

HEIDEGGER AND THE ENIGMA OF DEFINING HUMAN ESSENCE

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The philosophy of Martin Heidegger has a significant application for the range of crucial issues in contemporary European thought. One of these issues which has become a central theme in post-modernism for understanding human existence is Heidegger's unique analysis of "Dasein" based on hermeneutic-phenomenology. What is distinctive about Dasein is its consciousness projecting itself and the things in the world and at the same time is subjected to the world by the very nature of existence in the world. Dasein finds itself in the world which is its own world insofar as its consciousness projects it. In this account, it is not the thinking-substance as a completely self-dependent and autonomous master of its own knowledge and standing aloof from the contingent events in history, but it is a unitary whole capable of experiencing the world as a living being.

Heidegger's primary concern in his major philosophical work *Being and Time* (1926) is an inquiry into the meaning of Being in general, or the establishment of 'fundamental ontology'. His quest for understanding the meaning of Being began in 1907 under the influence of Franz Brentano's work, *On the Manifold Sense of Being According to Aristotle* (1862). Since then he fostered this idea as the major philosophical enterprise in his life time. According to Heidegger, Being, as the ontological ground, has been neglected by post-Aristotelian thinkers as they began to engage themselves in studying finite manifestations of Being rather than Being itself. Since then, Being, which is considered by Heidegger to be a genuine philosophical truth, was alienated from philosophical thought. However,

the problem of the possible oblivion of Being is not our target here as we try to explain how Heidegger's analysis of human existence, or Dasein, opens a new horizon for understanding human reality and how this analysis becomes a total rejection of a Cartesian theory of self-substance. In approaching this problem we find Heidegger's relationship with Descartes to be of a primary rather than a secondary concern. Heidegger's criticism of Cartesianism began in the winter semester of 1923 at Marburg, three years before publishing his major work *Being and Time*, while lecturing on 'Modern Philosophy.

It is evident that Descartes' philosophical inquiry is concerned with the problem of 'certainty' and aims at the stratification of true knowledge; and so from its inception, Cartesian philosophy is engaged chiefly with epistemology. In the *Meditations*, "Doubt" is utilized for examining the reliability of knowledge. All beliefs, prejudices and knowledge of the objects and events in the world even the existence of the world as well as of our own bodies were swept away by means of doubt. All judgments were suspended until a certain foundation was found on which true knowledge could be established. (1)

As we know the scope of methodic doubt narrows down gradually and becomes less universal after discovering the certainty of one's own existence in the Second Meditation, where Descartes concludes that by his famous statement or the *Cogito* "I think therefore, I exist". The *Cogito* signifies that one can doubt knowing everything other than his/her own existence as a thinking-being and verifies itself as the only self-evident truth which does not require any proof and emerges as the most certain fact whose negation is self-defeating and at the same time it has become the point of departure in Descartes' philosophical inquiry. ²

The attribute of thinking in the *Cogito* covers all kinds of mental activities from contemplation to doubt and imagination, and makes an individual aware of the objects of the world. Thinking as an activity is intentional and can never happen without standing out from itself before its object. It is always posited and directed towards something which is

thought about. But does the awareness of an object or intentionality of thinking includes self-awareness? Can thinking relate itself to itself in the same intentional manner of being aware of an object in the world? The second part of the *Cogito* suggests that when I think, I become aware of my existence. But how can I think of myself? Does that mean, to become self-conscious, I must stand at a distance from myself and split the I into a subject and an object? Obviously, the dichotomy of subject-object relationship makes it difficult to encompass the split of the "I" subject from the "I" object. Whenever we are self-conscious, the human self suffers a shizodic mode and then every self will be carrying two selves within itself; the observed and the observing selves. But since the observed self has become an object and it is not a subject like the observing self, then it should be different from the latter and cannot be defined as a thinking-subject anymore. In this case, the self will not become aware of itself as an active subject because the observed self is reduced to an object, and in order to become self-conscious, the observing self has to split still further; this process to continue infinitely. Jean-Paul Sartre suggests a solution for this problem, arguing that the self is always aware of being aware of the objects in the world and this kind of awareness is 'pre-reflective *Cogit*'⁽³⁾ an implicit knowing of the self which is presupposed by positional awareness.

In Cartesian philosophy, thinking has become a necessary condition for existence and human essence is defined as an entity that can exist by itself without relying on the body. Consciousness is closed in on itself, dwelling totally within the inner space of its own ideas and experiences and only subsequently in contact with external reality. In other words, Descartes has tried to prove that human existence is a mixture of worldly and transcendent entities which are not necessarily connected. The thinking substance does not rely on the extended-substance to exist. The self and the body interact without depending on each other for their existence.

After making this distinction between the self and the body and apprehending the differences between them, Descartes arrived at the

conclusion that the self must be complete because it is unchangeable, otherwise it would not be distinct from the body. As a 'subject' it should resist all kinds of change, and it should be the self-same bearer of all sorts of cognition and different experiences. This notion of self-sameness of the subject is again a derivative of metaphysical understanding of human existence as a thinking-substance.

There are two serious problems with a Cartesian analysis of the self; first, the primary relationship between the self and the world is epistemological and self stands in this relationship to the world as a sepectator and remains separated from its object. Second, although Descartes believes that the self may be known better than the body because it is unchangeable, but knowing one's own self does not guarantee an access to knowing the other's self. The other, or another thinking-substance recedes from our knowledge and stays undiscovered or unknown. It is possible to know myself by intuition but how can I know the other ? The self-substance theroy has not been abale to recognize these two problems and fails to deal with the complexity of the application of its account of human existence when the question of interpersonal relationship arises.

Generally speaking, the Cartesian analysis of human existence can be summarized in five points :

- * The belief in the existence of the self distinct from the body.
- * The self is known to be unchangeable.
- * The distinction between the self and mental activities.
- * The emphasis on the priority of an epistemological relationship.
between the self and the world.
- * The self is non-corporeal and cannot be known by perception.

Against these points we find philosophers Hume, Kant, and many contemporary thinkers, including Heidegger who have developed new theories by refuting Cartesian philosophy. Heidegger's throught is a new

challenge which aims at constructing a foundation for understanding human existence on the refutation of Cartesianism. The main arguments and the focus of his critique of Descartes in *Being and Time* can be set out as following :

- * The rejection of the theory of self-substance.
- * The rejection of the primacy of the epistemological relationship between the self and the world.
- * The rejection of mind-body dualism.

Heidegger rejects Descartes' analysis of human existence as a thinking-substance and describes human being as '*Dasein*' (Being-There) because *res cogitans* presupposes its own ontological ground, there will be no thinking without being. *Dasein* is an entity which intends itself and understands its own being. This attitude of *Dasein* is at the same time the realization of the possibilities and its existence is always towards these possibilities. For that, and in order to make a clear distinction between *Dasein* and other entities, Heidegger designates 'existence' (*Existenz*) to it rather than '*existentia*' which describes the being of other entities.⁴ *Existenz* and not '*Existentia*' captures the unique meaning of human existence because it is incomplete and dynamic and it is a being towards possibilities. On the contrary, '*Existentia*' signifies a static existence which is used by medieval metaphysicians to describe something actual and that is an inadequate term for describing a kind of being such as *Dasein*. With regard to *Dasein*, its being is at issue; it has to decide about its own being and then comport itself towards that. In opposition to *res cogitans*, *Dasein*'s authentic existence is possibility and not actuality.

Now after discussing Heidegger's refutation of the self-substance theory, we talk about the adoption of Husserl's phenomenology in studying *Dasein* by Heidegger which is another departure from Cartesian tradition. The terms 'Phenomenon' and 'Phenomenology' have been used by thinkers such as Kant and Hegel before Husserl. Kant, in his *Critique of Pure Reason* has made a distinction between two aspects of reality;

phenomenon and noumenon. The former was kept in the light of human knowledge while the latter remained inaccessible and hidden. Hegel used phenomenology as a descriptive method to explain dialectic stages through which consciousness develops itself with the help of inherent contradictions to the higher stages of progress. For Husserl and Heidegger the term 'Phenomenon' signifies something that exhibits itself or presents itself to experience.⁵ It is derived from a verb which means 'to show itself'⁶ and a phenomenon can be understood as something that shows itself to be seen from itself in the way in which it shows itself.⁷ Heidegger has gone further by making a distinction between phenomenon and appearance. Phenomenon is something which shows itself, '*das was sich zeigt, das Sichzeigende das Offenbar*' and this coming to the light of day can take multiple forms.⁸ This difference may be understood as the relationship between a disease and its symptoms. The symptoms are not the disease but are an indication of it and that simply means the disease as a phenomenon needs to manifest itself through the symptoms. Fever, for example, is a symptom of flu, but the flu is not fever. Appearance is not a phenomenon but the announcing of a phenomenon. It is something that depends on an appearance to announce itself. Appearance of a phenomenon is quite similar to the 'shining-forth' of 'Essence' in Hegel's logic, and it is possible, as Christopher Macann remarks that Heidegger has Hegel's logic in mind in his distinction between phenomenon and appearance.⁹ In 'The Doctrine of Logic', Hegel has distinguished two movements of 'Essence'; 'shining-in-itself' and 'shining-forth'. When 'Essence' is hidden and not revealed to consciousness, it is shining-in-itself and when it manifests itself, shines-forth and becomes appearance. In Hegel's logic appearance is not self-dependent, because it relies on 'Essence' to exist and such a dependence is interchangeable.¹⁰ In making this distinction between phenomenon and appearance, Heidegger does not intend to believe in transcendentalism of something beyond the realm of appearance in the Kantian sense. But when we think about a phenomenon as being distinct from its appearance it will remain transcendent and so it becomes accessible only through its manifestation as a disease is known through the

symptoms.

Heidegger employed Husserl's phenomenology in his investigation into the meaning of Being and Dasein, but before we deal with Heidegger's phenomenology it is important to say a few words about Husserl and his philosophical inquiry. Edmund Gustav Albrecht Husserl (1859-1938) was originally a mathematician. His passion for philosophy was developed under the influence of Franz Brentano, a philosopher and a psychologist at the University of Vienna. The main philosophical issue for him was a new foundation for cognition. To accomplish this, he believed, one should begin with the analysis of consciousness phenomenologically. This type of analysis is not concerned with psychic states of the mind but with intentionality of consciousness and the objects intended by it. Phenomenology as a method is then a turn to the phenomena intended by consciousness or to the things-in-themselves '*Zu den Sachen Selbst.*' This turn does not conceive of the phenomena as a reality of the second grade but objects that can be grasped intuitively prior to any presuppositions and prejudgements. Consequently, phenomenology can be defined as a method which describes the phenomena the way they show themselves to consciousness.

Intentionality stands against two kinds of beliefs; first, the denial of reality other than consciousness or solipsism and second, viewing consciousness as a monad closed in upon itself. In this regard, the intentional structure of consciousness becomes a foundation for ontological proof of the world. Since consciousness is consciousness of something then that something becomes the constitutive structure of consciousness and there can be no consciousness without object, as Sartre remarks "Consciousness is born supported by a being which is not itself."¹¹ Another way to describe the structure of consciousness is its transcendental character. In phenomenological method, consciousness is 'transcendental'. It is a necessary a priori condition for every experience. Consciousness is the only object that escapes the bracketing process in the phenomenological method and becomes the only presupposed foundation for knowledge.

It should be mentioned that Husserl was not interested in empirical facts. He wanted to develop phenomenology as an 'eidetic' science. For this purpose he made a distinction between two kinds of intuition, empirical and categorial. In the Sixth Logical Investigation, two titles have been used to describe these two kinds of intuition, 'Sensibility and Understanding' and then 'Sensuous and Categorial Intuitions'. The first title corresponds to the two faculties of human mind recognised by Kant but it is wrong to think that Husserl used these terms in the Kantian sense. For Kant, Understanding is bound to sensibility and cannot go beyond the empirical facts provided by sense experience. The categories in Kant's philosophy are subjective and deduced from the Aristotelian table of judgments, and are given by intuition. We can say that empirical intuition, resembles sensibility, because it is the source of empirical knowledge and discovers the facts which are accidental and conditioned by space and time.¹² Categorial intuition is non-empirical and is an immediate insight into the genus, species of each entity. It reveals the stable essences of the phenomena. This unchangeable structure of the phenomena is called "*Eidos*" or idea, and is defined as the 'universal' of which the particular is an instance.¹³ The goal of phenomenology is then the transition from the factual to these essential forms.

In order to reveal the "*Eidos*" of a phenomenon in our intuition it is necessary to go through two major stages known as the 'natural standpoint' and 'phenomenological standpoint'. Natural standpoint is also called 'Bracketing' the 'Epoche' and the second stage is phenomenological reduction. Natural standpoint is the most basic attitude of cognitive relationship to the objects, and it is different from scientific standpoint, because it is free from all presuppositions (*Voraussetzungslos*).¹⁴ Although taking a stand from presuppositionless might seem to be similar to Cartesian doubt in the First Meditation, Husserl does not begin with doubt. Scepticism is not an issue for him, and bracketing the world is in no way limited to doubt. It is a mere suspension of all kinds of pre-knowledge and judgments regardless of their being true or false. Natural standpoint is the first outlook upon the world from view point of a common human being

similar to sense-certainty in Hegel's phenomenology or knowledge by 'Acquaintance' in Russell's philosophy and as such is a simple way of looking at the world without presuppositions, before analyzing it into universal categories. Phenomenological standpoint or reduction can be termed as a moving away from empirical facts towards the unchangeable aspects of the transcendent. More clearly this reduction detects the persistent part of a phenomenon that can exist independently of the empirical facts. It is the discovery of a 'ground' on which empirical facts stand and present themselves to consciousness.¹⁵ In eidetic reduction every experience of a particular phenomenon is transformed into categorial intuition or discovering the universal determinations.

The main philosophical enterprise undertaken by Heidegger is entirely distinct from Husserl's. For Heidegger the problem is not methodology since Husserl has already produced one, but an inquiry into the meaning of Being with the help of that method, and he places emphasis on the "hermeneutic" characteristic of Dasein's understanding of its own existence.¹⁶ Philosophical hermeneutics was developed by Friedrich Schleiermacher as a theory of interpretation of text and he proposed that interpretation should be based on full understanding of the circumstances in which a text came into existence. According to this theory, the meaning of a text can be apprehended after understanding the meanings of its parts and understanding of the parts require a prior understanding of the whole text. Heidegger was first introduced to hermeneutics as a student at the Roman Catholic Theological Faculty of the University of Freiburg. He employed the term in his philosophy seeking to distinguish his phenomenology from that of Husserl. For Heidegger, then, hermeneutics was the interpretation of existentiality of human reality. His hermeneutic circle does not deal with the interpretation of the text but consists of a movement from the meaning of Dasein to the meaning of Being and then from Being to Dasein. It denotes an ontological inquiry by exploring the existence of Dasein as the only being capable of understanding itself and comporting itself towards the whole reality. The philosophical understanding of the being of Dasein rests upon such a disclosing future

project. Understanding the meaning of Being becomes intelligible when the question of the meaning of Dasein is answered. In Division 1, chapter 5 of *Being and Time*, Heidegger explains the relationship between Understanding and Interpretation and on his account, Understanding is not considered as a faculty in the human mind, but an existential which constitutes the ontological structure of Dasein.¹⁷ This approach towards understanding of 'Understanding' is unique and is one of Heidegger's radical steps in developing his philosophy of existence and modifying all theories of knowledge that consider understanding to be just a faculty to shed some light on the objects outside human mind. The hermeneutic circle of Understanding and Interpretation is applicable to the interpretation of all kinds of phenomena attempted to be understood. Interpretation is possible when a phenomenon (whether Dasein, a text or an equipment) is understood and its meaning is assigned to it.

The major function of interpretation is the revelation of meaning and meaning is not imposed on a phenomenon by consciousness because what is understood is actually the phenomenon in its web of relations with other phenomena and then after that we infer the meaning of what we experience. A phenomenon becomes intelligible only when it is understood by consciousness in the web of relations and meanings and since Understanding is an existential of Dasein, Dasein is the only entity to experience the phenomena in their web of relations and meanings and Dasein is the only one to assert the meaningfulness of the world. In this context in interpreting human existence, history and language function as a special type of precondition in the hermeneutic circle, because the being of Dasein does not rely on self-substance as the master of its own cognitive activity. The actual historical circumstances and language provide a set of preunderstandings which help Dasein to make understanding possible. This entails that understanding depends, in part, on social and historical standards and Dasein's interpretation of reality is not completely presuppositionless. Coming back to phenomenological method, Husserl's understanding of essence is not distinct from the traditional

interpretation of the term explained mainly by Aristotle and then later by the medieval and modern thinkers. Essence has been traditionally defined as the primary element of a thing without which that thing cannot exist the way it is.¹⁸ A phenomenon changes its empirical qualities without ceasing to exist, but it cannot continue to exist when its 'essence' is altered. If the essence of water is being liquid, a condition in which its particles move freely over each other, then by losing that property, water ceases to exist. But then changing empirical qualities, such as whether water is cold or hot, does not affect its being as water. In this case being liquid as a universal determination becomes the essence of water.

Husserl's view of 'essence' resembles that of Aristotle with the exception that Husserl does not claim explicitly that essence is cause of being of a phenomenon. But when we analyse the significance and task of universal determinations in his philosophy, one can reach the conclusion that Husserl accepts that all phenomena rely on universal determinations to exist in one way or another.¹⁹ According to Aristotle, essence which constitutes the being of each species is what it is said to be *propter se*.²⁰ The essence of water is not being cold or hot, but being liquid, because these empirical qualities are accidents, not necessary properties. The essence of water as being liquid is unchangeable and when it is lost, water would also cease to exist. This distinction between 'necessary qualities' and 'accidents' is based on the question "What is it?". This interpretation suggests that all qualities predicated to a subject in a proposition do not constitute the essence of that subject. And when we deal with the answer of the question we simply try to define the term by discovering its essence. Each statement expressed to answer "What is it?" is said to be a definition and an indication of its essence. The ideas of 'substance', 'essence', 'properties', and 'accident' have been discussed by many thinkers after Aristotle; including the rationalists and some of empiricist thinkers and these thinkers agreed with Aristotle that 'essence' consists of the primary elements of an object. John Locke, for example, as one of the empiricist thinkers of the modern age has made this point clear by drawing further distinction between two kinds of essence; the real and

nominal.²¹ The real essence, on his view is the internal constitution of things on which all perceived qualities depend. Locke also believed that the real essence is unknown or like the things-in-themselves are inaccessible to human mind. The nominal essence by contrast is the connotation of the term, a cluster of qualities which are applied to when we describe an object.²² The nominal essence of 'water', for example, is that complex idea the term 'water' stands for, like; being liquid, having certain weight and it quenches thirst. The real essence, which is transcendent, is the internal constitution of water on which the nominal essence depends. Locke remarks that real essence is God-made but their being ranked under such and such names or species depend on human understanding. On Locke's view we know nothing about real essences of the objects in the world, but only about the nominal essences which are qualities ascribed to each species the way the categories in Aristotelian logic are applied to the entities in the realm of human experiences. What I intend to explain here is that Husserl in his analysis of the meaning of 'essence' belongs to the traditional interpretation represented by Aristotle which defines 'essence' as a necessary constitution of being of the entities in the world. But since there is a fundamental distinction between the being of 'Dasein' and the being of the other entities, we need to make a clear distinction between two kinds of essence, and the traditional interpretation of essence is applicable only to the being of the entities other than Dasein. The essence of Dasein, then, should be defined differently and requires a new interpretation. This analysis, however, does not reduce from the paramount of traditional, Aristotelian interpretation but rejects its adequacy for understanding the essence of Dasein simply because Dasein is not a property of a substance whose essence is what it is, and no property can be counted as a 'cause' for its being. The unique characteristic of consciousness, as dynamic and incomplete, will not allow us to accept the traditional interpretation for it otherwise, it will be reduced to thinghood and its nature becomes universal, shared by all individual conscious beings. Heidegger's understanding of the being of Dasein is a revolt against the traditional way of thinking about human essence and his understanding of

essence is intimately connected with his departure from tradition, particularly, Cartesianism.

The first step to understand Heidegger's viewpoint is that the essence of Dasein is not a property of a substance whose essence 'it is'. This point relies on the analysis of Dasein's existential structure as a being with its own distinctiveness described in *Being and Time*, "The 'essence' [*Wesen*]" of this entity lies in its "to be" [*Zu-sein*]. Its Being-what-it-is [*was-sein*] (*essentia*) must, so far as we can speak of it at all, be conceived in terms of its Being (*existentia*). But here our ontological task is to show that when we choose to designate the Being of this entity as "existence" [*Existenz*], this term does not and cannot have the ontological signification of the traditional term "*existentia*"; ontologically, *existentia* is tantamount to Being-present-at-hand, a kind of Being which is essentially inappropriate to entities of Dasein's character. To avoid getting bewildered, we shall always use the interpretative expression "*present-at-hand*" for the term "*existentia*", which the term "*existence*", as a designation of Being, will be allotted solely to Dasein."²³

The distinction between Dasein's Being and the Being of the entities of present-at-hand has been clearly emphasized by Heidegger and that distinction is based on the ontological structure of each of these entities. If the traditional interpretation of essence is accepted for defining the essence of an entity such as Dasein, then human essence will be defined as some properties which have already been there or born with Dasein. In this case, Dasein cannot choose its own essence because it is born with it like a trade mark or properties of the entities present-at-hand and ready-to-hand. But the rejection of the Cartesian theory of self-substance is the denial of inborn properties or the denial of human nature for Dasein;

"The essence of Dasein lies in its existence. Accordingly, those characteristics which can be exhibited in this entity are not 'properties' present-at-hand of some entity which 'looks' so and so and is itself present-at-hand; they are in each case possible ways for it to be, and no more than that."²⁴

What we are looking for is the way Dasein can be understood, because now the problem of defining Dasein's essence is more complicated than before. If dasein does not possess properties like the entities of present-at-hand, then what does constitute its essence? In the light of Heidegger's previous statements, we are able to discover a number of themes. The 'essence' of Dasein is not a property of a substance in the Aristotelian sense, simply because Dasein's existence precedes its essence. Although Heidegger does not mention this explicitly but he believes that Dasein comes into existence and then only after that it obtains its own essence. Its essence, in this regard, is nothing more than "the possible ways for it to be". The appropriate answer to "What is it?" of Dasein is the interpretation of its existence in terms of realized possibilities which at the same time distinguish one Dasein from another. When we say, Salvador Dali is an artist, being an artist as one of the realized possibilities in the life of this artist becomes a component of his essence. But then this is not an inborn universal property to constitute the essence of Dali.

The uniqueness of this entity (Dasein) and its distinction from the other entities has also motivated Heidegger to avoid using traditional terms and categories in describing it. He has listed some general ontological determinations (the Existentials) for studying the Being of Dasein only.²⁵ The question which arises here is that, do these existentials constitute dasein's essence? The essence of Dasein which lies in its existence is quite distinct from the existentials described in *Being and Time*. Heidegger has not considered them to be component parts of Dasein's essence, because Dasein's essence is defined in terms of realized possibilities and these possibilities which are at variance from one individual to another are not universal determinations. If the existentials are taken to be components of Dasein's essence then the essence of this kind of being, like the essences of the objects of ready-to-hand and present-at-hand, becomes a composite of universal determinations shared by all individuals. In this case, there will be a single universal essence for all of them and Dasein's individuality will vanish.

The existentials are ontological conditions for the existence of

Dasein and not the components of its essence. We may say that breeding, for example, is a necessary condition for the life of an embryo to begin, but this contact is not the essence of an embryo. Similarly, if there is Dasein, it should exist in the world. Being-in-the-world is an ontological condition for the being of Dasein but this condition does not constitute its essence. If we wish to reject the traditional interpretation of 'essence' and consider Dasein to be essentially distinct from the other entities, this Heideggerian approach will be the only alternative. Accordingly, if Husserl's phenomenological reduction aims at detecting the essences of the phenomena and these essences are composed of universal determinations revealed in categorial intuition, then the phenomenological reduction will not be in a position to uncover the essence of Dasein, because Dasein's essence is not composed of universal determinations. Perhaps, phenomenological reduction can be utilized to reveal the 'existentials' rather than the essence of Dasein.

The 'existentials', like the categories of Understanding in Kant's "Transcendental Analytic", are necessary and *a priori*, but at the same time different. They are different from the categories because the categories which are transcendently deduced from the forms of judgments are conceived to be subjective-epistemological conditions for the possibility of knowledge.(26) The existentials by contrast, are ontological, and stand as objective principles outside the human mind as pre-conditions for human existence. However, one may understand the nature and characteristics of these existentials as *a priori* conditions for human existence in two ways; The existentials are presupposed by the existence of Dasein. If there is Dasein, then, it should be in the world, or space is always presented to it.

In "natural standpoint" Dasein shows itself the way it appears as something there on the platform of everyday life. In this situation 'others' prevail over the Being of Dasein and Dasein becomes 'somebody' other than its own possible self. This state of false selfhood is an inauthentic mode of existence and fallenness, *Vefallenheit*, where Dasein's self identification is at stake. In everydayness Dasein manifests itself to

consciousness as the "They" or as someone just like the others. The others, which are characterised by "They" are not this or that person, they are indefinite people without specific identifications. Since the "They" are not any definite others, are interchangeable and anyone can stand in for everybody else. Due to this character of the "They", the who of everydayness is (*Das Man*) without a face.²⁷ Inauthenticity, in this connection, seems to have ontological primacy to authenticity for Heidegger, because the Being of Dasein is grasped in "natural standpoint" as fallenness and Dasein is always in the-world-with-others or into which it has been thrown. These are, as we said, ontological conditions and necessary components of human existence. Fallenness is this becoming an inevitable character of Dasein's involvement in the world. Fallenness can also be understood positively in the sense that inauthentic mode of existence helps Dasein to be aware of losing itself and then to strive to obtain authenticity. Authenticity is achieved by projecting one's own self resolutely and this stand is not withdrawal from the others. It does not cut off Dasein from social responsibilities but brings the self right into the current concerned with being by possessing itself, by being the master of itself. Everydayness constitutes a network of practical ends and operational relations in which individuality and uniqueness of Dasein are not recognized. It is a system of activities and duties required by others to be fulfilled by Dasein and the essence of Dasein is defined by what one does in conformity with the system of these public requirements. Every Dasein has a proper professional label, for example, a teacher, a teller, a tram-conductor etc., and Dasein is identified with one of these professions. The "they" has its own way of existence maintaining distanciality and facticity.²⁸ An inauthentic mode of existence reduces Dasein's ability of understanding itself and its world by placing Dasein at a superficial level of life, relying mostly on ready-made knowledge and values provided by the "They". Inauthenticity as the denial of one's own possibilities is the state of alienation of Dasein from its own real essence. It is noteworthy that public life which is a primordial phenomenon revealed in "natural standpoint", has become an existential for Heidegger, and is Dasein's positive constitution and, "It

itself has, in turn, various possibilities of becoming concrete as something characteristic of Dasein [*seiner daseinsmassigen Konkrektion*].²⁹

In everydayness Dasein comes under the assailant of moods. The moods alter from one kind to another, for example, from happiness to sadness but they do not vanish and Dasein cannot escape them. This analysis of Dasein's ontological structure in everydayness is another departure from Cartesian tradition. The existential of Mood has become a primordial condition at this stage in the life of Dasein. This primacy of Mood to Understanding is based on two points; first, Mood is the dominant state of mind in everydayness and everydayness precedes Dasein's authentic mode of existence. Second, the existential of Mood is more general than the existential of Understanding. Dasein may not have an understanding of itself and a situation in which it is but it is always under the attack of moods." The fact that moods can deteriorate (*Verdorben werden*) and change over means simply that in every case Dasein always has some mood (*gestimmt ist*)³⁰ Mood discloses the facticity of Dasein as an entity that it has been thrown to the world. The notion of thrownness (*geworfenheit*) which has no connection with the religious myth of the Fall, determines the being of Dasein, by making it actual. Actuality reveals the "that-it-is" of Dasein exhibiting how one 'is' and how one finds oneself as an actual being. Actuality which is in the light of Being becomes the source of various kinds of moods assailing Dasein in everyday life. Dasein finds itself in a mood only when an event has become actual. No one can place him/herself in a specific mood for some thing or for an event which has not yet happened. Being in mood is a passivity, because it is an ability to be affected and attuned by the events in reality. It reveals the truth that Dasein is in the world living among the others. This aspect of the role of 'Mood' can also be understood better when 'Mood' is related to the existential of 'Care'. Dasein is assailed by mood in its relationships to the world and to others because it cares for them. This primordial relationship of Dasein to the world is emotional and unlike 'Perception' it does not require the presence of its object before consciousness. Even when objects of concern are not perceived, Dasein still cares

for them. The presence of objects are not fundamental for mood to assail and Dasein is attuned even by their non-existence, "....ontologically mood is primordial kind of Being for Dasein, in which Dasein is disclosed to itself prior to all cognition and volition, and beyond their range of their disclosure. And furthermore, when we master a mood, we do so by way of a counter mood: we are never free of mood,"³¹ Another significant role of 'Mood', as it is explained by Heidegger, is that, it gives birth to the revelation of 'Nothingness'. However, this explanation does not mean that 'Mood' becomes thinking because all of us know that "Mood" has a silent character, is speechless and no language is required for Dasein to be attuned by moods. But then how does mood become a ground for the revelation of 'Nothingness'?

For the answer to this question we need to refer to two further works of Heidegger; *On the Essence of Truth*, where he argues that the totality of Being is revealed in 'Mood'. And in *What is metaphysics ?* where he explains how thought is incapable of providing the source and the principle of all negations, namely, Nothingness, and how Nothingness is revealed in Dread (*Graun*) which is a kind of mood.³² By revealing 'Nothingness in Dread, Dasein will be able to transcend the given reality. But 'Nothingness', in Heidegger's ontology, has no attribute, it is also difficult to say that it is equivalent to pure 'isness' of Hegel's Dialectic Logic, because it is the negation of the totality of Being.

In inauthentic mode of existence, when Dasein feels at home with the "They", is primarily in the domain of 'Mood' and characterised by actuality. The "They" requires unexamined and uncritical style of existence and the possibilities of Dasein are abandoned to the disposal of the others. This mode of existence is alienation of Dasein from its own real essence, but we cannot say it is a state in which Dasein has no essence at all. Even when Dasein lives under the domain of the "They", its essence is defined in terms of the possibilities manipulated by others and as such are at the disposal of others.

Authentic mode of existence, unlike inauthenticity, is characterised

by 'Possibility' and 'Understanding'. Understanding, in *Being and Time* is not treated as a faculty of human mind but it is one of the existentials and an ontological condition for the Being of Dasein. It is Dasein's ability to apprehend its own existence and the world. In this context, Understanding does not consist of making propositions about the facts, it is the way of disclosedness which determines the whole life of the authentic mode of Dasein without which knowledge would not be possible. To be aware of one's own existence in the world and having possibilities depends upon Understanding. Possibilities, for Heidegger, do not have logical meaning and should not be mistaken for the concept of potentiality in Aristotle's metaphysics. Dasein is not determined by possibilities because Dasein is the creator and executor of the possibilities. This role of Understanding, in revealing Dasein's own possibilities, is called "Projection" (*Entwurf*). Dasein's authentic mode of existence is nothing more than self-projection towards future possibilities.

It is important to mention that Heidegger's interpretation of the existentials of Actuality and Possibility is the rejection of the traditional interpretation of actuality which considers actuality to be more significant and real than possibility. We have already discussed the significance of 'Possibility' for the authentic mode of existence and Dasein's essence is defined in terms of these possibilities. And then, 'Possibility' is connected with the revelation of truth. Inauthentic mode of existence, which is the state of false-consciousness and hiddenness is characterised by untruth, because truth is unhiddenness (*Alētheia*) but then hiddenness and the state of untruth in everydayness is unescapable. Dasein is incapable to emancipate itself immediately and reveal its own true essence by cultivating its own possibilities. Authenticity and truthfulness is achieved in resoluteness and conflict to eliminate all imposed condition by the 'they-self' in everyday life. In the conclusion, Dasein's being is such that it always has an understanding of its own being. To be Dasein is to have an understanding of itself and to intend itself as an end to be realized. It is only in light of such a projection that Dasein's essence can be understood at all. Our philosophical investigation must rest upon such disclosing projection of

Dasein rather than on traditional interpretation of essence, otherwise we fail to apprehend the true meaning of human reality.

NOTES

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24. *Ibid.*, section, 12,p.32.
25. Kant, Immanuel.*op.cit.*,A:79-83,B:105-109.26.
26. Heidegger, M., Section 53,p.78.
27. Heidegger,M..*op.cit.*,Section126,p.164.
28. *Ibid.*, Section 127,p.165.
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30. *Ibid.*, Section 134,p.173.
31. *Ibid.*, Section 136,p.175.
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ANNOUNCEMENT

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