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Phenomenology

Heidegger Final

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Within *Being and Time*, written by Martin Heidegger, the author attempts to establish the question of the meaning of being by analyzing the perceptual modes in which Dasein goes about Being-in-the-world and how the connection to the 'they' defines the directionality of such. For Heidegger, it is during the time of ancient Greek philosophy that the most monumental concepts were cognitively brought into existence. However, it is also during this time that people stopped philosophizing about the core of what philosophy is, that being the meaning of existence. For that reason, it is Heidegger's theory that to get back to the center of philosophical thought, we must first understand what being is and to do that we must construct the question of the meaning of being (seinsfrage).

Dasein or, in other words, the being for whom Being is an issue, exists as Being-in-the-world by creating an activity of involvement through two separate modes by which Heidegger denotes as the present-to-hand (vorhanden) and the ready-to-hand (zuhanden). Simply, the present-to-hand is a mode in which Dasein is the observer. It is when an item of equipment becomes fully present in our cognitive direction, noticing the shape, color, texture, etc., of an object. The other mode of being, known as the ready-to-hand, is when an item of equipment dissolves from our cognition due to the focus being directed toward an end goal or task. For example, in the process of making a cup of coffee, Dasein uses equipment such as coffee

grounds, a pot, water, and a burner and in the action of achieving ones goal of having a cup of coffee most of this equipment goes unnoticed as something for a means to an end. But, if you drop the coffee pot on the ground and it breaks, it becomes what Heidegger calls the unready-to-hand. This concept, is a derivative of the ready-to-hand and is encountered when an item of equipment breaks and the usefulness becomes devalued. For one to finish the process of making a cup of coffee, the requirement of obtaining a new pot is now necessary. In this instance, the pot becomes present-to-hand, for understanding the size, shape, brand and so on is now at the forefront of ones intention.

These modes of being create an activity of involvement within Dasein's everydayness that in turn provides a connection to the 'they' through a totality of involvements by which Dasein's existence is defined. To enumerate, it is Heidegger's belief that Dasein exists in the world by switching between these different modes and in doing so Dasein becomes involved with items of equipment that are in hindsight for the purpose of reaching a goal or completing a task. In that way, these layers of involvement make up the totality of possibilities for which Dasein may decide its own path. In Heideggarian terms, the experience follows a with-which, in-order-to, towards-this, for-the-sake-of-which structure and it is the for-the-sake-of-which that is most significantly in relation to the Other. Referring to the coffee example, in acquiring a new coffee pot I must go to a store that was built by Others where I may ask an Other to help me find a specific pot that was in turn manufactured by Others. Therefore, Dasein is inherently connected to Others through equipmental entities and by those means Being-with (Mitsein) is an essentially existential condition for Dasein's fundamental ontology. In addition, it is to be noted, that this for-the-sake-of-which structure that is the baseline for the totality of involvements is culturally

relative and historically oriented. To say the least, as a being in the world, Dasein initially coincides with Others of whom one is culturally brought up and therefore the signification of Dasein's activity will reflect the upbringing of such.

Since the totality of involvements defines Dasein's possibilities, and because Dasein exists as Being-with Others, language reveals what phenomena show and therefore, through the hermeneutics of language, Dasein is able to understand its being through potentiality. Inherently, Dasein realizes understanding through skilled activity in the state of being as ready-to-hand, however, the capability is also available to be received through that of hermeneutics which is essentially a science of interpretation. Now, Dasein is subjected to various moods in which one consistently resides that in turn reflect the way in which the world is disclosed. Of course, because Dasein exists in the world as Being-with Others, cultural implications underly the disclosedness of such. Moreover, the potentiality for being may be given in idle talk or discourse which is a modality where either nothing is revealed or all is revealed and because Dasein is a being that is the-having-to-be-open the understanding of its existential possibility for existence is revealed in the truth of discovery through the exchanging of interpretive explication of language.

As we can see, Dasein exists in the world as a Being that is connected and thrives through the understanding and interpretation of Other beings as well as the implication of interchangeable modalities of existence. In that way, Dasein is able to create and render new possibilities while maintaining a fluent structure that is optimally for the achievement of progress in each individual Dasein's worldhood. Furthermore, by interacting with Others, Dasein is able to understand more about that world than would be available by one's own capability. Truly, Heidegger produces an extensive analysis of what he believes brings about the question of the

meaning of being and it is in this way that we may view a different perspective on the phenomenological philosophy that allows for the continuation of more extensive thought.

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