

Overview of the Work as a Whole

The first Introduction formulates the question to be asked: "What is the meaning of Being."

Important orientation: Heidegger will seek to gain access to the meaning of Being as such by interpreting a particular being viz., Human Being. In consequence of this, the central task in Being and Time will be to gain access to the meaning of Human Being (Dasein). And this will form our main interest viz., the Dasein Analytic.

The second Introduction describes the method Heidegger will use to uncover the meaning of human Being. That method will be phenomenology. Indeed, the 'phenomenon' of phenomenology will turn out to be the Being of the being that is to be investigated. We will attempt a phenomenological interpretation of everyday human existence in order to uncover the ground for the possibilities of everyday human existence.

The investigation will be ontological in nature.

Now let me give you an indication of what I mean by this. Suppose the concept of freedom then:

Particular acts such as walking to the store, etc. can be viewed as occurring on an 'ontic level' whereas the nature of Human

Freedom would underlie these actions on the 'ontological level.'

Thus the ontological structure of Freedom becomes the ground for the possibility of all particular (ontic) manifestations of freedom.

Now, this ontological structure is the kind of structure that Heidegger wants to get at--he wants, in the Dasein Analytic, to uncover the fundamental structures of Human existence.

Furthermore, in our example of Freedom, we can say that the structure of Freedom is peculiar to human beings and not to things. This distinction between structures that pertain to Human Being and not to other kinds of beings, this distinction is what lies behind a distinction Heidegger will make between existentials and categories. Thus, in our example, 'Freedom' would be an existential while, say, 'hardness' (which pertains to 'things') would be a category.

So we can say that Heidegger in the Dasein Analytic wants to uncover the existential structures of Human existence.

In the chapters immediately following the 'introductions,' Heidegger begins the analysis of what it means to be human, he begins the uncovering of the Being of Human Being. Indeed, the entire published part of the thesis is devoted to uncovering the fundamental structures of Human Being.

Chapter 1

Heidegger begins the chapter with two general statements:

(1) Dasein is in each case mine (i.e., each one of us is a human being)

(2) The 'essence' of Dasein lies in its Existenz (Existenz here to be taken in a dynamic, active, future oriented sense). Now these two characteristics of Dasein are unified in two modes of Existenz:

(a) authentic (*eigentliche*) existence

(b) inauthentic (*uneigentliche*) existence

What this means can be seen in Heidegger p. 68.

This means that there are two ways in which human beings can 'take up' their existence (for in each case it is their existence) viz. either as their own (authenticity) or, in some sense, as not their own (inauthenticity).

For instance (i) a person who realizes that they are choosing their life style or (ii) a person who is simply fulfilling a pre-designed role in their society, family, peer group etc.

Both people exist and both people have an existence that is theirs but the former involves an element of choice that is not clearly present in the latter.

Now, here's where Chapter 1 leads into the beginning of the analysis:

Heidegger then asks, what is the most general structure in which human beings exist--authentically or inauthentically. And he sees this general structure in the 'empirical,' ontic level of average everydayness. This average everydayness thus forms the starting point for the interpretation of Dasein.

This level has, as its fundamental structure, *Being-in-the-world*. It is a unitary structure which must be seen as a whole. Yet, if we bear this in mind, it is methodologically possible to 'divide' it into different parts and levels. (It is

these 'parts and levels' of Being-in-the-world that are explained in Chapters 2-5.)

Ch 2: preliminary discussion

Ch 3: 'in-the-world': discloses 'the worldhood of the world' (emphasizes the structures of 'things').

Ch 4: the 'who' of that entity which exists 'in-the-world': (discusses our relation with others)

Ch 5: 'steps back' and seeks a deeper understanding of the structures involved in Being-in-the-world (viz., Being-in as such).

Chapter 2 is devoted to a preliminary discussion of Being-in.

Dasein is not 'in' the world as, for instance, water is 'in' a glass i.e., as objects stand to objects, one 'inside' the other. Rather, Being-in is an existential and as such is characteristic of Dasein. It is best described as dwelling alongside, as tarrying along. Dasein comports itself concernfully within the world.

Again, Dasein is engaged in the activities of its everyday life--Being-in-the-world denotes Dasein's concernful being alongside entities and tarrying with others. This is the primary mode in which Dasein is in the world.

As a corollary, Heidegger contrasts this primary mode with a derivative (founded) mode which he calls knowing the world.

In this peculiar way of comportment to the world, I dis-engage myself from my concernful comportment and 'change my attitude' toward the world. I tend to 'focus in' on something as an object

Take for example, the handling of a piece of chalk: (1) I can engage in use which teaching or (2) step back from its use and 'talk about it', even starting to describe it ('know it') as white, an inch or so long, etc. This shift in comportment will have great significance, it will affect the attitude one can take towards Human Being.

In **chapter 3**, Heidegger looks more closely at one's dealings with the world, he looks specifically at the 'in-the-world'. From this the interpretation uncovers that our primary comportment to 'entities' within the world is one of use.

I am, proximately and for the most part, engaged with 'things' in terms of an equipmental totality. Entities, seen from their aspect of use, are called 'ready-to-hand' (*Zuhanden*). However, entities, when they become disengaged from our use with them become merely 'present-at-hand' (*Vorhanden*).

Think of the distinction between (1) using a pencil and (2) having the pencil break -- and just staring at it.

Now, these two ways of describing entities become, for Heidegger, the two ways of categorizing 'things'.

Again, though, our primary relationship to entities within the world is in the mode of their being ready-to-hand. And it is with this that a sense of the worldhood of the world emerges as Dasein's totality of involvement's with things ready-to-hand.

[Think, for instance, of the 'world' of a carpenter and of how much of that world is 'signified' by the referential totality of involvements that he/she would have to the equipmental totality around them (and how that world might be different from the 'world' of a mathematician).]

Chapter 4 devotes itself to an uncovering of the 'who' of this Dasein who understandingly comports itself towards its everyday activities and involvements.

Heidegger wants to investigate the sense of the self manifest for the most part in everyday existence. His brilliant analysis comes to the startling conclusion that proximately and for the most part, everyday Dasein has no 'self' of its own.

One's sense of self, of what one is to do, of how one is to live: this, for the most part, is given from the outside--

Heidegger characterizes this as the they-world, or simply as the they (*Das Man*). The 'who' of everyday Dasein is *Das Man*. (cf. page 164)

Chapter 5 Being-in as such

Now at this stage Heidegger stops the ongoing analysis and 'steps back' in order to attempt a more primordial interpretation of what has so far been said -- the interpretation is going to seek a deeper understanding of Being-in-the-world.

And it is going to do so by uncovering certain fundamental structures in Dasein itself (as opposed to 'things' and 'others').

Chapter 5 is to investigate Being-in as such. The analysis discloses two fundamental moments that are always

present in Dasein and, for the most part, are involved in a third moment. Let's look at these 'moments', these existential structures of Dasein's Existenz:

(1) *Befindlichkeit* ('How one finds oneself')

This expresses the 'fact' that Dasein always finds itself in a situation. Heidegger uses the expression thrownness (*Geworfenheit*). Dasein is 'thrown' in a world (most radically at birth) and is always already in a world.

(a) Concrete manifestation of *Befindlichkeit*.

As a specific mode of *Befindlichkeit*, Heidegger points out the sense of moods (*Stimmung*). Moods can somehow disclose 'how we are' or 'how we find ourselves', they manifest a peculiar attunement to existence (this 'power' of moods to disclose will lead Heidegger to his famous discussion of anxiety).

(2) *Verstehen* ('Understanding')

This is expressive of Dasein's active comportment towards possibilities, projects. Heidegger says that they understanding is altogether permeated with possibilities (Dasein is always confronted with the 'possible')

(Note: understanding is not a 'mental state' nor is 'possibility' to be seen in terms of 'actual possibilities,' rather it is the ground for the 'possibility of possibilities')

(a) Specific mode of *Verstehen*

Now Heidegger writes that the 'projecting' of the understanding has its own possibility--that of developing 'itself'. Such a self-developing of the understanding Heidegger calls interpretation.

From this we can see how Dasein has the peculiar possibility of understanding itself, of engaging in a self-interpretation. That is to say, of engaging in a 'project' like that put forth in this present treatise: The Dasein Analytic is engaged in an interpretation, a self-understanding of Human Being.

Now, these two movements (*Befindlichkeit* and *Verstehen*) constitute the essential unity of Dasein's basic state. They are never wholly separate from one another: (pg. 188) "By way of having a mood, Dasein 'sees' possibilities, in terms of which it is. In the projective disclosure of such possibilities, it already has a mood in every case". Now, these two movements are, for the most part, unthematically present in a third movement which Heidegger calls:

(3) *Verfallen* (Fallenness) This expresses Dasein's average everydayness--Dasein's immersion in the world of its everyday concerns and projects. This is the level at which the moments of *Befindlichkeit* and *Verstehen* usually operate.

Thus we have the three 'movements': Dasein finds itself in a situation, comports itself to possibilities and does so for the most part in its everyday concerns and activities.

Chapter 6

But these three movements are not, so to speak, radically separate from one another--Heidegger has 'stepped back' to analyze them, but he is analyzing a unitary phenomenon: Dasein's existence is a unity.

Now, Heidegger calls the unity of this unitary structure Care (*Sorge*). And he says, in chapter 6, that "Care" is the Being of Dasein, the Nature of Human Being (it is that fundamental structure that underlies each and every particular human existence).

Being and Time p. 237 The Being of Dasein (i.e., Care) is:

ahead-of-itself/being-already-in-(the world)/as being-alongside-entities (and caring-for-others)

The ahead-of-itself refers to the structural moment of *Verstehen*, it expresses Dasein's comportment towards possibilities (in the philosophical tradition: Transcendence--this expresses the deeper structure of Freedom, which the later Heidegger expresses by "Openness").

The being-already-in-the-world refers to the structural moment of *Befindlichkeit* and indicates the factual situation that always surrounds a human being. Dasein is always thrown into a situation that is, in some sense, already there. And this means that Dasein is not the ground (or cause) of the situation--in fact, the situation becomes the ground upon which Dasein 'finds itself'. (The philosophical tradition speaks of this as finitude).

Now, these two 'moments' in Dasein's Being are for the most part, imperceptibly 'at work' in Dasein's everyday activities and concerns. They are acted out in the presence of one's being-alongside-entities (and caring for others). And this Heidegger has referred to as the structural moment of *Verfallen*.

With this, the Being of Human Being is disclosed. The first division closes with a very important reflection on the

nature of truth--a reflection designed to show that the disclosures thus made are not merely 'Heidegger's thought' but rather are uncoverings of 'the things themselves.'

Second Division

It is here that the notion of Being and the notion of Time are brought together. Heidegger has called the 1st division a "Preparatory Analysis"--here this analysis receives its completion: We have said that the Care-structure expresses the Being of Dasein, the meaning of Human Being. But if we look closely at this care-structure, we can see something perhaps even deeper than these moments themselves, something that seems to lie behind even these fundamental structure, something which grounds their inner unity and makes them possible.

That which grounds the unity of the care-structure i.e., that grounds the Being-of-Dasein, the Being of Human Being, is Temporality (*Zeitlichkeit*). In Aristotelian terms, we could say that Time is the form of human life.

Each structural moment manifests what Heidegger calls a temporal ecstasy:

The ahead of itself manifests the *futural*.

The already in a world manifests the '*past*' (or the having been).

The being alongside manifests the '*present*' actualization of the other two moments.

(We reach out towards the future while taking up our past thus yielding our present activities. Note how the future--and hence the aspect of possibility--has priority over the other two moments.)

I should mention that it is in this second division that he carries out his famous analysis of "that possibility which is our ownmost possibility," namely Death.

One final note on this 'overview' will lead us into the first page of the text. We now have an indication of the relation between temporality and the Being of Dasein (Human Being is thoroughly temporal). It is this connection between temporality and human existence that gives rise to Heidegger's discussion of *History*.

'How we find ourselves' expresses the fact that we are thrown into a 'world' already there before us -- this is most evident in the radical sense of Birth. Hence, one is literally 'thrown into a world' beyond one's control -- but this 'world' is not merely a particular environment -- it has its place in history: one is, broadly speaking, thrown into a historical moment.

Now, 'historical moments' are not isolated moments, but rather involve a 'carrying forth' of history. A certain tradition gets 'passed down' and 'taken over' (in its own fashion) in every epoch. The past, in some sense, gets taken up in the present -- though often in a manner in which its character as past gets forgotten and covered over. With this in mind, Heidegger writes (p. 43):

"Tradition takes what has come down to us and delivers it over to self-evidence; it blocks our access to those primordial 'sources' from which the categories and concepts handed down to us have been in part quite genuinely drawn. Indeed it makes us forget that they have had such an origin, and makes us suppose that the necessity of going back to these sources is something which we need not even understand."

Now this provides the clue for the kind of beginning that Heidegger makes in the treatise -- in a sense, through the final reflections on history, the whole work has begun to bend back upon itself -- and it shows the necessity of beginning at 'the origins' of a problem.

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