

# Analysing dasein according to heidegger philosophy essay



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Martin Heidegger was a student of Husserl and even dedicated his book 'Being and Time' to him. However, he ended up going against a lot of Husserl's ideas. Where Husserl's phenomenology is a phenomenology of description of objects and how they present themselves to us, Heidegger's is a phenomenology of understanding and interpretation. As he says in 'Being and Time' (1973: 25), " Heidegger's phenomenology is not pure, - again going against his teacher, as Husserl strove for a pure phenomenological attitude - he incorporates existential ontology into his phenomenology, which means being historically situated in the world. Husserl wilfully chose to leave history unexamined because of the implications it would have had on his science - historical context would have made it impure. Heidegger's phenomenology is almost hermeneutical (understanding and interpreting our historically lived situation through texts), so much so he applies this hermeneutical approach to human beings. Heidegger wants to move away from subject (that which remains unchanging) and consciousness and look at Being and his concept of Da'sein.

This essay will examine Heidegger's concept of Da'sein as a movement away from Husserl's concept of consciousness of objects and subjectivity. It will begin by explaining what Da'sein is - and is not. Looking at it as ontologically situated in the world as having an understanding of the meaning of Being. It will then move on to looking at Da'sein as the entity of all entities and seeking for the meaning of Being. This will lead onto the concept of the they-self and everydayness and how Da'sein is situated in these which will inevitably move onto anxiety as a means of getting from the ' they' to the '

my'. This will link into the authentic and inauthentic self - authentic being one-self and inauthentic being the they-self.

Da'sein literally means Being-there (Polt, 1999: 29). It is not consciousness and it is not a person. It is not simply existence or a thing in the world. It is a verb - to exist. Da'sein is no-thing. It is the essential structure of a human being - the way of Being of a human being. It is not static in the world, but active towards the world (towards the world coming back to Husserl's idea of objects giving themselves towards the world). Da'sein exists understandingly - having the understanding of the meaning of Being - ontologically - always historically mediated. Da'sein is ontological insofar as it understands the meaning of Being - it only has an opaque and vague understanding of Being but it has some. " (Heidegger, 1973: 31). Da'sein is the condition of possibility of the world - so it can be considered transcendental. However, at its simplest Da'sein is just Being in the world.

Heidegger refers to Beings as entities - entities are anything that has existence (Polt, 1999: 2). He mentions that '). Entities are ontical - they are out there in the world. Da'sein is the entity that is distinct from all other entities in that it is out there and it exists towards the world. It is the entity of all entities. As Heidegger says in ' Being and Time' (1973: 32),' Entities present themselves towards the world simply as they are in their being.

Heidegger is interested in the meaning of Being. Things are but Being is nowhere - you cannot point to Being or Da'sein like you can point to an object. Da'sein is no-thing. ' We need to witness the no-thing of our Being - we need to look for the meaning of our Being or at least have an

understanding of it. Human existence - Da'sein - is being interrogated. The Being of our being is been asked about. To get to the meaning of Being, we must first go through the human being and the Da'sein. To do this, Heidegger talks about 'seeking' (ibid: 24). When we look for something we must have an idea of what we are looking for - we cannot look for something we have no experience of.

Da'sein is primordially temporal in three ways - 1. Existence: Da'sein's potentiality for Being projects Being on various possibilities. 2. Thrownness: Represents Da'sein's structure - phenomenon of the past that represents past as having been - historically. It could be argued that we are forced to be who we are because of our past - we ' 3. Fallenness: Being alongside Da'sein's place among other Da'seins made possible by those present and being in the world. It is the result of being thrown into the world from the past (ibid: 76). As Polt (1999: 76) says, 'The human needs to be taken away from this simple subjectivity and looked at in the broader sense - I am as 'they'. This is where the concept of Das-Man or the they-self comes into play. Da'sein has an aspect to itself as a they-self. The opinions that are out there. What other people tell us about ourselves determines us. In the they-self, the Da'sein is comfortable; it seeks refuge in the they-self. There is a tranquilising familiarity of the they-self. In the they-self we feel at home - but philosophy is not about feeling at home. We are on the run from our meaning of Being - we are on the run from ourselves. The they-self defines who we are so we can never really get out of it fully. The they-self is everydayness. ' Da'sein has to retrieve itself from the Das-Man in order to truly be itself. To do this, Heidegger says we must undergo anxiety.

Heidegger asks how do we get from the 'they' to the 'my'? Husserl suspends the empirical or natural attitude for the phenomenological. It is a wilful suspension. For Heidegger, suspension is affective and comes in the form of anxiety. He also wants to suspend the natural attitude for the phenomenological, but for him, he calls the natural attitude, the everyday. I am affected by anxiety. When I am anxious I'm brought back to my proper Da'sein. Anxiety is how we get from the 'they' to the 'my'. Heidegger says that we should let anxiety overcome us in order to get back to my-self or one-self. However, one-self is a task for Da'sein, as Da'sein is an entity concerned by its own being and is comforted by the they-self. We are anxious about our being in the world - our Being is determined by the fact that sometime we will not be in the world. My Being towards death is an indeterminable determinacy - there is something indeterminate about death, but it determines me. In this anxiousness we emancipate ourselves from the they-self. Letting anxiety overwhelm us, is the only way to get to our authentic self.

Heidegger says that we are merely actors in our daily lives and that we have to get back to who we really are. This is where authenticity and inauthenticity comes into practice. Da'sein encompasses both the authentic and inauthentic. There is a Da'sein of the 'they' and a Da'sein of the 'my'. Authenticity is who I am - it can be argued that we are trying to get back to our authentic selves. For the most part we are inauthentic and improper - we live through the they-self in everydayness. In the they-self the authentic self is dormant. However, we can never fully leave one or get into the other.

Heidegger (in Keane, N., 1927: 65) says, Silence, according to Heidegger is

how we get back to our-self - our authentic self. Not saying anything at all, says more than 'idle-talk'. As he says in 'Being and Time' (1973: 213), '

Being as Da'sein is Being toward the world. Being toward the world means concern. '). Heidegger says in 'Being and Time' (1973: 237), that at its most basic level, Being-in-the-world is care. As such, Da'sein is fundamentally care. Da'sein is always out ahead of itself - it is born into a world that already has meaning. Caring implies things that matter to us - so we do care about our Being (Polt, 1999: 79).

Da'sein is human existence. It is the way of Being for human beings. At its most basic it is Being-in-the-world - human's existence in the world. It is the entity of all entities - so it can be argued that it is the way of Being over all other ways of Being of human beings. Da'sein lives through the world in the everyday sense of the they-self. We are what other people perceive us to be. We can only truly be our authentic self by undergoing anxiety and letting it overwhelm us. Da'sein can be understood as the essence of human existence having lived through its historically lived situation. It is a part of a fundamental ontology. Da'sein is active towards the world as having a history by living through the world. It has to try find (seeking) its authentic self or 'ownness' through anxiety. Da'sein is basically Being-there - Being-in-the-world.