

Esoterica

Whether there is or is not a fifth meta-level of Being could be seen as esoterica by some who are not keyed into the complexities of fundamental ontology as they exist today over 70 years after the publication of Being and Time. What do we care whether there is some fifth meta-level of Being or any other higher meta-level for that matter. Now Pandora's box is opened again. But we did not know that it was opened then closed before it has been opened again and that did not seem to effect our lives very much. The point is that the meta-levels of Being is what gives us the infrastructure of the world in terms of our connection to it through our projection of it. So every meta-level of Being both expands and deepens our understanding of the Western worldview. If Ultra Being exists then that allows us to understand better the phenomena of Eras of Being within the worldview and the fusion of the four worldviews into a meta-worldview. That expands our horizon with respect to understanding the dynamics of the worldview in which we are entrapped. It helps us understand what the nature of the worldview we find ourselves within, all of us, even those around the world who did not volunteer to be encompassed by the dominant worldview via globalization. By understanding the infrastructure of the worldview we may discover things about it to explain its self and world destroying nature. Without some deeper

understanding there is not much hope. But with some inkling of understanding there is a glimmer of hope that we will discover something about ourselves that might help avert world disaster. It is not likely but it is right now our last best hope. So here we will mull over this problem of the possible existence of Ultra Being in our contribution to the understanding of the Metaphysics of Emergence. The metaphysics of emergence per se is a vast open problematic that has hardly been explored previously. Emergence is a fad now and there are many books about it but mostly from an ontic perspective which does not explain why emergence is a possibility within our worldview or any other worldview. So here we bring something of a fundamental ontological approach to the question of emergence. We will explore the various kinds of Being and their place in the infrastructure of our worldview and then we will contrast those to the possibility of a fifth meta-level of Being and attempt to see what its implications might be for the transformation of our worldview from within.