

QUESTIONING THE MEANING OF AUTHENTICITY IN
MARTIN HEIDEGGER'S *BEING AND TIME*

A Thesis

by

THOMAS LIWINSKI

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
MASTER OF ARTS

August 2011

Major Subject: Philosophy

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Approved by:

Chair of Committee,	John J. McDermott
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ABSTRACT

Questioning the Meaning of Authenticity in Martin Heidegger's *Being and Time*.

(August 2011)

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The purpose of this thesis is to clarify the meaning of authenticity in Martin Heidegger's *Being and Time*. This is done first by situating the meaning of authenticity within the project as a whole, second through an exegesis of key parts of the text, and third, through an evaluation of certain scholarly commentaries. The ultimate aim is to argue against an interpretation of authenticity that carries an overly subjectivistic-individualistic connotation.

The second chapter seeks to provide the necessary context for the meaning of authenticity within the project of *Being and Time* as a whole. The goal is to make transparent the situation that Heidegger finds himself in when he conceives of the necessity for the concept of authenticity. Towards this end, it is necessary to highlight those commitments to phenomenology and hermeneutics that informs Heidegger's effort.

The third chapter first introduces the various characterizations of authenticity that Heidegger offers in *Being and Time* and the problematic meaning they suggest. Subsequently, the third chapter aims at creating a context for the meaning of those

characterizations through an exegesis of the existentials of every existentiell disclosure of Dasein's being-in-the-world. By examining what it means for Dasein to be in the world in general, the goal is to narrow the scope of what authenticity can and cannot mean.

The fourth chapter surveys certain commentaries on authenticity that argue in favor of a subjectivistic-individualistic emphasis for the meaning of authenticity. The goal is to isolate the key points in *Being and Time* that are used in support of these interpretations, and subsequently to use the frameworks created in Chapters II and III to articulate why such commentaries are incorrect. Finally, Chapter IV gestures towards the right meaning of those descriptions of authenticity that carry a subjectivistic-individualistic connotation in order to place them in the right context.

The thesis concludes by suggesting that a non subjectivistic-individualistic interpretation fits more holistically with the other social-historical parts of the text, and that a subjectivistic-individualistic interpretation remains within the provenance of the kind of metaphysics that Heidegger wishes to distance himself from.

“My goal is this: always to put myself in the place in which I am best able to serve, wherever my gifts and qualities find the best soil, the widest field of action. There is no other goal.”

--Narcissus (from Herman Hesse's *Narcissus and Goldmund*)

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my committee chair, John J. McDermott, and my committee members Daniel Conway and Tazim Jamal, for joining me for a wonderful discussion at the end of my long journey in philosophy, allowing that the culmination of my efforts be so memorable.

Thanks also to my family who were unwavering in their support, and to my friends who encouraged me along the way.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The stated aim of the project in Martin Heidegger's *Being and Time* is to seek an elucidation of the question of the meaning of being. Initially then, it should seem curious that the notion of man's authenticity should figure in so prominently into such a project. Furthermore, Heidegger himself offers little in terms of support for understanding this connection. Initially, Heidegger simply tells us that Dasein has two kinds of being—authenticity and inauthenticity—and that these are based on the fact that Dasein is characterized by always being-mine (Heidegger 40). Due to this lack of context, it is perhaps little wonder that the meaning of authenticity finds a diverse range of interpretations in commentaries on *Being and Time*.

In certain commentaries, authenticity takes on an overly subjectivistic-individualistic emphasis at the expense of the social-historical passages that are also clearly important for a complete understanding of what it means to be authentic. But those that recognize the importance of the social-historical passages often simply point out the inconsistency of arguing for a subjectivistic-individualistic emphasis without placing those passages used to support such a view in their appropriate context. The ultimate aim, then, is to build up that context, thereby clarifying the various remarks that characterize authenticity in *Being and Time*.

This thesis follows the style of the *MLA Handbook*.

In order to do so, first it is necessary fill in the missing gap in Heidegger's presentation by providing the necessary context for the meaning of authenticity within the project as a whole. In a lecture on hermeneutics before the publication of *Being and Time*, Heidegger writes that any interpretation has three elements—a point of view, a direction of view, and a range of view—and that the interpretation can be made transparent only to the extent that its situation is clarified according to these three aspects.

The possible accomplishment of interpretation and understanding, as well as the appropriation of the object that thereby occurs, are transparent to the degree that the situation—in and for which an interpretation develops—is illuminated according to the aspects just mentioned (Figal 39).

Of the three, the point of view is primary as it represents the basic prejudice that determines in what way the subject matter of the interpretation is to be appropriated. The first goal, then, is to make transparent the point of view out of which Heidegger's analytic of Dasein develops. To do so it is necessary to discuss those principles of phenomenology and hermeneutics that underlie the approach that Heidegger takes in pursuing his inquiry. Ultimately, by making transparent the situation within which Heidegger conceives of the necessity for the notion of authenticity, a context will be established for which the meaning of authenticity can come back to for its verification.

The next step in establishing the proper context for authenticity will be to clarify those existential structures that describe what it means for Dasein to exist concretely in the world. Since Heidegger provides a fairly comprehensive account of the ontological constitution of this being, it is possible to create a context out of how Dasein is in the

world in general to help clarify what an authentic existentiell can and cannot reasonably entail.

The final step is to evaluate directly the analyses present in certain commentaries that have strong subjectivistic-individualistic interpretations of authenticity. To this end it must be possible to locate exactly where in *Being and Time* these claims find their textual justification. The ultimate goal is to connect the meaning of authenticity as it is established for the project to the various characterizations of authenticity as they appear in the text. In doing so, the characterizations of authenticity that supposedly ground the subjectivistic-individualistic emphasis are reappropriated by an understanding that is more holistically situated in the project as a whole and in the existential understanding of Dasein.

Ultimately, what seems to be the root of the problem in understanding authenticity in *Being and Time* is the difficulty of conceiving the being of Dasein in any way other than on the basis of subjectivity and a metaphysic of presence. After the publication of *Being and Time*, perhaps in recognition of precisely these difficulties in getting past subjectivity, Heidegger stresses that Dasein is meant as a “neutral” term that designates only the “metaphysical isolation of the human” (Figal 63-64). As part of establishing this neutral designation in *Being and Time*, Heidegger introduces the distinction between the ontological and the ontic, and the existential and the existentiell. As a result, the traditional notions of selfhood and subjectivity get split between this new landscape of categories and subsequently lose their meaning. As Francois Raffoul points out in regards to Dasein, "We are dealing then with a completely unprecedented kind of

solipsism, the concept of which unites isolation, individuation, and opening to others and to the world" (Raffoul 216). The difficulty and the challenge, is in thinking through these traditional ideas on the new basis that Heidegger establishes.

CHAPTER II

SITUATION

2.1 Overture

Fundamentally a work of ontology, the stated project of Martin Heidegger's *Being and Time* is to seek an answer to the question of the meaning of being. For Heidegger, this is a question that has been neglected in the history of western philosophy, passed over owing to its ubiquitousness or obtuseness or simply its emptiness. We use it and yet we are unable to articulate an adequate understanding of its meaning. This puts us in an epistemic situation worthy of Plato's *Meno*: can we ask after the meaning of being without presupposing that we do not already know it? Otherwise, how would the appropriateness of the response be measured?

How will you look for it, Socrates, when you do not know at all what it is? How will you aim to search for something you do not know at all? If you should meet it, how will you know that this is the thing that you did not know? (Cooper and Hutchinson 880).

As a seeking, the questioning needs prior guidance from what it seeks. The meaning of being must therefore already be available to us in a certain way ... But already when we ask, 'What is being [sic]?' we stand in an understanding of the 'is' without being able to determine conceptually what the 'is' means (Heidegger 5).

It is not clear that Plato's answer to Meno's challenge is adequate, as he enters with his reply into "divine matters." The paradox remains a formidable one. Heidegger too believes that we must already possess some understanding of the meaning of being in order even to inquire into what that meaning is. At the same time, what is the

significance of the qualification that yet we are unable to ‘determine conceptually what the ‘is’ means’?

But at the same time, could not the opposite point be equally valid: that to search for anything, such as the meaning of being, indicates precisely that such an understanding is lacking? We find this argument in Plato’s *Symposium* as regards the search for love: that desire presupposes that one is in need of what one desires. As Socrates queries, “...ask yourself whether it’s *necessary* that this be so: a thing that desires desires something of which it is in need; otherwise, if it were not in need, it would not desire it” (Cooper and Hutchinson 482). By the same token, for the one that asks the question, is the meaning of being not something that is equally lacking an answer?

If we put the two together, we find ourselves in the following dilemma: on the one hand we must already stand in an understanding relationship to that which we inquire after; on the other hand, in asking, that which we inquire after must nonetheless be absent to us in a significant way. How can both be true? Ultimately, Plato’s answer, delving as it does into divine matters, is predicated on a fracturing of the world into appearance and reality. It delimits the scope of the dilemma to the epistemic limitations of the inquiring subject. In doing so, Plato’s explanation must mediate between the reality of the meaning of being and the subjective experience of the inquiring subject who experiences the dilemma.

Heidegger, like Plato, also seeks to answer the question. But what is particularly interesting about Heidegger’s answer to the question is that whereas Plato’s answer

entails certain epistemic and metaphysical significance, Heidegger's answer provides an interpretation of the kind of being that finds itself in this kind of epistemic situation, turning an epistemic question into an ontological one. He grounds the truth of the epistemic dilemma in the relationship between the meaning of being in general, and what it means to exist *qua* human being, or as he defines it in *Being and Time*—Dasein. As a result, his approach has consequence both for the meaning of being in general, and also for what it means to be a human being.

The difference in Heidegger's approach cannot be understated, and constitutes a large part of the reason why he considers himself a departure from the tradition in western philosophy coming down from Plato. This departure, put plainly, is a departure from conceiving the meaning of being on the basis of objective presence. Instead of assuming that Dasein's epistemic dilemma is caused by a limited epistemic perspective, why not assume that the epistemic dilemma suggests something inherent to the very nature of the meaning of being? The fact that one already has an understanding of the meaning of being, and yet does not, is appropriated into the meaning of being itself.

But to make the meaning of being a dilemma seems to deprive of it of a principle of stability upon which it is grounded. Is being therefore nothing? Or if it is something, but ungrounded, then it must be attached to some principle that explains a logical movement or development. And yet, as we have seen, the one horn of the dilemma already suggests that it belongs to Dasein to have an understanding of the meaning of being, albeit unclarified. What grounds this understanding? Where does this understanding of being derive from if not from the meaning of being itself? It is here that

Dasein steps into the forefront of the question of the meaning of being and the analytic that unfolds in *Being and Time*. If the being of Dasein can be clarified in the manner in which it moves already in an understanding of being, then it could be possible to free an answer to the understanding of being in general.

We are *looking* for the answer to the question of the meaning of being in general, and above all the possibility of radically developing this basic question of all ontology. But freeing the horizon in which something like being in general becomes intelligible amounts to clarifying the possibility of the understanding of being in general, an understanding which itself belongs to the constitution of that being which we call Dasein. The understanding of being, however, cannot be *radically* clarified as an essential factor in the being of Dasein, unless the being to whose being it belongs has been *primordially* interpreted in itself with regard to its being (Heidegger 213-214).

According to Heidegger, the question concerning the meaning of being must take a detour through the analytic of Dasein as its ground. But as a consequence for the central question of the text—the meaning of being—the detour through Dasein radically calls into question what kind of answer is possible. Depending on what grounds Dasein’s understanding of being, this might delimit the possibility that a solution to the question of the meaning of being in general is possible. For Heidegger, the thought is that in trying to appropriate the dilemma into the ontology of Dasein, and grounding it there, the very thing he is after—the meaning of being—will precipitate out.

The epistemic dilemma, therefore, is no longer a problem at all, but rather justified according to the human way of being, and ultimately the meaning of being itself. To be in this existential situation, according to Heidegger, is what it means to *exist*. But what in fact justifies Heidegger’s approach to begin with? Why should philosophy be orientated towards an appropriation of the dilemma into an ontological

answer? Why not a cosmological answer like Plato's that accommodates the existence of the dilemma by explaining it in terms of a more encompassing reality? Under what prejudice is Heidegger formulating his position? Why should fundamental ontology take an existential turn through a primordial interpretation of Dasein?

2.2. Justification of the approach

In an essay entitled *Indication of the Hermeneutical Situation* from a course held in 1922, Heidegger writes:

All interpretations in the field of the history of philosophy, as well as in those other fields that strive—over against problem-historical 'constructions'—not to read anything into the texts, must admit that they too read into the texts, only they do so without orientation and with conceptual tools from the most disparate and uncontrollable sources (Figal 40).

For Heidegger, questions such as what the meaning of being is do not take shape in a vacuum, but rather belong as objects of philosophical research to the history of philosophy in which they move and develop. It is no small coincidence that it is a line from Plato's *Sophist* on what the meaning of being is that introduces *Being and Time*, as it is out of and against this tradition that Heidegger's effort takes on its significance.

Heidegger reminds us that all interpretations of the past 'must admit that they too read into the texts'—that they have a point of view that can be made transparent. In taking up the question of the meaning of being, Heidegger too moves within his point of view in interpreting the tradition and giving his contribution. We can make sense of the particular approach that Heidegger takes and the solutions that it leads him to by making transparent those principles that guide his effort. The two intertwined pillars of his

thought that lead him to the analytic of Dasein as the chosen path for fundamental ontology are phenomenology and hermeneutics. In appealing to both phenomenology and hermeneutics, Heidegger must be distinguished from his predecessors by his fundamentally distinctive appropriation of these traditions.

2.3 Phenomenology

To begin with, Heidegger's phenomenology must be distinguished from Husserl's. As Taylor Carman points out, "Common to Husserl and Heidegger, then, there is hardly a 'principle' of phenomenology worthy of the name, apart from their shared commitment to a philosophical program of concrete description, as opposed to hypothesis and explanation" (Guignon 116). Both Husserl and Heidegger believe that philosophy begins from the description of how phenomena are actually experienced as the grounds of the validity of any conclusions. Heidegger, in discussing what phenomenology means in the introduction to *Being and Time*, even goes so far as to repeat Husserl's maxim, "To the things themselves!" (Heidegger 34). But what this means for Heidegger turns out to be something very different than what it means for Husserl.

Husserl's phenomenology tries to give a rigorous descriptive means of understanding subjective experience for the sake of being able to ground objective claims about the world. Phenomenology, starting from the content of conscious experience, tries to turn a mirror to the structures of the intentional apprehension of the world so as to be able to ground scientific and philosophical inquiry on a transcendental foundation of how consciousness structures our experience. The route to objective knowledge necessarily must be derived from an understanding of the intentional content

of experience, not from the natural attitude that simply assumes the objectivity of empirical data and therefore the empirical sciences. When defining what a phenomenon is for Husserl, they are by their nature subjective appearances.

Phenomena are, for Husserl, appearances, which is to say the contents of or in consciousness, not the things themselves appearing to consciousness. Phenomena are subjective, and phenomenology is essentially an inquiry into the nature of subjectivity in its own right, in strict distinction from the objective entities and structures studied by the empirical and formal sciences, in abstraction from our experience of them (Guignon 100).

For Husserl, phenomenology, in direct inheritance of Kant's transcendental idealism, preserves the distinction between the appearance and the metaphysical reality. The 'things themselves' that phenomenology investigates are the appearances that belong to consciousness. Phenomenology, as the investigation of consciousness and its intentional attitudes, carries the possibility for Husserl of making the structure of consciousness transparent, thereby illuminating the ground of all empirical claims. Towards this end, Husserl believes phenomenology to be a descriptive endeavor with an epistemically foundational intent.

Heidegger, like Husserl, shares the starting impulse that philosophy must begin from the content of experience in the manner in which it is experienced. The principal difference will be that Heidegger, unlike Husserl, rejects the metaphysical assumption that the subjective and the objective are two distinct realities. For Heidegger, phenomena are not essentially subjective (Guignon 100). There is an interdependent relationship between how phenomena manifest in subjective experience and their reality. In classic appearance vs. reality metaphysics, there must be the distinction between the two or else

things as they are experienced will also be as they exist, collapsing semblance and truth into each other. For Heidegger, the category of a phenomenon replaces both the categories of appearance and reality and the *aporia* created by thinking in those opposed terms. Heidegger gives the following definition of a phenomenon:

Manifestly it is something that does not show itself initially and for the most part, something that is *concealed*, in contrast to what initially and for the most part does show itself. But at the same time it is something that essentially belongs to what initially and for the most part shows itself, indeed in such a way that it constitutes its meaning and ground (Heidegger 35).

In the concept of a phenomenon, we can see how the kernel of what belongs to the concepts of appearance and reality are both found together. There is what shows itself, which might be called the appearance, and what this showing conceals, which might be called the reality; however, what the showing conceals constitutes the meaning and ground of the showing, and yet this meaning and ground belongs to what shows itself. A difficult formulation to digest, one way to make sense of what a phenomenon is on Heidegger's account is through analogy to Aristotle. In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, we see that philosophic inquiry begins initially from the *doxa*, or common opinion. At the same time that the *doxa* form the basis for the analysis, they give way under philosophical investigation to a more essential formulation, which then becomes the basis of the truth of what was initially held in the opinion. The investigation proceeds on the basis of a deepening of the truth initially expressed in common opinion, but therefore never separate from those opinions that started the inquiry.

Likewise, in Heidegger, the designation 'phenomenon' captures both sides of the interdependent relationship between how the world is initially manifest in experience

and the resulting analysis that uncovers the meaning and ground of what shows itself. This unfolds in *Being and Time* through Dasein's everyday understanding from which Heidegger derives the existentials that constitute the meaning and ground of what shows itself initially in an everyday way. But without the appropriate distinction between appearance and reality, the scope of such an inquiry is not simply about the content of consciousness, but is meaningfully inquiring into the meaning and ground of beings *tout court*. Phenomenology for Heidegger, therefore, constitutes ontology: "As far as content goes, phenomenology is the science of the being of beings—ontology" (Heidegger 33). The concealed aspect of what shows itself that constitutes its meaning and ground is nothing short of the being of its being—the subject matter of ontology.

This creates a basis for understanding how a commitment to principles of a phenomenological investigation leads Heidegger to pursue the analytic of Dasein as the means of answering the question of the meaning of being. The phenomenon that shows itself initially is the fact that Dasein is in the epistemic situation of inquiring after the meaning of being yet already operating within an unclarified understanding of it. And every phenomenon shows itself as it is not and yet belongs to the showing. Both the having and the not possessing an understanding of being belong equally to the phenomenon as it shows itself. To take an explanation such as Plato offers with a two-tier reality of appearance and reality, the phenomenon as it shows itself becomes divorced from the actual reality of being, and then only a hypothetical metaphysical solution can relate the two back to each other again. If the essence of a

phenomenological approach is to make philosophical explanations adequate to the phenomena as they show themselves, then Plato's solution will certainly not suffice.

The closer we cleave to the phenomenon as it shows itself, the more phenomenologically adequate our inquiry becomes. In the introduction to *Being and Time*, Heidegger gives an explanation why this leads to Dasein becoming the focus of the inquiry into the meaning of being. In the first place, there is no such phenomenon as being itself that can be investigated: "Being is always the being of a being" (Heidegger 7). This means that there are ever only particular beings at our disposal as phenomena, never being in general. Therefore, our inquiry can only ever proceed by starting from a particular being. Given the method of a phenomenological approach just outlined, we already have our first reason for choosing Dasein—the being of human beings—as our being to inquire about; that is, Dasein just so happens to be the being that inquires into the meaning of being. We cannot as of yet assume that in asking the question of the meaning of being, that the answer to the question will be separable from the being to which the question phenomenally belongs. In essence, in choosing Dasein, we have an extra fitting layer of phenomenological appropriateness because we are including into our inquiry the very being that asks the question about being. By further inquiring into the situation of this being, we are delving deeper into the initial phenomenon as it shows itself, rather than treating the question as if the answer can be sought out in abstraction from the context in which it initially is manifest.

2.4 Hermeneutics

If we wished to sum up Heidegger's phenomenology in a word, it is perhaps the oft-repeated characterization that it is a 'hermeneutic phenomenology'. But as Jean Grondin points out, Heidegger's own occasional reference to hermeneutics in *Being and Time* offers little in the way of a robust understanding of his appropriation of that term.

Yet, because *Being and Time* offered only meager remarks on this theme, it remained difficult to understand what Heidegger meant, exactly, by hermeneutics. Indeed, in *Being and Time*, a mere half-page at the end of Heidegger's otherwise elaborate Section 7 on phenomenology is devoted to situating and systematically defining hermeneutics as a philosophical program (Grondin 7).

But despite the short shrift Heidegger gives the elucidation of hermeneutics, situated as it is in his elaboration of phenomenology, perhaps the insights that explain hermeneutics as a philosophical program are already present in germ in the discussion of phenomenology. If we return to the definition of a phenomenon, we see that for every phenomenon there is a hidden aspect that is concealed in the initial showing, but that is yet the ground of the showing, and so must be unconcealed. And yet by saying it is by its very nature concealed, we forgo the possibility of ever grasping it transparently, there being always an act of unconcealment that separates what is the ground of the phenomenon from us. And the initiative towards the unconcealment of phenomena Heidegger calls the 'interpretation'. Every phenomenon must be interpreted, and therefore the aim of phenomenology is in trying to interpret the phenomena such as to uncover their ground: "From the investigation itself we shall see that the methodological meaning of phenomenological description is *interpretation*" (Heidegger 33).

The notion that phenomenological description is interpretation is at the same time a disavowal that phenomenology is a purely descriptive endeavor. There is no transcendental position that achieves the transparency of phenomena—no claim to objective knowledge that can be reached. Heidegger situates Dasein caught in the middle of his definition of a phenomenon between what is showing itself and what is concealed that constitutes its meaning and ground. But this place is neither one of subjectivity nor of objectivity. What is bracketed is not something merely subjective, and what is derived is nothing purely objective.

Drawing once again on our analogy to Aristotle, consider that the starting point of common opinion can neither be said to be true or false, although it certainly does not provide the best account. But if the subsequent analysis provides a better account, can the insights derived be evaluated for their truth separately from those initial appeals to common sense? What sense is there in entertaining the truth of the statement that the human good is *eudaimonia* independently of the common sense ethos that creates the background of its intelligibility? Likewise, in Heidegger, the starting point of Dasein's everydayness will not be separable from the more primordial existentials that will be derived such as angst, death, guilt, conscience.

But if phenomenological description is interpretation, Heidegger perhaps makes a claim with stronger emphasis a few lines later when he writes that "Phenomenology of Dasein is *hermeneutics* in the original signification of that word, which designates the work of interpretation" (Heidegger 33). To a certain extent we can only speculate what the 'original signification' of hermeneutics is meant to refer to exactly. But Heidegger

goes on to write that the hermeneutic of Dasein will provide both "...the condition of the possibility of every ontological investigation," as well as "...the roots of what can be called 'hermeneutics' only in a derivative sense: the methodology of the historical humanistic disciplines" (Heidegger 33). If we take a step in the direction of a phenomenology of Dasein we can begin to understand the further significance it might have over and above other objects for investigation that lends credence to its designation as an original hermeneutics.

Our first observation in a phenomenology of Dasein was that Dasein asks the question of the meaning of being. Our second observation was that Dasein already understands something of being. This capacity for understanding is itself an important ontological claim of the phenomenological description of Dasein. Because the nature of phenomenological description is not simply epistemic, but fundamentally the work of ontology, defining the being of Dasein as understanding means that it is interpretive and therefore ontological in its very nature: "*Understanding of being is itself a determination of being of Dasein.* The ontic distinction of Dasein lies in the fact that it is ontological" (Heidegger 10). To be ontological means both to relate to phenomena in terms of the category of being—i.e. to say of anything that it 'is'—and also to say of oneself in what way one 'is'.

When Dasein understands phenomena other than itself, it can still make a partial foundational claim for the direction of the interpretation because the unconcealment belongs to how the phenomena initially show themselves through a pre-reflective engagement. The basis of this understanding, as is elaborated in the notion of being-in-

the-world, will be Dasein's practical life. But how does this stand when the phenomenological inquiry becomes reflexive, when Dasein engages in an interpretation of its own being? How does the phenomenon initially show itself? What guides the inquiry?

In order to understand the being that understands, the reflexivity of the task cannot direct the inquiry back onto any phenomenal basis. Dasein cannot wait for its being to show itself in order to be unconcealed, because it is its own activity of unconcealment that constitutes the showing of its being as an understanding being. It is not the various pre-reflective activities that Dasein engages in that form the basis of a phenomenological investigation into its being, but rather the understanding that makes sense of those activities. To provide an example, whereas the basis of our understanding of a hammer is pre-reflectively grounded in its usefulness for hammering, a similar understanding of Dasein engaged in hammering cannot equally be said to be grounded in its activity of hammering. Rather, one must look to the understanding that guides hammering—e.g. that of building a home—in order to understand what the being of Dasein is about. Therefore, an understanding of the being of Dasein has no other basis than its own understanding.

Thus it is constitutive of the being of Dasein to have, in its very being, a relation of being to this being. And this in turn means that Dasein understands itself in its being in some way and with some explicitness. It is proper to this being that it be disclosed to itself with and through its being (Heidegger 10).

The being of Dasein is determined in and through its understanding. And because the phenomenological investigation thrusts the inquiry onto Dasein's understanding, this

puts Dasein in a position of some transparency in understanding its being. Dasein ‘understands itself in its being in some way and with some explicitness’.

But this transparency is not at the same time an understanding of the meaning of its being. Heidegger writes, “To be ontological does not yet mean to develop ontology. Thus if we reserve the term ontology for the explicit, theoretical question of the meaning of beings, the intended ontological character of Dasein is to be designated as pre-ontological” (Heidegger 10). As a question, the meaning of being is a kind of interpretation that belongs to ontology, or the theory of being, which still requires that Dasein engages in a phenomenological description of understanding, the same as with the investigation of any other phenomenon.

Nevertheless, this creates a special opportunity in choosing Dasein as the being to investigate in the question concerning the meaning of being. For every other being unlike Dasein, if it were to be chosen as the subject of the inquiry into the meaning of being, there would be a myriad of ways of unconcealing its being. A tree, for example, can be interpreted in terms of its biology, its aesthetics, its utility, or its divinity, to name a few possibilities. These all represent different *ontic* ways of understanding what the being of the tree consists in. But which one of these many ways sufficiently gets at the meaning of the tree? If the proper ontological perspective is not secured in our analysis, the results for the meaning of being would not be sufficiently ontologically grounded. Therefore, with any other being unlike Dasein, we have the problem then of how to ensure that the analysis is ontological.

However, with Dasein the same problem does not exist. The fact that Dasein's ontic distinction is that it is ontological—that its being is disclosed in its understanding—means that the meaning of its being can never be identified with whatever understanding of itself it has achieved, because then the meaning of its being would change according with the development or decay of its understanding.

Not only does an understanding of being belong to Dasein, but this understanding also develops or decays according to the actual manner of being of Dasein at any given time; for this reason it has a wealth of interpretations at its disposal (Heidegger 14).

At the same time that no interpretation can validly be based on the specific content of its self-understanding, this also implies that the meaning of its being must show itself somehow through every self-understanding. This has the effect of pushing the investigation of its being into the structure of its understanding rather than what the understanding consists in. And because such an investigation does not need to secure a specific understanding in order to be ontological, a sound basis for an investigation concerning the meaning of its being is available to it at all times. Therefore, the principal reason to choose Dasein on the basis of its original hermeneutic quality is the fact that we are not faced with the problem of knowing whether the basis for our understanding is ontological and not simply ontic.

This understanding relationship to its being that defines Dasein perhaps explains why phenomenology of Dasein is hermeneutics 'in the original signification of that word'. Because phenomenology of Dasein is the interpretation of understanding, it is not phenomenal in its orientation---at its basis is Dasein's understanding, which itself

changes with Dasein. And as we shall see in our formal exegesis of interpretation, the relationship of interpretation to understanding is such that interpretation is "...the development of possibilities projected in understanding" (Heidegger 139). Therefore, the motive force which explains the changing basis and development of understanding is internal to it. Phenomenology of Dasein becomes the continual development of understanding, its direction not determined from below by a phenomenal basis, but rather pulled along from above by interpretation.

This reciprocity between understanding and interpretation is often characterized as the hermeneutic circle. The point for Heidegger, of course, "...is not to get out of the circle, but to get in it in the right way" (Heidegger 143). For Heidegger, a circle in understanding explains how it is that Dasein can find itself in between having yet seeking an understanding of the meaning of being. Understanding becomes the basis for interpretation, which develops understanding, sowing the ground for new interpretation, *ad infinitum*. But more than simply applying to the question of the meaning of being, this model becomes the basis for how Dasein understands being from the most basic everyday coping in the world, the most basic acknowledgement that "the sky *is* blue," all the way to the more highly specialized ways of knowing expressed in the sciences. In articulating this most primordial structure of how Dasein as ontological knows being, the significance of the phenomenology of Dasein rightfully becomes an investigation into the condition of the possibility of every ontological investigation.

Hermeneutics as a philosophical discipline gained ground before Heidegger as the attempt to articulate a methodology appropriate to the human sciences. For example,

what kind of method is appropriate for grounding historical claims as opposed to the claims of the natural sciences? As such, philosophical hermeneutics in its nascent form had an entirely epistemological purview. In *Being and Time* we see many of those insights such as the fore-structure of understanding incorporated to elaborate Dasein's situatedness in the hermeneutic circle. But taken together with the insight that phenomenological description is ontology, the crucial difference that separates Heidegger's appropriation of hermeneutics from that of his predecessors is that hermeneutics under Heidegger becomes ontological. In divesting understanding of its purely epistemic character, Dasein invariably becomes the center for the unconcealment of being.

2.5 Conclusion to justification of the approach

The scope of the discussion here of phenomenology and hermeneutics as they factor into the project of *Being and Time* was limited from the start by the question of what justifies answering the question of the meaning of being through an ontological investigation of Dasein. Heidegger offers a summation of the reasons why Dasein takes priority.

Dasein accordingly takes priority in several ways over all other beings. The first priority is an *ontic* one: this being is defined in its being by existence. The second priority is an *ontological one*: on the basis of its determination as existence Dasein is in itself 'ontological.' But just as originally Dasein possesses—in a manner constitutive of its understanding of existence—an understanding of the being of all beings unlike itself. Dasein therefore has its third priority as the ontic-ontological condition of the possibility of all ontologies. Dasein has proven to be what, before all other beings, is ontologically the primary being to be interrogated (Heidegger 11).

All these reasons have variously been produced in our analysis. First, following Heidegger's phenomenological methodology, because being itself is not available as a subject for analysis, the investigation must proceed from a particular being, and all the more appropriate then to choose the being that just so happens to pose the question: "Thus to work out the question of being means to make a being—one who questions—transparent in its being" (Heidegger 6). The ontic priority and the ontological are really the same reason approached from two different directions, as Dasein's ontic distinction is that it is ontological. The premise from which *Being and Time* begins—that "*The 'essence' of Dasein lies in its existence*"—makes sense only as an ontological claim derived by combining: the notion that phenomenological description is both ontology and interpretation; and, the initial phenomenological description of Dasein as a being that understands and questions being (Heidegger 40). Taken together with its reflexive implications for self-understanding, only then does it become apparent that "The 'essence' of this being lies in its to be" (Heidegger 39). The ontological priority that Dasein is disclosive of being is merely a repetition of the insights that prop up the ontic priority to begin with. Finally, the ontic-ontological priority is a necessary consequence of the fact that the being of Dasein is ontological. If ontology is possible only through Dasein, then the meaning of any being can only be determined through Dasein as the inquiring agent; therefore, certainly it makes most sense to interrogate the being through which such meaning can be determined. Otherwise, the meaning of a being other than Dasein will always be somehow relative to Dasein as the inquiring agent, and the

analysis will never achieve the necessary transcendental point of view to reach the meaning of being in general.

Although the hermeneutic insights play a critical role in the elaboration of what it means for Dasein to be an understanding being, all of the reasons why Dasein takes priority can be unpacked from the phenomenological claims, and perhaps even more reducibly, simply the definition of a phenomenon. Phenomenology becomes ontology because a phenomenon recognizes no distinction between subjective and objective; phenomenology becomes interpretive because a phenomenon has a concealed ground that belongs to how the phenomenon shows itself. But a phenomenon is itself a non-entity without positing a being that has the experience of it. Therefore, Dasein is lurking in the background even in the definition of a phenomenon. And if one reflexively applies those insights belonging to a phenomenon to the being that is invariably situated in the understanding experience of them, the consequences that make Dasein a priority in the question concerning the meaning of being naturally unfold.

2.6 Authenticity

Of all the reasons that make Dasein a priority in the question concerning the meaning of being, the one that gives the inquiry a secure basis is that fact that because Dasein's ontic distinction is that it is ontological, it will both be the case that no particular ontic disclosure will be adequate to define the meaning of its being, while also being the case that any ontic disclosure will be an equally adequate basis for inquiring into the meaning of its being. Any disclosure of its being is a testament to its being ontological in its being; but therefore, the analysis cannot stop at any particular disclosure, but must find a

way to capture Dasein in its being as understanding being. This means we already possess a good indication of what an ontological analysis of Dasein will produce. An ontological analysis of Dasein must present an understanding of Dasein that is not reducible to the results of any ontic investigation, but rather transcends them. The meaning of Dasein must manifest the transcendent structure of self-understanding and not be reducible to any one ontic disclosure.

However, to be clear, this does not mean that all ontic beginnings will be equally productive for the sake of the analytic: “The possibility of understanding the being of this being stands and falls with the secure accomplishment of the correct presentation of this being” (Heidegger 41). If the goal of an ontological analysis is to capture the existentials that pertain to Dasein’s being in general, then it is little wonder that Heidegger chooses Dasein’s average everydayness as the starting point for the investigation into its being.

And although the fact that Dasein is ontological creates a special opportunity for choosing Dasein as the being to investigate into the meaning of being, it also creates a unique liability for Dasein to fulfill in this regards. In the first place, we must recognize that nothing has yet been proven. The relatively radical phenomenological suggestion that Dasein is ontological in its being has not been proven. Nor is it sufficient that an ontological analysis could prove by means of a transcendental deduction from the fact that Dasein understands itself in many ways that it is ontological by virtue of this, and not simply lacking in self-understanding (i.e. epistemically deficient in regards to its being). The standard of proof must be higher, and much hinges on this. If the meaning of

being in general is to be based on the meaning of the being of Dasein, it is essential that the analytic of Dasein finds the proper attestation of its truth.

But what kind of proof is appropriate? The transcendental deduction is insufficient as a manner of proof because it does nothing to dissuade us from the alternate Platonic explanation that Dasein has its being in the manner of objective presence, but it lacks appropriate knowledge about it. But the fact that Dasein is ontological creates its own burden of proof. As part of what it means to be ontological, the development of Dasein's understanding occurs according to a motive force internal to it as opposed to a principle external to it. This seems necessary if Dasein is truly to be ontological in its being—change must come from within. If this is true, there will be identifiable in Dasein's existence the existentiell possibility that captures the moment when Dasein transcends its self-understanding. This possibility will be the attestation of the fact that Dasein's being is in fact ontological. This possibility Heidegger will call Dasein's *authenticity*. By showing how it is possible that Dasein can be authentic, Heidegger wishes to give credence to the phenomenological description of Dasein and the direction he takes to provide an answer to the meaning of being.

But the nature of the proof is limited by the fact that because Dasein's being transcends whatever is disclosed in its self-understanding, what constitutes an authentic possibility for its being can never be grounded within the ontic framework of a particular disclosure. Because Dasein is ontological, what it means to be this being is pushed away from definite ways in which it has its being into the structure of its self-understanding. As a result, the being of Dasein is identified with certain existentials rather than

existentiells. Of course, existence itself takes place only in terms of definite existentiell possibilities. Authenticity, too, is an existentiell possibility. But it is impossible for the proof to provide a description of a concrete existentiell way Dasein has its being in order to show what it means to be authentic, it can only outline the existential conditions of its happening. Heidegger's 'proof' is more in showing the coherence of his thinking through the keystone that is Dasein's authenticity.

2.7 Conclusions

As the analysis of authenticity moves forward, two important conclusions from the previous discussion should be kept in mind. The first is the definition of authenticity that was gained as it stands relative to the project. Authenticity turns out to be the possibility that Dasein can show in an existentiell manifestation that it is ontological in its very being. Authenticity is a kind of proof that serves an ontological function, separate from the normal normative connotations that perhaps the notion of what it means to be 'authentic' normally carries. With the ontological function that defines authenticity always in mind, it will be easier to navigate the various descriptive characterizations of authenticity that Heidegger uses throughout *Being and Time* that subsequently become the focus of the inquiry in the following chapters into clarifying the meaning of authenticity.

But if Heidegger is correct in that the meaning of the being of Dasein has a self-transcendent structure, the second important conclusion will be that it is impossible to identify what it means to be authentic by fixing it relative to any concrete existentiell possibility for being. Although authenticity is supposed to be an existentiell

manifestation of the meaning of Dasein's being, this nonetheless cannot point to any one way of being in the world. That is because transcendence cannot be brought to objective presence. This effectively limits the nature of the proof and the existentiell manifestation to simply grounding the possibility of an existentiell attestation of authenticity. This removes the discussion of authenticity as an existential possibility from the concrete conditions of its happening. This becomes relevant especially for the discussion of being-toward-death upon which the existential possibility of an existentiell attestation is grounded. It is there that whether or not Heidegger is presenting a possible existentiell guideline for becoming authentic through an anticipation of dying becomes a central question for clarifying the meaning of authenticity.

CHAPTER III

EXEGESIS

3.1 Overture

The definition of authenticity gained in Chapter II was the existentiell possibility that Dasein can manifest the transcendent structure of self-understanding implied by its ontological constitution. Whether such a possibility can be demonstrated is important for confirming the phenomenological description of Dasein and ultimately the answer to the question of the meaning of being. This definition was gained by situating the meaning of authenticity within the project as a whole. Curiously enough, why authenticity is important for the project is not something that Heidegger himself offers an account of at all in *Being and Time*. The introduction, which was written after the completion of the main text, offers a clarification of the aim of the project, including why Dasein takes priority in the question of the meaning of being, but fails to mention authenticity at all.

Heidegger formally introduces authenticity in the opening pages of division I, Chapter I. There, Heidegger simply tells us that two kinds of being belong to Dasein—authenticity and inauthenticity—and that “...these expressions are terminologically chosen in the strictest sense of the word...” (SZ, 40). The German word Heidegger uses which is translated as authenticity is *eigenlichkeit*, which has a literal meaning of what is one’s own, or what is proper to one’s self. *Eigen* means “own” or “proper.” Adding *-lich* turns it into the noun form “ownness” or what is translated in *Being and Time* as “authentic.” Adding *-keit* modifies it into “authenticness” or what is rendered in the text

as “authenticity.” Heidegger tells us to take the use of “authenticity” in the strictest sense of its meaning. This means a possibility that Dasein can be its own, or “...belong to itself...” (Heidegger 40).

Because the meaning of authenticity is not situated in the project as a whole, it is perhaps little wonder then that so much disparity occurs between commentators on *Being and Time* on what it means exactly to be authentic. What it means to belong to one’s self is in need of further clarification. And throughout *Being and Time* there are defining statements that give us an indication of what qualifies an authentic possibility for being leading up to anticipatory resoluteness in division II. Taken together, these statements lend to the interpretation of authenticity strong subjectivistic-individualistic qualities.

The first of these statements is found at the very beginning of *Being and Time*, where along with the priority of existence over essence, Dasein has “the character of *always-being-my-own-being* [*Jemeinigkeit*]” as one of two founding characteristics of Dasein (Heidegger 40). And furthermore, that “The two kinds of being of *authenticity* and *inauthenticity*... are based on the fact that Dasein is in general determined by always being-mine” (Heidegger 40). So, initially, authenticity as a possibility is grounded in a self-referential property that belongs to Dasein. This seems to suggest that there are many Dasein, that we are each are own Dasein, and that authenticity/inauthenticity belongs personally to each of our own realms of possibilities.

The second indication that authenticity has strong subjectivistic-individualistic qualities is the many statements describing inauthenticity in division I, and what they

conversely imply about authenticity. In division I, Heidegger's focus is mainly to describe inauthentic Dasein, also referred to as Dasein's average everydayness. In these descriptions, inauthenticity is identified with being lost in an anonymous social normativity called the they (*das man*): "The self of everyday Dasein is the *they-self* which we distinguish from the *authentic self*, the self which has explicitly grasped itself. As the they-self, Dasein is *dispersed* in the they and must first find itself" (Heidegger 121). In the difference between authenticity and inauthenticity, Heidegger establishes the dichotomy between the self-ownership that characterizes authenticity and the dissolution in Dasein's relationships with others that characterizes inauthenticity. Inauthenticity is a kind of lost absorption in the expectations for being a self that speak to us from out of our relationships with others. "Inauthenticity... constitutes precisely a distinctive kind of being-in-the-world which is completely taken in by the world and the *Mitdasein* of the others in the they" (Heidegger 164).

It is not until division II that Heidegger begins to outline the positive constitution of an authentic Dasein. From division I we have the one positive criterion that authentic Dasein is "...the self which has explicitly grasped itself" (Heidegger 121). Division II starts by declaring that "The inadequacy of the hermeneutical situation from which the foregoing analysis originated must be overcome" (Heidegger 219). That is due to the fact that the scope of division I was limited to an analysis of Dasein in its inauthentic mode—its average everydayness. But in order to fulfill the intention of the project, the attestation of an authentic possibility for being must be established: "We are looking for an authentic potentiality-of-being of Dasein that is attested by Dasein itself in its

existentiell possibility” (Heidegger 247). In order to do this, first Heidegger establishes the grounds for the ontological possibility of authenticity in the discussion of anticipation, or being-toward-death. Authenticity is possible through death as one’s ownmost possibility, and through being-toward-death Dasein has the opportunity to take a stance on existence that is its own.

Anticipation lets Dasein understand that it has to take over solely from itself the potentiality-of-being in which it is concerned absolutely about its ownmost being. Death does not just ‘belong’ in an undifferentiated way to one’s own Dasein, but it *lays claim* on it as something *individual*. The nonrelational character of death understood in anticipation individualizes Dasein down to itself. This individualizing is a way in which the ‘there’ is disclosed for existence. It reveals the fact that any being-together-with what is taken care of and any being-with the others fails when one’s ownmost potentiality-of-being is at stake. Dasein can *authentically* be itself only when it makes that possible of its own accord (Heidegger 243).

This paragraph, along with the rest of division II, Chapter I, carries some of the strongest subjectivistic-individualistic language in *Being and Time*. Here we see that anticipation of death ‘individualizes Dasein to itself,’ and even more importantly perhaps, Dasein’s relationships to others fail to provide a basis for Dasein’s authentic possibility to be itself.

Between mineness, the characterization of inauthenticity, and the positive ontological characterization of authenticity as anticipation, we have a strong implication in *Being and Time* of authenticity’s subjectivistic-individualistic qualities. Being-with others also has its authentic possibilities, but Heidegger goes so far as to say that these possibilities are predicated on first authentically being a self. He writes, “It is from the authentic being a self of resoluteness that authentic being-with-one-another first

arises...” (Heidegger 274). This lends the impression that the primordial meaning of authenticity is a unique possibility for the individual, and only derivatively can being-with others be authentic when such authentic individuals join together.

3.2 Two challenges

But in light of some of the other statements that Heidegger makes in *Being and Time*, there is a challenge in understanding how these subjectivistic-individualistic qualities cohere with other parts of the text, especially Dasein’s relationship to other Dasein. At the end of *Being and Time*, in his discussion on historicity, Heidegger writes:

But if fateful Dasein essentially exists as being-in-the-world in being-with others, its occurrence is an occurrence-with and is determined as *destiny*... The fateful destiny of Dasein in and with its ‘generation’ constitutes the complete, authentic occurrence of Dasein” (Heidegger 352).

This passage suggests that a particular kind of relationship to other Dasein—a fateful destiny—is in some way constitutive of a ‘complete’ understanding of authenticity. But up until this point in division II, authenticity, with its subjectivistic-individualistic connotations, only seems to draw upon those existential structures that belong to being-in-the-world, especially Dasein’s being-toward-death. The other Dasein, insofar as they are even mentioned, are mainly brought up in terms of the anonymous they that is associated with inauthenticity. The limited mention of authentic being-with others, one in which for example Dasein can “leap ahead” of another Dasein in order to free it for its possibilities, can still be understood on the basis of a subjectivistic-individualistic account of what it means to be authentic (Heidegger 115). The problem with what Heidegger seems to imply with Dasein’s ‘fateful destiny’ with its generation is that there

is little indication in anticipatory resoluteness that in what it means to be authentic, Dasein is implicated together with all the other Dasein of its generation such that its authenticity hangs together with theirs.

At the same time, this is not completely unanticipated. It reminds us of Dasein's essential constitution as presented in division I, Chapter IV, that being-in-the-world is equiprimordial with being-with others. There, Heidegger writes, "By investigating in the direction of the phenomenon which allows us to answer the question of the who, we are led to structures of Dasein which are equiprimordial with being-in-the-world: being-with and the *Mitdasein*" (Heidegger 107). Because being-in-the-world and being-with others are equiprimordial phenomena, this seems to provide a basis for the belief that a complete understanding of Dasein's authenticity includes its being-with others in some constitutive way. And although it is an underdeveloped theme for much of *Being and Time*, there seems to be an existential understanding that comes out of Dasein's being-with-others that then gives social-historical dimensions to authenticity at the end of division II that cannot be accounted for by the subjectivistic-individualistic structures that are at the forefront of Heidegger's explanation of authenticity.

There is second challenge to our understanding of authenticity and the subjectivistic-individualistic qualities that seem to define it. This challenge concerns how Heidegger describes the way in which inauthentic Dasein constitutes our everyday existence. Heidegger is clear that Dasein, for the most part, remains inauthentic: "*Initially*, 'I' 'am' not in the sense of my own self, but I am the others in the mode of the they. In terms of the they, and as the they, I am initially 'given' to 'myself'. Initially,

Dasein is the they and for the most part it remains so” (Heidegger 121). To say that Dasein is ‘initially’ inauthentic is not to suggest that later on it is less so, but rather that Dasein, in its factual situation, is always for the most part inauthentic. Heidegger tells us that the reason that this is so has to do with how the they dominates interpretation, including Dasein’s self-interpretation: "...Dasein, which mostly remains concealed from itself in its authenticity on account of the public way of being interpreted of the they... " (Heidegger 178).

Interpretation, which is the development of Dasein’s possibilities, is the key existential for determining Dasein’s possibilities, and therefore, its authentic or inauthentic development. Since the they initially determines the different ways of interpretation that Dasein is introduced to in being-with others, this prevents Dasein from projecting itself onto its own authentic possibilities for being a self. Furthermore, Heidegger writes that “Dasein can never escape the everyday way of being interpreted into which Dasein has grown initially. All genuine understanding, interpreting and communication, rediscovery and new appropriation come about in it and out of it and against it” (Heidegger 159). The fact that Dasein can never escape the everyday way of interpreting its existence creates a point of tension for a subjectivistic-individualistic understanding of authenticity. How is Dasein supposed to realize any individualized possibilities for being a self when its very ability to develop those possibilities is conditioned by the dominance that the they has over interpretation?

So, in the first place, an overly subjective-individualistic emphasis for understanding authenticity has a difficulty in incorporating the social-historical claim

that authenticity could have something like a generational context to it; and in the second, the way in which interpretation is conditioned by inauthentic structures seems to conflict with the expectation that authenticity individualizes Dasein in any robust fashion. Perhaps then, in our attempt to make sense of what it means for authentic Dasein to belong to itself, it is insufficient or incomplete to only emphasize those subjectivistic-individualistic qualities that are at the forefront of the explanation in the text. In the very least, those qualities are not in themselves self-explanatory, but are in need of further clarification. To be sure, we have not yet even begun to ask the question of what such descriptions of authenticity can mean independent of a commonsense intuition about them. But from Heidegger we lack the appropriate clarifying remarks that would allow us to place these claims in proper perspective. What is needed is a way of binding the scope of what authenticity can and cannot mean in a way that is more rigorous than what the various descriptions themselves leave open to interpretation. It is therefore necessary to ground our understanding of authenticity somehow on a textual basis.

But we are not completely without a direction in this endeavor. Because Heidegger offers us a fairly comprehensive ontological analysis of Dasein, it is possible to limit the scope of the interpretation of what authenticity can mean within those existential structures that explain how Dasein is in the world in general. Unlike a metaphysically grounded understanding of the being of human being, Heidegger tells us from the start that Dasein is being-in-the-world and that all of its existential features can be derived from that context: "*Dasein is its disclosure*" (Heidegger 125). Therefore, a

certain transparency is possible through an analysis of the way in which Dasein is its disclosure that can provide appropriate insight into the clarification of Dasein's authenticity.

It is in division I that Heidegger lays the groundwork for what it means to exist *qua* Dasein. The sections that are particularly illuminating in this regards are those that describe what the being-in of being-in-the-world means. In division I, Chapter V, Heidegger discusses being-in as such under the rubric of "The Existential Constitution of the There." What is covered in these sections concerns the existential structures of Dasein's existentiell existence, providing insight into how is it that Dasein is "there" in the world.

For an understanding of authenticity this can be relevant because authenticity is an existentiell possibility. And since "The Existential Constitution of the There" provides the existentials of every existentiell being-in, authentic or inauthentic, what limits our understanding of what it means to be in the world will equally narrow the scope of understanding authentic or inauthentic being-in-the-world as well. The descriptive qualities identified with authentic and inauthentic Dasein will then have a basis in the transparency of the existential structures that delineate Dasein's existentiell existence.

What we are interested in when we inquire into the being-in, or the "Da" of "Dasein," has three existential parts that phenomenally account for the way in which Dasein is in the world: attunement, understanding, and discourse. Being-in reveals itself phenomenally through Dasein's attunement and understanding, both of which are "...

equiprimordially determined by discourse” (Heidegger 126). For our purposes, what will be most relevant of these three existentials is understanding, its possible development in interpretation, and the discourse that determines it.

3.3 Understanding

The existential of understanding was first introduced in an informal way as the fact that it belongs to Dasein to understand something of being. This was developed further into an ontological statement with the deeper implication that understanding is not simply epistemic, but has ontological significance as the disclosure of being. In the discussion of how Dasein is there in the world, understanding is given formal elaboration in this fundamental role of constituting Dasein in terms of its possibilities for being a self.

In understanding as an existential, the thing we are able to do is not a what, but being as existing. The mode of being of Dasein as a potentiality of being lies existentially in understanding. Dasein is not something objectively present which then has as an addition the ability to do something, but is rather primarily being-possible. Dasein is always what it can be and how it is its possibility (Heidegger 134).

How Dasein understands itself equates to how it has disclosed its being. This is neither an abstract theorizing of its possibilities to be or not to be itself, nor is it necessary that Dasein has conceptually grasped its possibilities at all. As Jean Grondin explains, “This everyday understanding, Heidegger observes, almost always remains implicit. As a ‘mode of being’ it is not consciously thematized. We live too much within it for it to need to be made explicit” (Grondin 94). In understanding, Dasein simply knows what to do in the world. One understands that the door is for opening, that the bus will take one downtown, or that the paper will provide the latest news. This kind of understanding,

embedded in Dasein's everyday coping, is the basic building blocks of the disclosure of self and world that is constitutive of being-in-the-world. What Dasein understands, initially and for the most part, are not statements about the world, but rather its possibilities for being in the world.

Behind the existential of understanding is the essential aspect of Dasein's being that it "exists" rather than it "is." Contrary to what is the case of an innerworldly being, Dasein cannot be defined according to objectively present qualities—to do so would make use of category distinctions that belong to a metaphysic of presence. For Heidegger, the Aristotelian categories are inappropriate to define existence: "Beings are a *who* (existence) or else a *what* (objective presence in the broadest sense)" (Heidegger 42). Dasein is a *who* in this regards, and therefore the "what" of its being is disclosed in active predicates of "be-ing" instead of passive ones of substantiality. That is why the analytic of Dasein proceeds according to existentials, not categories. Understanding, along with the rest of the existentials, carries this connotation of an engaged present activity in defining the structure of Dasein's being-in-the-world.

Since understanding is not epistemic, but disclosive of being, what it produces is not propositions but rather possible ways of existing concretely in the world. And the fact that understanding is parsed out in terms of possibility has significance on both the existentiell and the existential level of Dasein's existence. The first of these reflects the fact that Dasein "...has always already got itself into definite possibilities. As a potentiality for being which it *is*, it has let some go by; it constantly adopts the possibilities of its being, grasps them, and goes astray" (Heidegger 135). As it moves

through life, possibilities for being are chosen, adopted, rejected, seized upon, and these constitute the defining content of Dasein's existentiell, factual existence. As an existing being, Dasein is already in definite possibilities for being.

However, if Dasein were nothing more than its concrete existentiell possibilities in any given situation, either its essence would be fixed to those possibilities, or any change it experienced in its possibilities would not originate of its own being, but would have to be a result of an external motive force. But what we are looking for is an attestation of the deeper existential essence of its being, confirmed by one of the initial statements of *Being and Time*, that "...Dasein is always essentially its possibility" (Heidegger 40). This is to be read literally: its possibility, not its various possibilities. The fact that Dasein is its possibility is the necessary condition for the fact that it can transition through various existentiell possibilities and is not defined essentially through any of them. The deeper existential truth that allows for Dasein to be its possibilities existentially is the fact that Dasein is its possibility existentially. Disclosure in terms of possibility attests to Dasein's existential essence as potentiality. But concretely, as it is manifest in its disclosure, Dasein is always situated in definite possibilities existentially. It never finds itself hovering above its possibilities like a free-floating ego.

In terms of the project of making sense of authenticity, the fact that Dasein is its possibility existentially is what Heidegger is looking for an existentiell attestation of. Otherwise, Dasein's existence could be anchored to some *arche* that determines the way in which it transitions through various existentiell possibilities, and Heidegger could not rightfully claim that he has manifested his starting hypothesis that Dasein's essence is in

fact existence. But if authenticity is the task of bringing an existentiell attestation of the truth of existence, then the fact that Dasein is always situated existentially could make the project of authenticity problematic, because situated as it is always within existentiell disclosures of its being, its existential essence can never directly be foregrounded in an existentiell disclosure. To do so would mean to find the Archimedean point relative to the disclosure of existence in order to gain an objective grasp on it.

And yet, this difficulty is averted if we reflect on the ontological implication of the fact that possibility, not actuality, is what is disclosed in Dasein's understanding. What is possible is never necessary, and therefore never was. The worry that Dasein can never foreground its existential essence in an existentiell disclosure mistakenly attributes to Dasein's possibilities the quality of objective presence. The definite possibilities that constitute Dasein's disclosure are only definite in the sense that they are the ones that Dasein has gotten itself into, they are not definite in the sense of being substantial. The ground upon which possibilities are disclosed is not substantial being, but Dasein in the mode understanding being.

Therefore, when one looks to the heart of what it means to be a possibility—what constitutes the ground of its meaning—one finds the understanding being of Dasein that is holding up what is possible about its possibilities. This corroborates what was already recognized in the broader analysis of Heidegger's hermeneutics, that his phenomenology is fundamentally interpretative. Situated as Dasein is between what shows itself in a phenomenon and its concealed ground, that which Dasein understands becomes an interpretive act of what is possible about its being-in-the-world. This point is developed

in understanding as disclosure in terms of possibilities for being. In this way, understanding is fundamentally an interpretive act.

And this is also what makes the attestation of authenticity possible. Each disclosure already implies its existentiality. Therefore in authenticity, to foreground existentiality in an existentiell disclosure amounts to bringing out explicitly something which is already implied therein. Relating the ground of what a possibility is to Dasein's own understanding activity, Heidegger cannot help but make a circle. This circle reveals an opening that is present at the heart of all of Dasein's existentiell disclosures that is both an attestation of Dasein's existential essence, and that also accounts for how Dasein's existentiell disclosures develop from one another. The movement of this development, and how this development can explicitly foreground Dasein's existentiality, has its own explanation in interpretation.

3.4 Interpretation

In defining the possible project of authenticity, we began with an existentiell and an existential understanding of Dasein as its possibility. To that the notion of interpretation adds the third component that describes the relational circle between Dasein as possibility and Dasein as embedded in various possibilities. Interpretation is not its own existential. As was recognized already, all understanding is fundamentally interpretation. As a specific aspect of the existential of understanding to be highlighted, interpretation describes the development of understanding's possibilities.

As understanding, Dasein projects its being upon possibilities... The project of understanding has its own possibility of development. We shall call the development of understanding *interpretation*. In interpretation

understanding appropriates what it has understood in an understanding way... Interpretation is not the acknowledgment of what has been understood, but rather the development of possibilities projected in understanding (Heidegger 139).

In its familiar connotation, interpretation is the basis of all theoretical activity. For Heidegger, this is the meaning of interpretation in a derivative sense. Just as understanding discloses being-in-the-world largely in pre-conceptual possibilities—in the “...unthematic, circumspect absorption in the references constitutive for the handiness of the totality of useful things,” so too does the development of those possibilities in interpretation occur simply as adjustments in everyday coping (Heidegger 71). Heidegger writes, “The primordial act of interpretation lies not in a theoretical sentence, but in circumspectly and heedfully putting away or changing the inappropriate tool ‘without wasting words’” (Heidegger 147). In changing the inappropriate tool, what was understood—the tool’s inappropriateness —is taken up understandingly. This model for how interpretation functions is fundamentally the same one at work in theoretical activity as well.

To grasp the mechanics of interpretation, we begin with the fact that understanding has the character of project: “It projects the being of Dasein upon its for-the-sake-of-which just as primordially as upon significance as the worldliness of its actual world” (Heidegger 136). In disclosing its possibilities for being-in-the-world, what is projected in understanding is always two things: the world in terms of its significance, and Dasein in terms of its meaning. In the example of hammering, what is projected is the world as a related totality of significance that connects hammers to

materials to buildings. At the same time, what is also projected is that for-the-sake-of-which Dasein hammers—i.e. to build a shelter for example.

The for-the-sake-of-which constitutes what is meaningful about Dasein's possibilities. Therefore, meaning or intelligibility is also always projected in understanding. There is nothing to determine what is meaningful about Dasein's possibilities except Dasein itself. Dasein holds itself in a certain intelligibility which then teleologically determines what is possible about its possibilities and also therefore the referential significant totality of the world. Heidegger writes, "Only Dasein 'has' meaning in that the disclosedness of being-in-the-world can be 'fulfilled' through the beings discoverable in it. *Thus only Dasein can be meaningful or meaningless*" (Heidegger 142). It is the meaningfulness of Dasein that ultimately determines the project character of understanding. In changing the inappropriate tool, the for-the-sake-of-which is what ultimately guides how Dasein appropriates what is has understood in an understanding way.

The existential character of understanding as project also signifies the inertia that understanding carries. There is no neutral starting position from which Dasein ascertains its possibilities; interpretation has as its starting point that which Dasein already understands. This implicates the character of Dasein in the project of understanding as a thrown being, embedded in existentiell disclosures of being-in-the-world that already have their intelligibility. That which interpretation does is to bring that intelligibility to the fore and make it explicit.

Interpretation does not, so to speak, throw a 'significance' over what is nakedly objectively present and does not stick a value on it, but what is

encountered in the world is always already in a relevance which is disclosed in the understanding of world, a relevance which is made explicit by interpretation (Heidegger 140).

The fact that relevance must be made explicit suggests that meaning is more often than not only implicitly carried along with the possibility. Possibilities are meaningful in ways Dasein may grasp more or less in its existentiell situation. At the same time, to make the relevance disclosed in understanding explicit does not mean that this intelligibility is present substantiality within the possibilities. That which is simply there capable of being directly read off its possibilities Heidegger tells us, "...is nothing else than the self-evident, undisputed prejudice of the interpreter..." (Heidegger 141). The relevance of the world which Dasein makes explicit in interpretation reflects back on the meaningfulness in which Dasein holds itself. Therefore, the goal of interpretation is in fact in a sense to make the 'undisputed prejudice of the interpreter' explicit.

So, on the one hand, intelligibility is a definite part of any existentiell disclosure of Dasein. Insofar as Dasein is already embedded in definite possibilities for being, it has done so by projecting the meaning of its being in definite ways. This intelligibility is what can be made explicit by interpretation. But ultimately, how that relevance relates to its possibilities is not grounded in the possibilities, as if no other relevance were possible, but is rooted in the understanding that Dasein has projected. The bare possibilities themselves, insofar as one can speak of them at all in this way, are always phenomena the concealed ground of which Dasein must interpret. The fact that Dasein is thrown means that it has already done so, and because the disclosure of understanding has ontological import, the understanding it has already reached becomes a new

situation—a new phenomena that must be interpreted. When Dasein ‘appropriates what it has understood in an understanding way’, it is engaged in that process.

But with interpretation, Heidegger was supposed to have described the mechanism by which the development of possibilities in understanding occurs; but so far, the recognition of what interpretation does has been limited to making explicit the relevance of the world and therefore the meaningfulness that Dasein carries itself in. But this is, in fact, all that interpretation does. In ‘making explicit’ or appropriating ‘what it has understood in an understanding way’, Dasein is engaged in interpretation—that is to say, Dasein is developing what the possibilities mean to it. Interpretation is never once done and over with, but is an ongoing part of projecting possibilities for being. And the inertia of projection ensures that there is always a new existentiell situation that Dasein finds itself that it needs to interpret its possibilities relative to.

As concerns authenticity, because interpretation is the development of understanding, an authentic potentiality for being a self will occur only on the basis of an interpretation that projects Dasein’s possibilities into the truth of its being as possibility. Interpretation is therefore the key for clarifying the possibility of authenticity. But since what is disclosed in understanding is being-in-the-world, which always has concrete ontological significance, a theoretical acknowledgement of the truth of its being is not sufficient. To understand its being in an understanding way is still an ontological project. To that effect, since Dasein is always situated existentiellly in concrete possibilities for being a self, the interpretation that develops those possibilities authentically will always have to transform whatever existentiell possibilities it is disclosed as. Dasein is its

disclosure, which is a limitation that pertains to an authentic potentiality for being a self as well. Authenticity as a project is pushed into the particulars of its factual existence. In order to project its authentic existentiell possibility to be itself, it must do so by effectively bridging its factual disclosure, thereby tethering what it means to be authentic to concrete conditions of its existentiell existence.

3.5 The role of being-with and the they in understanding

If Dasein is factually its existentiell situation, and if that situation is relevant for the project of an authentic potentiality for being a self, then what it means for Dasein to be its existentiell situation must be further clarified. A few interesting questions are raised in this regards. First, from where do existentiell possibilities come? And what does it mean for Dasein to exist as possibilities as opposed to being a being with possibilities? And finally, from where do Dasein's interpretations come?

In the introduction, Heidegger tells us that "Dasein has either chosen these possibilities itself, stumbled upon them, or in each instance already grown up in them." (Heidegger 10). This is further developed in division I, Chapter IV, where Heidegger introduces the concepts of being-with others, the *Mitdasein*, and the *they*. The reality of growing up in possibilities or stumbling upon them is grounded in the fact that Dasein's world is a world shared with and largely created by other Dasein. The world that "...is always already from the outset my own" (Heidegger 111), is from the outset a *with-world*: "...the world is always already the one that I share with the others. The world of Dasein is a *with-world*. Being-in is *being-with* others" (Heidegger 111-112). Dasein takes care of the world in ways anticipated for it by other Dasein. In walking down the

sidewalk, Dasein is disclosing its potentiality for being in accordance with a world that it did not create. For the most part, Dasein conforms to the world in this way.

In addition, these possibilities for being are themselves possible only with the participation of other Dasein, such as listening to the radio, taking public transport, playing sports, buying groceries. In the possibilities that I exist as, many of them include other Dasein in their very constitution, which then reflects on my self-understanding. Heidegger writes, “Knowing oneself is grounded in primordially understanding being-with. It operates initially in accordance with the nearest kind of being of being-together-in-the-world in the understanding knowledge of what Dasein circumspectly finds and takes care of with the others” (Heidegger 116). In the nearest kind of being of everyday taking care of the world, my Dasein does not resonate in any distinction from the other Dasein, but is rather one with the other Dasein in the anonymous understanding that accompanies all our everyday possibilities. This directly gives rise to the notion of the *they*, which answers the question of the “who” of everyday Dasein. If Dasein is existentially defined by its possibilities, and if those possibilities are largely as universal as using a sidewalk, then the self-understanding that arises on the basis of those possibilities is just as universal.

Concerning the last mode of coming into its possibilities—choice, although Dasein sometimes legitimately experiences a choice between possibilities, it does not have a choice in the fact that the possibilities that it does exist as determine its existential factical identity, irrespective of whether Dasein chooses to put importance in them or not. But, for the most part, Dasein doesn’t generally choose its possibilities for

being. Nor does choosing provide a possible alternative to this state of things. Dasein chooses from what it is familiar with, and what it is familiar with is determined by the world it is part and parcel of. Radical choice is never a reality in a world where possibilities are finite and founded in the familiarity of the closest tradition into which Dasein is raised.

This relates to the first of our two challenges to a purely subjectivistic-individualistic emphasis placed on the meaning of authenticity. The fact that at the end of *Being and Time* Heidegger relates authentic Dasein to its generation, thereby raising social-historical dimensions of what it means to be authentic, finds initial ground in what was elaborated above concerning how Dasein comes into its possibilities for being for the most part, and how many of those possibilities are inter-relational in their constitution. In the discussion of Dasein's essential historicity, Heidegger asks, "...whence in *general* can the possibilities be drawn upon which Dasein factually projects itself?" (Heidegger 350). The answer, which implicates Dasein in and with its generation, is from its heritage which resoluteness takes over as thrown: "The resoluteness in which Dasein comes back to itself discloses the actual factual possibilities of authentic existing *in terms of the heritage* which that resoluteness *takes over* as thrown" (Heidegger 351). Without the initial grounds in what it means to be a possibility and the provenance of those possibilities through the existential of being-with other Dasein, the connection of Dasein's authenticity to taking over its heritage would remain puzzling set against the subjectivistic-individualistic emphasis. Therefore, what it

means to belong to one's self in authenticity must preserve this fundamental constituting fact of Dasein's existence if it is to resurface later in Dasein's historicity.

But far from delegitimizing the subjectivistic-individualistic emphasis placed on authenticity, it deepens the problematic. In resoluteness, Dasein takes over possibilities from the tradition in which it is thrown, "...although not necessarily as traditional ones" (Heidegger 351). If the possibilities Dasein takes over from its heritage in resoluteness are not identical to the ones articulated by that tradition, is that enough leeway in the meaning of those possibilities that they can be considered individual to Dasein, validating the subjectivistic-individualistic emphasis? Could Dasein's destiny with its generation be a destiny of one authentic world-historical individual that transforms its being-with others? The resolution of these questions ultimately pushes the problematic towards the clarification of interpretation as the development of Dasein's possibilities. Because the locus of interpretation is Dasein, it could matter little if Dasein's possibilities are socially and historically constituted if an interpretation that develops them authentically individualizes them.

3.6 Interpretation and discourse

It was shown how authenticity relates to the project nature of understanding as is developed by interpretation. The final existential to consider as it will affect authenticity is discourse. In the introduction to the sections on "The Existential Constitution of the There," Heidegger writes that "Attunement and understanding are equiprimordially determined by *discourse*" (Heidegger 126). Discourse is described as "*The existential-ontological foundation of language...*" (Heidegger 150). Discourse pertains to the very

“...articulation of intelligibility,” and as such has an especially important relationship to interpretation that becomes relevant for this analysis (Heidegger 150).

It was already recognized that interpretation concerns the intelligibility of possibilities by making explicit the meaning carried along in understanding. In interpretation, Dasein has an opening into altering the development of its possibilities according to the meaning it discloses therein. If discourse is the ‘articulation of intelligibility’, then in relation to interpretation it stands as the constituting grounds of interpretation—all interpretation occurs within the bounds of discourse. These bounds delimit the ways in which for Dasein everything is communicable. As the foundation of language, it is more than words or symbolic expression, it is all the significant expressiveness of Dasein: “Discourse is the articulation in accordance with significance of the attuned intelligibility of being-in-the-world” (Heidegger 152).

As the totality of expressiveness of Dasein, discourse comes about through being-with others and belongs to the Mitdasein. Especially in avenues of self-expression, Dasein exploits possibilities that it can never lay claim on as uniquely its own, but always occurs in and out of the context of intelligibility established in discourse through being-with others. Heidegger writes, “Being-with is ‘explicitly’ *shared* in discourse” (Heidegger 152). With interpretation, the situation is no different. All the meaning that Dasein makes explicit in interpretation can only come about in the intelligibility established in discourse. Therefore, discourse becomes the background condition for what meaning Dasein finds in its understanding.

This becomes relevant for authenticity in that interpretation as the vehicle of the development of possibilities in understanding, needs to develop Dasein's possibilities towards its ownmost potentiality for being a self, but will be necessarily determined in its effort to do so by the possibilities of expression available in discourse. This constitutes the second challenge to the subjectivistic-individualistic emphasis placed on authenticity in *Being and Time* outlined above. The public provenance of discourse becomes the fertile ground for the they to dominate interpretation. Heidegger writes, "Dasein is initially and in certain limits constantly entrusted to this interpretedness that directs and apportions the possibilities of the average understanding and the attunement belonging to it" (Heidegger 157). Thereby, Dasein interprets itself and develops its possibilities in the direction of the everyday inauthentic way of being a self. Heidegger is clear that interpretation can never transcend the limitations of discourse. He writes, "Dasein can never escape the everyday way of being interpreted into which Dasein has grown initially. All genuine understanding, interpreting and communication, rediscovery and new appropriation come about in it and out of it and against it" (Heidegger 159). This means that an authentic potentiality for being a self cannot arise from an interpretation that takes its meaning from a sphere of intelligibility outside of the everyday inauthentic way of being interpreted.

The problem of the relationship of discourse to authenticity is a formidable one because it affects the development of possibilities in interpretation, striking at the heart of how an authentic possibility for being a self can come about. Therefore, it poses a real challenge to the subjectivistic-individualistic emphasis read into authenticity. Unlike the

possible response to the first challenge, the fact that Dasein is the locus of interpretation will not supersede any social-historical claims that affect interpretation itself. If possibilities for interpretation originate in a social-historical context, then by means of interpretation it will be difficult to develop possibilities that are individual to Dasein. To accept the fact that all interpretation comes out of the everyday way of being interpreted into which Dasein has grown means either that it is necessary to attribute to Heidegger's presentation the tension that this creates with the notion that authenticity individualizes Dasein, or it means to pull back from an overly subjectivistic-individualistic account of authenticity.

3.7 Conclusions

The inquiry into the existentials of every existentiell being-in-the-world helped to clarify how the descriptions of authenticity can be better grounded relative to the way in which Dasein is its being concretely. In the existential of understanding, Dasein is existentially defined in terms of possibilities for being. Initially and for the most part, the “who” of Dasein’s possibilities is the they. But at the heart of what it means to be a possibility is possibility itself that corresponds to the disclosive openness of Dasein’s essential existential constitution. This opening creates the circle in understanding the movement of which is described in interpretation.

As the development of possibilities projected in understanding, interpretation is the only window through which something like a subjectivistic-individualistic emphasis on authenticity can be properly grounded. Through interpretation, the meaning and therefore the identity of Dasein’s possibilities is established. Since Dasein is the locus of

interpretation, it is possible that it can develop its possibilities in accordance with an intelligibility that is its own, giving them its own identity. However, one must then resolve the problem of how it can do so when intelligibility itself is the provenance of discourse which comes out of being-with others.

But what has not been asked as of yet is what concretely the subjectivistic-individualistic emphasis read into authenticity implies. Does it suggest Dasein's factual particularity, its ontic solipsism, or its metaphysical isolation? And once this is clarified, the argument must proceed from the other direction as well and ask whether any of these possibilities find their justification in *Being and Time*.

CHAPTER IV

EVALUATION

4.1 Overture

From a perspective of the whole scope of the project of *Being and Time*, the meaning of authenticity is linked to the question of the meaning of being as an existentiell attestation that the meaning of Dasein's being has the self-transcendent structure of understanding that Heidegger comes to define as "care." Catching sight of this possibility constitutes a kind of proof that confirms the hypothesis that Dasein's ontic distinction is that it is ontological. If the meaning of Dasein's being can be secured in this manner, on this basis the way opens up for an understanding of the meaning of being in general. For the phenomenology of Dasein, an existentiell attestation is the only possible means of a confirmation of this fact.

But as the notion of authenticity is elaborated through the analytic of Dasein, a different kind of presentation takes shape. A summation statement of the ways in which authenticity is described in *Being and Time* is that: mineness is the grounds of the possibility that Dasein can retrieve itself from the anonymous social normativity of the they and explicitly grasp itself through an individuation made possible by anticipation. Authenticity is the existentiell achievement of this individuated explicit self-retrieve. These descriptions lend to authenticity a subjectivistic-individualistic descriptive emphasis.

Between the meaning of authenticity as it fits into the question of the meaning of being, and the descriptions of authentic Dasein that lend it a subjectivistic-individualistic emphasis, the necessary connection must be made. How does manifesting the transcendent structure of care equate with Dasein's belonging to itself? The fundamental question to be answered can be reduced to the following: what does becoming individualized have to do with being authentic?

The initial approach, based on taking the subjectivistic-individualistic descriptions of authenticity at face value, was an exegesis of the existentials that go into every existentiell disclosure. Perhaps in explaining the structure of what it means for Dasein to be its *Da-*, to be its there in the world, it would have become evident the ways in which Dasein could be an individualized being-there. This approach reached its limit in the tension that discourse creates with the possibility of an individualized interpretation. Surveying the literature on Heidegger, more than a few commentaries reach an impasse in understanding authenticity on precisely this point. But for those that find themselves in this situation, their difficulty is not without value. This *aporia* in understanding authenticity becomes itself illustrative of how these commentaries incorporate the subjectivistic-individualistic emphasis in the descriptions of authenticity into the understanding of what authenticity entails. Therefore, a look into how some of these commentaries perceive the problem in authenticity also becomes instructive for deconstructing the critical unexamined question behind this entire inquiry: mainly, in what unified sense are we supposed to understand what these subjectivistic-individualistic descriptions add up to? Once those assumptions for the meaning of

authenticity are fore-grounded, this will lead the way back to Heidegger to search for the textual justification for the kinds of subjectivistic-individualistic emphases that are grounded therein. In the end, a non-subjectivistic understanding of what it means to be individualized in authenticity has to be articulated to get past the *aporia* caused by an overly individualistic-subjectivistic interpretation.

4.2 Authenticity as ontic individuality

As was evident through the analysis of the existentials of every existentiell disclosure, a literal interpretation of the subjectivistic-individualistic emphasis on the meaning of authenticity reaches an impasse in a point of tension between interpretation and discourse. If Dasein is supposed to develop its possibilities through an interpretation that projects its ownmost possibility for being, how can it accomplish this task if the intelligibility that is necessary for interpretation comes out of inauthentic everyday being-with others? The fact that this is the sticking point is attested to by Taylor Carman and Piotr Hoffman.

Interpretation has no choice but to accommodate and exploit the prevailing criteria of intelligibility, which means at least to some extent trading the irreducible particularity of one's own factual situation for generally adequate, but always more or less loosely fitting means of expressing and communicating it (Malpas and Wrathall 21).

In fact, one of the tasks of Heidegger scholarship remains the task of coming to terms with the tension between those individualistic and subjectivistic aspects of Heidegger's philosophy, on the one hand, and his simultaneous stress on the inevitably public character of intelligibility and significance, on the other (Guignon 240).

In both Carman and Hoffman we see at one pole of the friction the public interpretedness of discourse, what Carman identifies here as the 'loosely fitting means of expressing and

communicating' that Dasein has at its disposal. But whereas at the other pole of the friction Hoffman merely gestures in general to 'those individualistic and subjectivistic aspects of Heidegger's philosophy', Carman identifies it more specifically in the 'irreducible particularity of one's own factual situation'. In this we have the first substantive possibility of translating the descriptions of authenticity into their supposed ontological consequence for Dasein. For Carman, the tension between interpretation and discourse is rooted in the assumption of Dasein's factual (i.e. ontic) particularity. The belief that in authenticity Dasein achieves factual particularity constitutes the first of the possible ways of understanding how authenticity is Dasein's ownmost possibility.

But it is in fact a question of critical interpretive significance whether or not authenticity implies an existentiell particularity for Dasein. Authentic anticipation individualizes Dasein, but does that at the same time imply that in authenticity each Dasein achieves a unique existentiell potentiality for being a self in accordance with its individuation? By taking this position on the meaning of authenticity, Carman sets in motion the interpretive framework within which he consequently reaches the impasse between discourse and interpretation. Hoffman perhaps wisely holds back from making a similar commitment, but he might think so too, or else wherein would the source of the tension be that he identifies? For the 'public character of intelligibility' to be seen as a source of 'tension', this seems justified most readily on an assumption of Dasein's factual particularity. However, if Dasein's factual particularity is not assumed, what reason would we have to believe that the public character of intelligibility, and Dasein's tendency to fall prey to it, causes tension for authenticity?

If factual particularity is to be justified, there are two ways that this is possible: initially, or through anticipation.

Initially, we know that factual particularity is not in the least justified, because that would mean that the possibilities that Dasein exists as in understanding and the interpretation that determines their meaning would be identified as particular to it. But as was evident in the discussion of the genesis of our possibilities, Dasein's disclosed existence consists of possibilities for being that are not in the least particular to its engagement. Dasein exists in a world shared with and prepared for by other Dasein. Furthermore, the meaning of these possibilities that Dasein has grown into are articulated by the interpretation of the they in idle talk. This constituting the self-understanding closest to each Dasein, it is the case that initially and for the most part, particularity does not belong to Dasein in any serious existentiell way.

However, the principal grounds in support of Dasein's factual particularity in *Being and Time* is not through an initial presumption, but rather through the projection of possibilities involved in becoming authentic that consequently individuates Dasein. On this reading, ontic individuality is the accomplishment of authenticity. And as an accomplishment of a projection of possibilities, ontic individuality will have its basis in interpretation as the development of Dasein's understanding. Already, the analysis of interpretation recognized that the meaning of Dasein's possibilities is not grounded in the possibilities themselves, but rather in the interpretation that makes sense of them. Therefore, it matters little for authenticity that initially and for the most part Dasein's existentiell existence is factually in its situation the exact opposite of particular to it. If

meaning is determined through interpretation, then the factual particularity of Dasein's existence can still be achieved if the authentic interpretation can instill unique meaning into Dasein's possibilities.

Notwithstanding the already recognized unresolved tension that this reading of authenticity leads to by creating friction between interpretation and discourse, ontic individuality can be evaluated through reference to the section on being-toward-death in division II. It is here that the positive project of authenticity begins to be outlined. Being-toward-death grounds the ontological possibility that interpretation will be able to project Dasein's ownmost possibilities for being. Therefore, it is in the anticipation of dying, or being-toward-death, that the possibility that authenticity individuates Dasein existentially must find its justification.

4.3 Being-toward-death

In the discussion of being-toward-death we find the start of the analysis that outlines existentially the possibility of an attestation of authentic Dasein. The description of dying can be reduced to two essential features. The first is its ownmost, nonrepresentational quality.

Insofar as it 'is,' death is always essentially my own. And it indeed signifies a peculiar possibility of being in which it is absolutely a matter of the being of my own Dasein. In dying, it becomes evident that death is ontologically constituted by mineness and existence (Heidegger 223).

Unlike other possibilities for being, dying is something which every Dasein must take on itself: "*No one can take the other's dying away from him*" (Heidegger 223). Dasein cannot flee into inauthentic everydayness when it takes its dying upon itself. The they

can reduce talk about death to a level of generic abstraction, but Dasein cannot substitute its own projection of possibilities for a generalized way of understanding itself when its dying is at stake. Because dying uniquely has this quality, it provides a window of opportunity for Dasein to project possibilities for being that will be its ownmost, authentic ones.

The second feature is that dying is a possibility that is imminent rather than conceived of as an event that Dasein can project out ahead of itself as something not yet objectively present. Heidegger writes, “The ending that we have in view when we speak of death, does not signify a being-at-an-end of Dasein, but rather a *being toward the end* of this being. Death is a way to be that Dasein takes over as soon as it is” (Heidegger 228). An existential understanding of dying cannot conceive of death in terms of the termination of being, because Dasein’s end cannot be projected in its understanding: “As an essential structural factor of care, ‘being ahead of itself’ cannot be eliminated” (Heidegger 220). Dasein can never understand itself in terms of the elimination of its possibility to be, as that contradicts the basis of its self-understanding to begin with. Therefore, an existential understanding of death can only conceive of death in terms of dying: “Let the term *dying* stand for the *way of being* in which Dasein *is toward* its death” (Heidegger 229). What is relevant about death for the analytic of Dasein is how it exists as dying. This gives death its imminent, existential quality, as Dasein is always already dying.

It is these qualities that characterize dying that afford the opportunity for interpretation to develop Dasein’s authentic possibilities. If Dasein projects its

possibilities as a being-toward-death, the ownmost nonrelational quality of that possibility can put Dasein's possibilities in a context of meaningfulness that is its own. This requires that dying as a possibility that is imminent in all that Dasein identifies in its understanding be maintained in that light.

... if being-toward-death has to disclose understandingly the possibility which we have characterized as *such*, then in such being-toward-death this possibility must not be weakened, it must be understood *as possibility*, cultivated *as possibility*, and *endured as possibility* in our relation to it (Heidegger 241).

Ultimately what seems important about dying is not simply that it represents the finiteness of all of Dasein's possibilities, but that it creates the opening in Dasein's possibilities that allows for its development in interpretation. If it were not for the fact that Dasein as its possibilities is always essentially dying, there would not be the corresponding freedom for the development of its being. Therefore the finitude of dying corresponds to the freedom of Dasein's essential essence as possibility.

4.4 Lawrence Vogel and Piotr Hoffman

Being-toward-death as the existential possibility of an interpretation that develops Dasein's ownmost authentic possibilities means that the death analysis figures centrally into any argument that the individualizing effect of anticipation should be read in a subjectivistic-individualistic way. In the initial exegesis of understanding and its development in interpretation, it was evident that interpretation carried the possibility for radical individuation. Being-toward-death perhaps only further confirms this in that the description entails that "The nonrelational character of death understood in anticipation individualizes Dasein down to itself" (Heidegger 243). Lawrence Vogel presents an

argument that shows how the subjectivistic-individualistic conclusions for authenticity can be based on the analysis of being-toward-death.

Heidegger surely invites this existentialist interpretation and so makes himself vulnerable to the charges that his philosophy is radically individualistic, egocentric, voluntaristic, and decisionistic. The problem with Heidegger's account of authenticity is that the nonrelational, individualizing character of Being-towards-death appears to subvert the prior claim that others have on my will insofar as I am a moral agent. The centrality and tone of the death-analysis makes it seem like the experience of my mortality, rather than revealing me not to be the center of the world, shows just the opposite: that the significance of entities within my world depends wholly on my projects. The individuating power of Being-towards-death drives a wedge between the self and nature and between the individual and the community. Heidegger's insistence that anxiety and authenticity do not take us out of the world but lead to a more primordial engagement does not resolve the tensions between Being-onto-death on the one hand and Being-in-the-world and Being-with-Others on the other (Vogel 38).

According to Vogel, being-toward-death 'drives a wedge between the self and nature and between the individual and the community'. And despite whatever emphasis Heidegger places on being-in-the-world as fundamentally socially and historically contextualized, this 'does not resolve the tensions' that are created as a result of being-toward-death's fundamentally individualizing effect that makes it so that the significance of the others and moral normativity in the end 'depends wholly on my projects'—i.e. the projection of Dasein's own possibilities in authentic interpretation.

Vogel identifies the root of the problem in the fact that once the nonrelational character of being-toward-death individualizes Dasein down to itself, it removes Dasein from the claim that any social-historical or moral values have on it, and reveals them to be contingent on Dasein's own projection of possibilities. Vogel, therefore, similarly to Carman and Hoffman, invokes the notion of a tension between the structures of being-

in-the-world and being-with others. At the same time, Vogel separates himself from making the claim of factual particularity attributed to Carman. He recognizes that the social-historical dimensions speak against a purely subjectivistic-individualistic emphasis on authenticity. Instead, he argues that being-toward-death creates a general vacuum in the meaningfulness of Dasein's possibilities, and leaves Dasein to resolve upon them arbitrarily. He argues that Heidegger provides no evaluative criteria by which this newly self-aware Dasein, freed from the authority of the they, is to decide its fate. And although resoluteness thrusts us back into the social-historical context from which our possibilities derive and are fundamentally limited, we are left without a compass in navigating within the tradition we are bound, and are certainly left without criteria to evaluate the possibilities of our tradition against itself.

Heidegger offers as his standard our confrontation with death. But even he admits that anticipation in the face of Being-unto-death, though a necessary aspect of the standard for authentic choice, is not sufficient. And so he refers us to resoluteness in the face of our historical thrownness to supplement anticipation and to provide it with content. But this casts his concept of authentic choice into a vicious circle. On the one hand, choice is supposed to free one from the contingencies of the historical possibilities in which one actually finds oneself. On the other hand, choice is rooted in historicity, in the possibilities in which one actually finds oneself. But to say that the possibilities to be chosen are those that are in fact given provides no criterion for choice *among* possibilities. Authenticity, therefore, collapses into irrational decision (Vogel 60).

This is what Vogel, borrowing from Charles Guignon, labels as Heidegger's "evaluative nihilism." Despite the description that Heidegger gives us of Dasein as a thrown projection, Vogel concludes that "The ontological insight that we are a 'stretching along' between past and future and so are subject to both compulsion and freedom does not

provide us with any directive as to how to appropriate the past" (FW 59). For Dasein to be cast into a position of 'evaluative nihilism' suggests that the nonrelational effect of being-toward-death radically de-situates Dasein from its world such that it stands over and against its possibilities. For Vogel, this seems to indicate that the meaning of the individuation that being-towards-death entails is in revealing to each Dasein its ontic isolation in making the world meaningful.

Unlike what Carman and Hoffman posit, for Vogel it is not the generic nature of discourse that forces a point of tension with the possibility that authenticity individualizes Dasein. Recognizing the rootedness of the social-historical context—that 'choice is rooted in historicity'—perhaps Vogel sees that the projection of Dasein's possibilities in interpretation is too much bound by these circumstances to seriously argue that the individualizing effect of authenticity implies Dasein's factual particularity. Vogel finds a different meaning for individuation, which is that Dasein, faced with the otherness of its possibilities, yet forced to choose, is trapped in an evaluative nihilism wherein the only standard for choosing is whatever calls forth from its own interpretative inclination. Vogel's Heidegger carries the Sartrean sympathy that man is condemned to be free. So although not arguing for ontic particularity as the meaning of the individuation of authenticity, Vogel rather argues for an ontic solipsism instead.

Yet Vogel's analysis is deeply connected to that of Carman's and Hoffman's. Vogel is only one step removed from ontic particularity by his attempt to reconcile the social-historical elements yet maintain the subjectivistic-individualistic emphasis. The

difference between them is in the conclusions they draw more so than in a fundamental difference in their understanding of being-toward-death. In all three commentators, it is being-toward-death that causes tension between being-in-the-world and being-with others.

Piotr Hoffman was already identified as a possible proponent of the view that the individuation entailed in being-toward-death is meant to bring Dasein to the ontic particularity of its existence. Although he himself is careful to limit the force of his conclusions, there is good indication that this is what he believes when he identifies a tension between the public character of intelligibility as determined by discourse and the individuation that arises through being-toward-death.

Vogel was illustrative of how being-toward-death can be seized upon to give force to a subjectivistic-individualistic understanding of authenticity. But in Hoffman we have the added benefit of an exegesis of the chapter that illuminates textually how the connection is made between being-toward-death and authenticity that establishes it as fundamentally subjectivistic-individualistic. Hoffman writes, “I hope to show, however, that in Division II of *Being and Time* Heidegger reveals himself as an heir to that [subjectivist] tradition and to its model of the human self” (Guignon 222). This conclusion will ultimately be based on the endorsement of the understanding that “...as it will soon become clear, Dasein’s authenticity requires the lucid acceptance of one’s own death...” (Guignon 223). It is these two related features of Hoffman’s analysis—the emphasis on death’s inherent subjectivity, and the resulting need for its lucid acceptance—that establishes the subjectivistic-individualistic reading of being-toward-

death that then supports conclusions such as those of ontic particularity and ontic solipsism.

In the first place, Hoffman repeatedly refers to the key themes of division II upon which authenticity and everything else hinges as dimensions of Dasein's subjectivity, which in the end he concludes places Heidegger in a similar vein of the Western philosophical tradition as other subjectivist writers.

But Dasein's linkup with a historical community does not remove from Dasein's structure its dimension of subjectivity. On the contrary, Dasein reveals itself as rooted in its historical community only by exploring the full depths of its own subjectivity—of its finitude, its freedom, its guilt, and so on. And these themes—the key themes of Division II of *Being and Time*—can be found not only in the classical writers of the subjectivist tradition (in Descartes, Kant, Fichte), but indeed, in its final and most radical version, existentialism. One is thus perfectly legitimate in drawing parallels between Heidegger and such radically subjectivistic writers as Kierkegaard, Sartre, and Camus (Guignon 240).

At first it seems almost innocuous that finitude, freedom, and guilt are treated as elements of Dasein's 'subjectivity'. But Heidegger himself never makes use of this term in *Being and Time* and it therefore has a problematic meaning to try and fit in with the rest of the technical terminology of *Being and Time*. The first question we must ask in regards to 'subjectivity' is whether the term as is commonly made use of in the Western philosophical tradition fits in with Heidegger's fundamental ontology as an existential or existentiell determination of Dasein's existence. If Dasein is equiprimordially being-in-the-world and being-with others, does subjectivity simply refer to the existential structures implied in being-in-the-world only? A consequence of this would be that all of Dasein's possibilities that are constituted by being-with other Dasein would be deemed inauthentic, problematizing the social-historical references to authenticity.

An indication of how an assumption of subjectivity shapes the analysis can be seen in the subtle psychological character that the theme of dying takes on in relation to Dasein's projection of possibilities.

At the same time—and due to the very same circumstance of my total vulnerability to death—the complete identity that I envision as attributable to me remains *my* identity. For my first-person sense of death establishes my life not only as a *totality*, but also as uniquely *mine*—that is, not as an intersection of social and natural roles and functions that I share, or may share, with others. Heidegger's justification of this important connection—death gives my life its 'totality' and its 'mineness' (*Jemeinigkeit*) as well—is simple [BT 283-4] (Guignon 225).

For Hoffman, 'my first-person sense of death establishes' the uniqueness of 'my identity', which then satisfies the mineness that is the existential condition of Dasein's authenticity. The lucid acceptance of dying that Hoffman concludes being-toward-death to entail can only be understood as an existentiell experience that Dasein, out of its first-person perspective, relates to in its being. For Hoffman, the themes of division II—death, guilt, conscience—are read as psychological phenomena of Dasein's factual existence that have the potential of being used to pivot Dasein's projection of possibilities towards that which is its ownmost. Death is always my death, not *qua* existential Dasein, but *qua* my existentiell experience. This is perhaps why Hoffman labels these themes as belonging to Dasein's subjectivity, and why he sees Heidegger's philosophy as having a remarkable kinship with Existentialists such as Kierkegaard, Sartre, and Camus.

In Hoffman's analysis, the ownmost, nonrelational nature of being-toward-death means that dying pertains to my Dasein only insofar as I am myself in my subjectivity, not insofar as I am in my Dasein a being-with. This equates the meaning of Dasein's

being with a fundamental existential subjectivity through which it can retrieve itself from lostness in the they by projecting its possibilities through the individualizing pivot of its being-toward-death. This puts the 'I' as existentially primary and the relationships to others as derivative. In doing so, dying as a concept invariably shifts from being purely existential to carrying the existentiell connotation that through an authentic appropriation of one's dying, Dasein can be reduced to its being-in-the-world individuated from the others.

It is precisely this assumption of subjectivity in the concept of dying that sets the stage for the interpretations of authenticity such as those that conclude ontic particularity and ontic solipsism, because they take an existentiell meaning of dying as the basis for their conclusions that the individuation of authenticity has an existentiell significance.

4.5 Refutation of anticipation as existentiell dying

At first it is difficult to see in which way Hoffman's reading of being-toward-death differs from how Heidegger himself presents it. It is Heidegger, after all, that surrounds these themes with such dramatic flourish, for example, when he writes that in anticipation of dying Dasein is "...itself in passionate anxious **freedom toward death...**" (Heidegger 245). But despite the effusive prose surrounding dying, there are substantial reasons to argue against conceiving of death as an element of Dasein's subjectivity.

The first thing one must remember is that these themes upon which the analytic proceeds are specifically chosen from Dasein's everydayness as the *doxa* that are subsequently clarified into existential structures. They become technical terminology

with meanings rarefied from their commonsense origin. Keeping this in mind, this should dissuade from any overly literal interpretation of the phenomena. But this is a problem that Heidegger himself invites by using everyday concepts as the basis of a philosophical investigation. In this vein, the problem with Hoffman's reading of being-toward-death is that it means that authenticity hinges on expecting and enduring Dasein's dying in a literal fashion, turning anticipation into an existentiell phenomenon. And although expecting and enduring dying may characterize Dasein in its authentic possibilities, it is difficult to believe that Dasein, acting resolutely, projects its possibilities into its subjective dying, as dramatically appealing as this may be. Unfortunately, one of the reasons *Being and Time* can be initially so appealing to first-time readers is precisely this dramatic element that seems to call on one to be courageously resolute in the face of their mortality.

This also runs counter to what Heidegger writes at the very end of the chapter concerning the scope of the analysis of being-toward-death.

The existential project in which anticipation has been delimited, has made visible the *ontological* possibility of an existentiell, authentic being-toward-death. But with this, the possibility then appears of an authentic potentiality-for-being-a-whole—but *only as an ontological possibility*... And yet this existentially 'possible' being-toward-death remains, after all, existentially a fantastical demand. The ontological possibility of an authentic potentiality-for-being-a-whole of Dasein means nothing as long as the corresponding ontic potentiality-of-being has not been shown in terms of Dasein itself (Heidegger 246).

Existentielly, a possible being-toward-death remains 'a fantastical demand'. What has been demonstrated is only the 'ontological possibility' of what will be the existentiell attestation of being-toward-death (i.e. resoluteness). At this point in the project of *Being*

and Time, Heidegger has yet to consider how an existentiell being-toward-death will be achieved. Certainly, then, it falls short of the scope of the discussion to have discussed Dasein's anticipation of death as precisely that mechanism that establishes Dasein's authenticity. Anticipation is not formally an existentiell phenomenon, but it would have to be if dying is conceived of as an element of Dasein's subjectivity.

Instead, what Heidegger is doing is grounding the *a priori* (existential) possibility for authenticity in the first place. At the start of division II, Heidegger reminds us that the analysis of division I was incomplete as it only described Dasein in its everyday inauthenticity. The structures there do not provide an avenue for outlining the possibility of authenticity. Division II would start by laying the ground for the possibility of authentic Dasein, which means providing its existential justification. The question to be answered in Chapter I of division II is whether or not Dasein can be authentic at all. Is it ontologically possible that this being can manifest its essence as existence existentiellly? And what are the existential structures that support this? Being-toward-death is meant to be the existential justification that makes possible such an existentiell attestation. Because Dasein is being-toward-death, it can be authentic.

Initially, being-toward-death is the discussion of an existential of Dasein's being. Only in the discussion of resoluteness does it become an existentiell possibility. This distinction effectively separates the actual existentiell content of resolutely anticipating dying in its possibilities from the ontological characterization of it existing in such a way. The fact that being-toward-death is Dasein's ownmost possibility is not yet a statement about the content of that possibility, about where it comes from, "who" it

concerns, and whether its intelligibility will be rooted in discourse or not . This means that the existentiell denial of death could be an authentic existential being-toward-death as well. To think otherwise, limits what authenticity looks like to instances when Dasein projects its possibilities always during a meditation on its mortality.

4.6 Subjectivity

If dying is meant only as an ontological characterization of a possible interpretation—one that pertains to Dasein in the totality of its structures as being-in-the-world together with other Dasein—does that mean that it is not an element of Dasein’s subjectivity? The answer can be both yes and no, depending on how the traditional notion of ‘subjectivity’ finds its place in an understanding of what it means to be human that is split between an existential and an existentiell reality. In a lecture given during the summer semester of 1928, a year after the publication of *Being and Time*, Heidegger has the following to say on how the things stand within the subjectivity of Dasein: “Only, one may not at this point reintroduce a common, subjectivistic concept of ‘subject.’ Instead, the task is to see that being-in-the-world... precisely transforms the concept of subjectivity and of the subjective from the ground up” (Figal 78). Insofar as all the existential structures are features that characterize Dasein, then death is undoubtedly an element of Dasein’s subjectivity, but only *qua* Dasein in its radical metaphysical neutrality.

In another lecture from the same semester following the publication of *Being and Time* in 1928, Heidegger comments on the neutral designation intended for the term Dasein.

This neutral Dasein is thus also not the egocentrically singular, ontically isolated individual. The egoicity of the individual does not become the center of the entire problematic. Yet Dasein's essential content, to belong to itself in its existence, must be taken up along with the approach. To be sure, the approach that begins with neutrality implies a peculiar isolation of the human, but not in the factual existentiell sense, as if the one philosophizing were the center of the world. Rather, it is the *metaphysical isolation* of the human (Figal 63-64).

The 'subject' is traditionally the bearer of experience and already presumes the difference between my experience and your experience. 'Dasein' is specifically formulated to include the possibility that it can belong to the they. If one equivocates Dasein with subjectivity, then the fact that Dasein is initially and for the most part not itself would be relegated to an appearance of a reality. This would contradict Heidegger's insistence that the they is part of Dasein's positive ontological constitution. In order to situate 'subjectivity' into the framework that Heidegger provides in *Being and Time* without revisiting its fundamental meaning, then because it already presumes Dasein's individuality of experience, it belongs to an existentiell discussion of how identity is a function of the existentials of being-in-the-world and being-with others. On the other hand, if we wish to say that 'the metaphysical isolation of the human' is in any way synonymous with subjectivity, then we seem to lose the basis of similarity that Hoffman wants to say can be found between Heidegger and the Existentialists he compares him to. Either way, being-toward-death as an element of 'subjectivity' could not be the grounds for either ontic individuation or ontic solipsism.

4.7 Existential individuation and being-with

If being-toward-death does not establish individuality with any subjective connotations, whether conceiving of Carman's factual particularity or Vogel's ontic solipsism, what kind of individuation is Heidegger referencing, if he's not being completely misleading by talking about individuation at all? The answer is existential, not existentiell individuation. Through being-toward-death, Dasein is individuated *qua* Dasein. And as a Dasein, both being-in-the-world and being-with others equiprimordially belong to its being. In anticipation, it is Dasein that is individualized as the being that it is with all the structures that pertain to it, not as a subjective 'me' set against a 'you'. And that is because, as Francois Raffoul points out, "As Being-in-the-world with others, Dasein in itself lies, from the outset, beyond the opposition between the individual I and the other (the non- or alter-ego), beyond the opposition between egotism and altruism" (Raffoul 213). Therefore, to become individualized as a Dasein cannot mean to demarcate a line between self and other. Near the end of the chapter on being-toward-death, Heidegger gestures towards this fact. He writes, "As the nonrelational possibility, death individualizes, but only, as the possibility not-to-be-bypassed, in order to make Dasein as being-with understand the potentialities-of-being of the others" (Heidegger 244). Anticipation individualizes Dasein as a being-with.

The problem with identifying authenticity with the individuality of Dasein *qua* subjectivity, is that it associates all being-with with inauthenticity. This initially seems plausible because to be inauthentic is described as being a they-self: "Initially, 'I' 'am' not in the sense of my own self, but I am the others in the mode of the they" (Heidegger

121). But rather than imputing all of Dasein's social constitution, inauthenticity seems rather to point to the manner in which Dasein, projecting its possibilities for being, can surrender its own role of appropriating what it has understood in an understanding way for a tendency to accept public interpretedness. The they, that which is associated with inauthenticity, rather than referring to other Dasein, really refers to no one.

Here it becomes clear that it is the mode of the 'they' that constitutes a negation of alterity, since under its 'dictatorship' the self and the other are, so to speak, the *same*. For, if it is true that in this 'same,' which is the neutrality of 'no one and everyone,' the self finds itself subjugated to others, the others, too, disappear, as *others*... The reign of the 'They' thus proves itself to be the negation both of the singular existent and of others; the 'They,' says Heidegger, is properly 'nobody' (Raffoul 214).

Inauthenticity, far from falling along a dichotomy between self and other, really constitutes a third category representing the nobody that Dasein is for the most part in accepting the dominant interpretedness that circulates in idle talk. Its association with Dasein's communal constitution is as a structure that arises from the "distantiality" of Dasein's being-with-one-another, but not suggesting that being-with is itself the cause of inauthenticity. And as Heidegger repeatedly reminds us, inauthenticity itself has no normative connotations, but rather belongs to the positive constitution of Dasein. The fact that Dasein is inauthentic for the most part is simply a reflection of the fact that Dasein is immersed in a world of possibilities the intelligibility of which it takes for granted. And in doing so, it covers over the fact that what grounds the intelligibility of what is possible is nothing other than the existential essence of Dasein, and it is therefore co-creating the truth of whatever it accepts.

Returning to the meaning of authenticity as it relates to the question of the meaning of being, authenticity was defined as the existentiell attestation that Dasein can manifest the transcendent structure of understanding. To fall prey to inauthenticity means simply that existentially, Dasein is developing its possibilities in accordance with a principle external to it—the intelligibility of the they—thereby not manifesting that understanding has a transcendent structure. To say that Dasein is not individualized in this context means that it is not developing its possibilities out of its own being.

Anticipation individualizes Dasein because it manages to thrust the intelligibility of its possibilities back onto its transcendent structure. It accomplishes this by projecting its possibilities towards their end, towards the very possibility of its possibilities, and in doing so, opens up the horizon of what is possible. Heidegger writes, “But being toward this possibility, as being-toward-death, should relate itself to that *death* so that it reveals itself, in this being and for it, *as possibility*... as one comes nearer understandingly, the possibility of the possible only becomes ‘greater’” (Heidegger 242). The fact that dying is Dasein’s ownmost possibility, and that Dasein is its possibility, are two sides of the same coin. The being-toward-death of anticipation is a projection towards possibility. And this possibility is what is ownmost about Dasein as the being whose ontic distinction is that it is ontological.

4.8 Mineness

The final point to consider is whether or not it is possible to completely eliminate a subjectivism from *Being and Time* when one of the two essential existential characteristics of Dasein from which the whole analytic unfolds is mineness. The very

fact that authenticity and inauthenticity both have their basis in mineness seems to set the stage perfectly for those who are already inclined to read authenticity as implying something fundamentally individualistic. Is it not the case that mineness directly establishes the essential subjectivism of Dasein's experience in the world?

The very opening of *Being and Time* stresses the importance of mineness for what follows: "The being whose analysis our task is, is always we ourselves. The being of this being is always *mine*" (Heidegger 39). As one of two initial existential statements that forms the basis of the entire analytic of Dasein, all the existentials that follow suit in describing Dasein are equally structured by mineness. If understanding and its development in interpretation is also always mine, then in what sense is this to be understood except as establishing that the authentic development of Dasein's possibilities will be particular to it?

To begin with, Heidegger writes, "Dasein is a being which I myself am, its being is in each case mine. This determination *indicates* an *ontological* constitution, but no more than that" (Heidegger 108). Identity, or answering the "who" of Dasein, is an existentiell question according to Heidegger. If mineness served to designate Dasein's existentiell disclosures as factually always its own, then mineness could no longer equally be the basis for inauthenticity, because inauthenticity is associated with the they. Inauthenticity would have to be explained along a Platonic scheme as an appearance of the authentic reality, making authenticity essentially an epistemological problem. The fact remains that existentiellly speaking, Dasein is not always its own. Initially and for the most part, Dasein is ontically undifferentiated as the they. And this too has its basis

in mineness. Therefore, mineness has to come before a distinction of the 'I' and selfhood and must encompass the possibility that Dasein is not itself in the they. As Heidegger confirms, "What if the fact that Dasein is so constituted that it is in each case mine, were the reason for the fact that Dasein is, initially and for the most part, *not itself*?" (Heidegger 109).

There is another possibility for understanding mineness that suggests an opposite direction from the one above. Ultimately, the problem with the above interpretation of mineness is that it conceives of mineness as a predicate of a substantial being. Therefore, possibilities become mine because they belong to my Dasein. On the contrary, what seems to be the case is that possibilities become mine because my Dasein belongs to them through being. Rather than mineness acting as a principle that makes all of Dasein's possibilities its own by having brought them into the sphere of its being; instead, being itself brings mineness to the possibilities that Dasein exists as. Therefore, mineness is the principle that constitutes the basis of the self-identification with Dasein's possibilities. Francois Raffoul is particularly insightful on this point.

This phrase should be understood literally: *it is Being itself that is mine*. And not 'I', then. I am only 'myself' through Being. Mineness is not the ontic individuality, the worldless self, or a self-consciousness that is closed upon its *cogitationes*, but is instead to be understood in the meaning of its Being, as the meaning of Being. (Raffoul 210-211).

Mineness, rather than constituting the grounds of Dasein's individuation, is a determination of being. It is being itself that always has mineness, not 'I' in terms of an ontic individuality. In this way, mineness comes before selfhood as the grounds of the possibility of all self-identification, including identification with the inauthentic they.

Whether or not as a possibility Dasein is undifferentiated in the they, as is the case in inauthenticity, mineness is the basis of Dasein identifying as that possibility for being. This effectively divorces the meaning of mineness from Dasein's existentiell possibilities as having any determining effect on what those possibilities mean. Whether or not the possibilities that Dasein exists as are ever factually particular to it, mineness has nothing to do with it. Mineness simply means that whatever possibilities Dasein exists as, Dasein cannot exist as those possibilities without identifying with them as its own.

If, as was recognized above, Dasein is to be understood in a purely neutral sense suggesting not the ontically isolated individual but rather the metaphysical isolation of the human, then it is consistent that mineness too should carry a neutral designation of coming before all ontic determinations of selfhood. And because authenticity is based on mineness, placing mineness in its appropriate neutral, existential context frees authenticity from the requirement that its realization has anything to do with individualized possibilities for being a self.

4.9 Conclusions

By placing mineness in its proper context as a neutral determination of Dasein's being, this unravels the last thread supporting an individualistic-subjectivistic reading of the meaning of authenticity in *Being and Time*. As was already mentioned at the outset, the kind of proof that *Being and Time* offers is found in the coherence of its phenomenological reductions—between what shows itself in the phenomenon and the interpretation of that ground. Therefore, there is always a relatedness backwards and

forwards in the analytic. To argue for or against a particular reading of a theme in *Being and Time* also gets caught in placing all the supporting parts in their right context. In order to place the individualizing effect of anticipation in the right light, being-toward-death and mineness had to be clarified as well.

Perhaps in the very opening pages of *Being and Time*, in mineness as one of the two fundamental existentials from which the analytic unfolds, the prejudice towards a subjectivistic-individualistic reading of authenticity takes hold. From there, as was evident in Hoffman's exegesis of being-toward-death, Dasein is seen as individualized qua subjectivity, and the resulting implication for authenticity is the assumption of Dasein's ontic individuation or ontic solipsism. But taking this road only leads to problems in incorporating authenticity as radical individuation with all of the elements derived from the communal character of existence that Heidegger presents.

An alternative account is that the individuation that pertains to authenticity on the basis of being-toward-death is that of the individuation of Dasein *qua* Dasein. Each Dasein is a locus of interpretation, even if its possibilities for being take shape from its context in being-with, and even if the intelligibility that makes sense of those possibilities derives from being-with others. These facts will not change as they are fundamental to every Dasein. Therefore, to become individualized does not subvert these facts. To be individualized means to realize (ontically) one's Dasein as a locus where the possibilities that Dasein exists as can be developed always towards their transcendence.

Dasein was defined existentially as its possibility, and existentially in terms of its possibilities. Authenticity, instead of pointing to a subject, rather points to an event

where a possibility is projected towards its dying—which can only happen in Dasein as being-toward-death—and therefore transcends the meaning of its possibility. Heidegger writes, “Anticipation discloses to existence that its extreme inmost possibility lies in giving itself up and thus shatters all one’s clinging to whatever existence one has reached” (Heidegger 244). It is precisely in giving up its possibilities to their fundamental possibility that Dasein takes over its ownmost being from dispersal in the anonymous they. The they represents the substitution of recirculated answers for the authentic development of possibility that belongs to Dasein as its ownmost possibility. Only Dasein out of its ownmost being can push possibilities towards their transcendence.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Turning to a justification of the social-historical claims of *Being and Time*, we are in a better position to understand why it is that “The fateful destiny of Dasein in and with its ‘generation’ constitutes the complete, authentic occurrence of Dasein” (Heidegger 352). By eliminating the notion that at the basis of what it means to be a Dasein is a fundamental subjectivity, Dasein’s existential self-identifying rooted in its mineness actually pushes existentiell self-identity out into the possibilities that Dasein exists as. Absent a substantial self, Dasein experiences a fundamental multiplication in its factual existence. As Heidegger writes, “But here we are dealing with something else, with a description of the multiplication (not ‘multiplicity’) that is present in every factually individuated Dasein as such” (Figal 64). Without a substantial self to hold all the pieces together, the essence of Dasein’s being as possibility actually causes its self to be thrust into all of its possibilities.

And as was evident in the elucidation of the existential of understanding, these possibilities that Dasein exists as are various, generally precede one’s own Dasein, and include in their very constitution various levels of involvement with other Dasein. Therefore, the possibilities into which Dasein is thrown are constituted by social and historical dimensions; and in participating in these possibilities—in saying mine—Dasein joins the others who are already there (*Da-* of Dasein) too. Therefore, the authentic development of Dasein’s possibilities carries its own possibility of joining

together with its generation to bring about the transcendence of being. In his own remarks given afterwards on the project of *Being and Time*, Heidegger articulates this as the problem of “...how Dasein can exist as essentially free in the freedom of the factical ties of being-with-one-another” (Figal 65). In other words, what does this freedom that Dasein can exist as look like concretely when what it means to be human has been established on a new basis that combines being-with indissociably with being-in-the-world? Whatever the possibilities for articulating this new conception for a free, authentic Dasein, what must be resisted is the thinking that pulls Heidegger's philosophy into traditional notions of subjectivity that conceive of being on the basis of objective presence, a tradition against which he is explicitly trying to formulate his contribution towards renewing the question concerning the meaning of being.

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