

Ontology in Contemporary Thought

Being, reality, space-time, virtuality, and the changing logic of order.

- 1 Foundation of ontology
- 2 Models of reality
- 3 Space & time
- 4 Virtuality
- 5 Randomness & order

Seminar Route

The class moves from classical ontological categories to virtual, informational, and probabilistic models of reality.



Final written task

Establish a logical connection between paired concepts and explain, in 2–3 sentences, whether one concept complements, transforms, or negates the other.

The goal is not only recall, but comparison, interpretation, and application.

1 The Categorical Foundation of Ontology

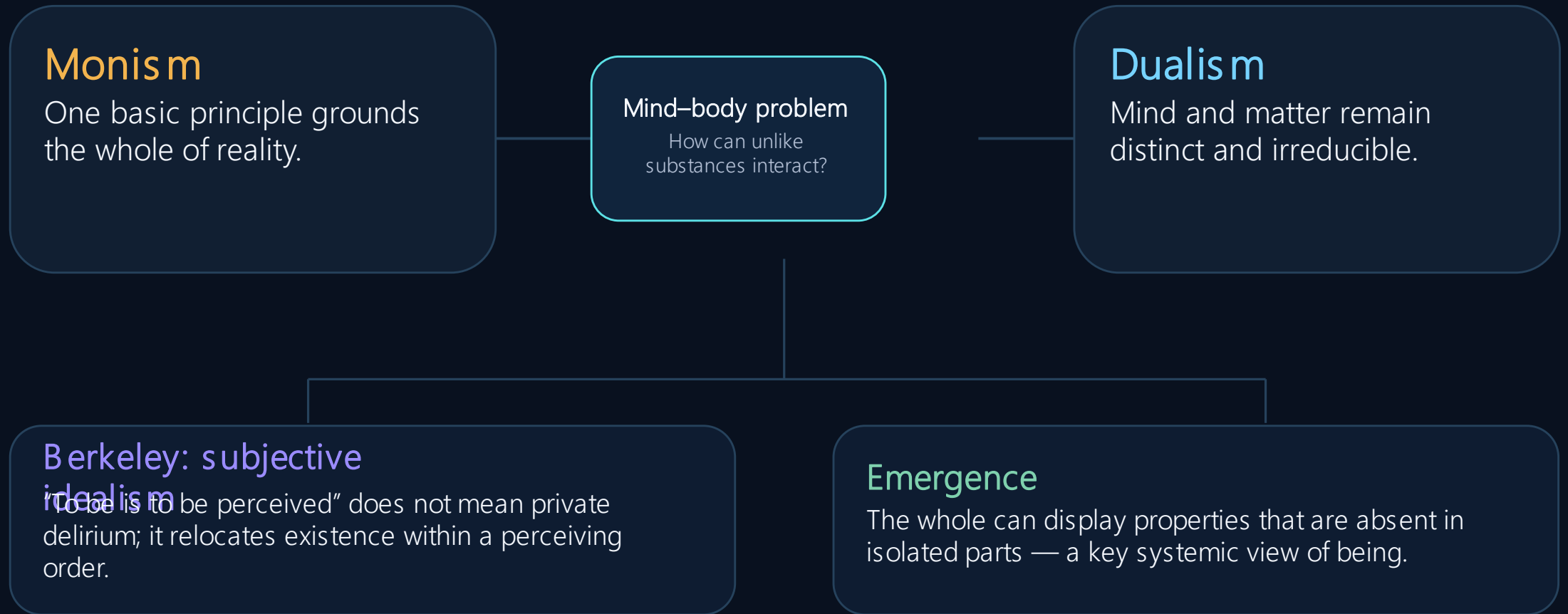
Three opening questions

- Being is not identical with the total sum of entities; Heidegger distinguishes the meaning of being from any list of things.
- Nothingness is not a simple blank. It intensifies the question: why is there something rather than nothing?
- The idea of substance changes historically — from Plato's realm of ideas to Heidegger's Dasein as situated, self-aware existence.



The block establishes ontology's core distinction: reality is not exhausted by what is merely present before us.

2. Models of Reality and the First Principle



3. Space and Time: Coordinates of Existence

from container → relation → lived duration



Newton

Space and time function as an absolute framework — a stable container in which bodies are placed and motion is measured.

Leibniz / Einstein

Space-time is relational: matter-energy and geometry belong together within one continuum rather than two separate stages.

Bergson / "Here and now"

Duration is lived from within, not merely counted by a clock; presence gives existential weight to the "here and now."

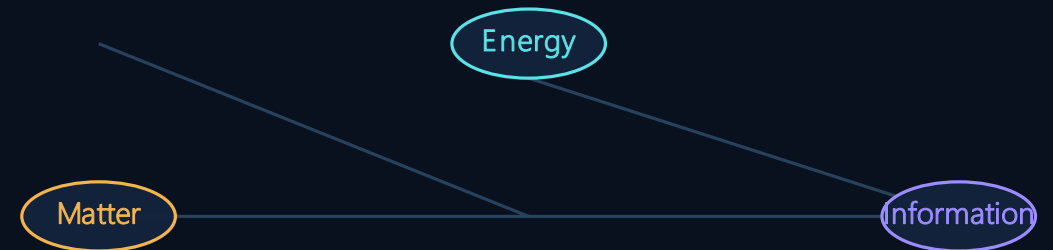
Modern ontology treats space not as a neutral box, but as something articulated through relations, events, and material processes.

4. Virtuality and the Modern World Picture



Key claims

- A digital object may lack physical mass and still exist ontologically as code, relation, and effect.
- Baudrillard's simulacrum names a sign that no longer points back to an authentic original.
- The triad matter – energy – information enlarges how we imagine the structure and self-organization of the universe.



Ontology now faces a world in which presence can be informational, immersive, and socially operative.

5. Regularity, Randomness, and Self-Organization

A shift in the logic of explanation

Laplace's Demon

perfect prediction
in classical
determinism

Statistical laws

probability replaces
rigid certainty

Synergetics

order emerges
from fluctuation

- Classical determinism imagined a fully calculable world, symbolized by Laplace's Demon.
- Modern ontology and science make room for probability, instability, and open systems.
- Randomness need not mean lawlessness; it can signal a deeper process of becoming.



Written Exercise: Connection of Concepts

Write 2–3 sentences for each pair, showing whether one concept complements, develops, transforms, or negates the other.

Substance

----- *identity vs. digital multiplicity* -----

Avatar

Absolute space

----- *container vs. inseparable place-time* -----

Chronotope

Simulacrum

----- *copy without original vs. ontological truth* -----

True being

Determinism

----- *rigid prediction vs. probabilistic being* -----

Field of possibilities

Biosphere

----- *organic environment vs. sign-system world* -----

Hyperreality

Prompt lens: look for conflict, continuity, inversion, or transformation.

Sample Pair: “Substance” ↔ “Avatar”

Logical connection: conflict and transformation

Classical ontology

- personality as a unified substance
- an indivisible and stable “I”
- continuity across life and action

shift in the idea of self

from fixed foundation
to digital plurality

Digital ontology

- multiple profiles or avatars
- switchable masks and roles
- identity becomes fluid and configurable

Thus modern ontology moves from the idea of a unified substance to a model of fluid identity, where the self appears as a set of switchable digital masks.

Key Vocabulary and Expected Outcomes

Core terms

Being

reality as such

Entity

any determinate existent

Dasein

self-aware human
existence

Emergence

new systemic properties

Chronotope

unity of time and place

Simulacrum

copy without original

Hyperreality

simulation over reality

Synergetics

self-organization in
complexity

After the seminar, students should be able to:

- distinguish major ontological models and questions;
- compare classical and contemporary views of reality;
- apply philosophical concepts to virtual and media environments;
- produce short analytical links between paired concepts.

Closing idea

From substance to simulation, ontology asks how reality is structured, experienced, and transformed.