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Author(s): John Haugeland

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Heidegger on Being a Person

JOHN HAUGELAND

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

This paper presents a non-standard and rather free-wheeling interpretation of *Being and Time*, with emphasis on the first division.¹ I make Heidegger out to be less like Husserl and/or Sartre than is usual, and more like Dewey and (to a lesser extent) Sellars and the later Wittgenstein. My central point will be Heidegger's radical divergence from the Cartesian-Kantian tradition regarding the fundamental question: What is a person?

According to Aristotle, man is a logical or "word-using" animal, a political or "community-participating" animal, and a featherless biped. In a sense easier to appreciate than to explain, the last is only incidental, while the first two are important; but those two are not our only important differentia. People (and probably only people) make and use tools, play games, judge themselves and others critically, and develop cultural traditions. It may seem that apes and social insects share some of these characteristics, at least primitively; yet people are clearly quite distinctive. A satisfactory account of what it is to be a person would expose the roots of this distinction, thereby showing why certain differentia are important, and others only incidental.

For instance, Christian and modern philosophers interpreted Aristotle's "logical" as "rational," and proposed this rationality as our fundamental distinction. Thus Descartes held that people can talk *because* they can ratiocinate; and he could well have said the same for making and using tools. Similarly, Hobbes tried both to explain and to justify our living in a commonwealth by showing that it is rational. I see Heidegger, on the other hand, as starting from Aristotle's second definition—trying, in effect, to ground all other important differentia on our basic communal nature.

But how can we conceive animals that are "political" in the relevant sense, without presupposing that they are rational or word-using? My reconstruction of Heidegger's answer to this question is the foundation of my interpretation. Imagine a community of versatile and interactive creatures, not otherwise specified except that they are *conformists*.

“Conformism” here means not just imitativeness (monkey see, monkey do), but also censoriousness—that is, a positive tendency to see that one’s neighbors do likewise, and to suppress variation. This is to be thought of as a complicated behavioral disposition, which the creatures have by nature (“wired in”). It presupposes in them a capacity to react differentially (e.g., perception), and also some power to alter one another’s dispositions more or less permanently (compare reinforcement, punishment, etc.). But it does not presuppose thought, reasoning, language, or any other “higher” faculty.²

The net effect of this conformism is a systematic peer pressure within the community, which can be viewed as a kind of mutual attraction among the various members’ behavioral dispositions. Under its influence, these dispositions draw “closer” to each other, in the sense that they become more similar; that is, the community members tend to act alike (in like circumstances). The result is analogous to that of gregariousness among range animals: given only their tendency to aggregate, they will tend also to form and maintain distinct herds. Other factors (including chance) will determine how many herds form, of what sizes, and where; gregariousness determines only that there will be herds—distinguishable, reidentifiable clusters of animals, separated by clear gaps where there are no animals (save the odd stray).

When behavioral dispositions aggregate under the force of conformism, it isn’t herds that coalesce, but *norms*. Other factors (including chance) will determine the number of norms, how narrow (strict) they are, and where they are in the “space” of feasible behavior; conformism determines only that there will be norms—distinct, enduring clusters of dispositions in behavioral feasibility space, separated in that space by clear gaps where there are no dispositions (save the odd stray). Like herds, norms are a kind of “emergent” entity, with an identity and life of their own, over and above that of their constituents. New animals slowly replace the old, and thus a single herd can outlast many generations; likewise, though each individual’s dispositions eventually pass away, they beget their successors in conformist youth, and thereby the norms are handed down to the generations.

The clusters that coalesce can be called “norms” (and not just groups or types) precisely because they are generated and maintained by censoriousness; the censure attendant on deviation automatically gives the standards (the extant clusters) a *de facto* normative force. Out-of-step behavior is not just atypical, but abnormal and unacceptable; it is what one is “not supposed to” do, and in that sense improper. Norms should not be confused with conventions (in David Lewis’, 1969, sense), which are “tacit” or “as if” agreements, where the parties have settled on a certain arranged behavior pattern, for mutual benefit. Though nothing is implied about the origin of these arrangements, their persistence is explained by showing how, for each individual, it is

rational to go along with whatever pattern is already established. The difference between norms and conventions lies in this explanatory appeal: conformism does not depend on any rational or interest-maximizing decisions (and thus the norms themselves need not be beneficial). Also, insofar as conventions depend on rational self-interest, they forfeit the normative force of norms.

The total assemblage of norms for a conforming community largely determines the behavioral dispositions of each non-deviant member; in effect, it defines what it is to *be* a “normal” member of the community. Heidegger calls this assemblage the *anyone*.³ (Perhaps Wittgenstein meant something similar by “forms of life.”) I regard it as the pivotal notion for understanding *Being and Time*.

Unlike a scatter of herds, the anyone is elaborately organized and structured, because the norms that make it up are highly interdependent. It is crucial that what get normalized are not, strictly speaking, actual instances of behavior, but rather dispositions to behave, contingent on the circumstances. Thus, norms have a kind of “if-then” structure, connecting various sorts of circumstance to various sorts of behavior. It follows that the conforming community (in the differential responses of normal behavior and normal censorship) must effectively categorize both behavior and behavioral circumstances into various distinct sorts. We say that the anyone *institutes* these sorts.

Imagine, for instance, that the rules of chess were not explicitly codified, but were observed only as a body of conformist norms—“how one acts” when in chess-playing circumstances. Thus, it is proper (socially acceptable) to move the king in any of eight directions, but only one square at a time. For this to be a norm, players and teacher/censors must be able to “tell” (respond differentially, depending on) which piece is the king, what the squares and directions are, what counts as a move, and so on. According to other norms, the king starts on a given square, must be protected whenever attacked, cannot cross a threatened square, can castle under certain conditions, etc. The important point is that it is the *same* king, the same instituted sort, that’s involved in each norm; hence, the norms themselves are interrelated in depending on the same sorting of circumstances. We call a sort which is involved in many interrelated norms a *role*—e.g., the role of the king in chess. Many norms are also related through the sorting of squares, moves, threats, other kinds of pieces and what have you; obviously, in fact, all the norms and roles of chess are bound up in a deeply interdependent bundle.

Heidegger makes these points in terms of the equipment and paraphernalia of everyday life; but the upshot is the same. Hammers, nails, boards, and drills, screwdrivers, screws, and glue are all bound together in a (large) nexus of intertwined roles, instituted by the norms of carpentry practice; and that’s what makes them what they are.

Consider what marks off our use of tools from the uses apes sometimes make of sticks, or ants of aphids. It isn't that people use things more cleverly, or more effectively, or that only we use them to fashion other things, though all of these may be true. The main difference is that tools have proper uses—for each tool, there is “what it's for.” If an ape uses a stick to get bananas, whether cleverly or not, whether successfully or not, it has in no sense used it either properly or improperly. You or I, on the other hand, might use a screwdriver properly to drive in screws, or improperly to carve graffiti on the subway wall; and either way, the propriety is independent of our cleverness or success. One misuses (or abuses) a screwdriver to gouge walls—that's not what screwdrivers are for. An ape could not misuse a stick, no matter what it did.

Being a screwdriver, like being a chess-king, is being that which plays a certain role, in relation to other things with inter-determined roles. These mutually defining role relations are constitutive of equipment or paraphernalia as such. Though Heidegger distinguishes and names quite a few varieties (especially sections 15-17), we need only his generic term, *referral*.⁴

Taken strictly, there never “is” *an* equipment. . . . In the structure [essential to equipment] there lies a *referral* of one thing to another. . . . Equipment always accords with its [own] equipmentality *by* belonging to other equipment: pen, nib, ink, blotter, table, lamp, furniture, windows, doors, room. (p. 68)⁵

The totality of all paraphernalia *cum* referral relations is called the “referral nexus of significance”; but since paraphernalia is taken broadly enough to include practically everything with which we ordinarily work, cope, or bother (except other people), this totality is tantamount, in fact, to the everyday world.

The everyday world, of course, is not the universe or the planet Earth, but rather the “world” of daily life and affairs—the world which has the business world and the wide world of sports as specialized portions.⁶ It is essentially a cultural product, given determinate character by—instituted by—the norms of the conformists who live in it.

The anyone itself . . . articulates the referral nexus of significance. (p. 129)

This is a central thesis of *Being and Time*, which I venture to sum up in a memorable slogan: *All constitution is institution*.

Language, not surprisingly, is entirely on a par with the (rest of the) everyday world, as fundamentally instituted and determined by conformist norms. This is one area, however, where recent “social

practice” accounts are decidedly more sophisticated than *Being and Time*; so I rest with quoting two passages exhibiting the basic idea:

But signs are above all themselves equipment, whose specific equipmental character consists in *indicating*. . . . Indicating can be defined as a “species” of referral. (p. 77)

and

[The referral nexus of] significance. . . harbors within itself the ontological condition for the possibility . . . [of disclosing] “signification,” on which are founded in turn the possible being of word and language. (p. 87; compare p. 161)

The important point is that linguistic forms are understood as (special) equipment, and hence the word/object reference relations are just a special case of interequipmental referral relations—which suggests another slogan: *All intentionality is instituted referral*.

We are at last in a position to address the fundamental question for any interpretation of *Being and Time*: What is *Dasein*? According to the text, the anyone (pp. 126-30), the world (pp. 64, 364, and 380), language (p. 166), and even the sciences (p. 11) all have “*Dasein*’s kind of being.” We can make sense of this astonishing diversity if we understand *Dasein* to be the anyone and everything instituted by it: a vast intricate pattern—generated and maintained by conformism—of norms, normal dispositions, customs, sorts, roles, referral relations, public institutions, and so on.⁷ On this reading, the anyone, the (everyday) world, and language are different coherent “subpatterns” within the grand pattern that is *Dasein*; they have *Dasein*’s kind of being because each of them *is Dasein* (though none of them is all of *Dasein*). Within the anyone and all it institutes, the science of chemistry is a coherent subpattern: chemistry is *Dasein*—and so are philately, Christmas, and Cincinnati.

There is, however, one crucial omission from the foregoing list. According to the first sentence of the book proper (p. 41), we are ourselves *Dasein*. But this is the most misunderstood sentence in all of Heidegger. For readers have surmised that ‘*Dasein*’ is just a newfangled term for ‘person’ (or ‘ego’ or ‘mind’)—in other words, that each of us is or has one *Dasein*, and there is a *Dasein* for each of us. This is wrong; and the first indication is a simple textual point. ‘Person’ is a count noun (we can “count” a person, several people, and so on); *Dasein* is (virtually) never used as a count noun.⁸ On the other hand, it isn’t a mass noun either (such as ‘water’ or ‘gold’); *Dasein* can no more be measured out (e.g., in gallons or ounces) than it can be counted. Grammatically, ‘tuberculosis’ is a closer analogy. We neither count “tuberculososes” nor

measure amounts of it; it comes, rather, in distinct occurrences or cases (which can, of course, be counted). A person is like an occurrence or “case” of *Dasein*—except that one doesn’t catch it, let alone get over it. *Dasein* is not a species of which we are specimens, a type of which we are tokens, a feature which we have, a spirit which is in us, a condition which we are in, or even a whole of which we are parts (though that’s closest). People are to *Dasein* as baseball games are to baseball, as utterances are to language, as works are to literature. *Dasein* is the overall phenomenon, consisting entirely of its individual “occurrences,” and yet prerequisite for any of them being what it is. English lacks a convincing word for this relation; so I will settle for saying that a person is a *case* of *Dasein*.⁹

People are, in one sense, on a par with everything else the anyone institutes; they are identifiable coherent subpatterns within the overall pattern that is *Dasein*. Intuitively, each person is that pattern of normal dispositions and social roles that constitutes an individual member of the conforming community. Now, it is a fundamental requirement of the story so far that *Dasein* have such “member-patterns” (conformists); but nothing has been said about what distinguishes these patterns either from one another, or from other subpatterns of *Dasein*—in effect, a “top-down” version of the personal identity problem. We can emphasize both this remarkable doctrine and the special difficulty it raises with a cryptic third slogan: *People are primordial institutions*. In other words, you and I are institutions, like General Motors, marriage, and the common law, except that we are “primordial.” What could that mean?

Try to imagine a conforming community whose members are (physically) like beehives; that is, each bee is just an organ or appendage of some conformist hive, and many such hives make up the group. These hives imitate and censure one another, thus sustaining norms of hive behavior. But what is hive behavior? If a particular bee visits a forbidden flower, how is that the hive’s doing, and not the bee’s? Well suppose, as a matter of physiological fact, that stinging any one bee would tend to suppress whatever any bees in her hive were (recently and conspicuously) engaged in; so, to keep bees away from forbidden flowers, it suffices to sting the sisters of any one that wanders. In effect, the hive as a whole is held to account for the activity of its parts; and it (the hive) is made to change its ways. Compare this with spanking a child’s bottom when it (the child) steals with its fingers, or blasphemes with its mouth. The whole hive, like the whole child, is one “unit of accountability,” and therefore the “subject” of the behavior, because it is what takes the heat, and learns from “its” mistakes. By the same token, it can be one member of a conforming community.

Units of accountability are as structured and multifarious as the norms to which they are held. Trivially, for instance, institutions of enduring ownership and debt require enduring owners and debtors. More important, many norms require “sorting” community members in the standard sorting of behavioral circumstances; thus, if you’re a sargeant and you encounter a captain, then salute. In other words, what a unit of accountability is accountable for is a function of its official rank—or, more generally, its various social and institutional roles. There is an obvious analogy between these social roles, and the roles which define equipment; but paraphernalia are never held to account (censured), no matter how badly they perform. Social roles (“offices”) are roles whose players are accountable for how they play them.

Each unit of accountability, as a pattern of normal dispositions and social roles, is a subpattern of *Dasein*—an institution. But it is a distinctive institution, in that it can have behavior as “my” behavior, and can be censured if that behavior is improper; it is a case of *Dasein*. Moreover, institutions of this kind are essential to all others; for without accountability there would be no censorship, hence no norms, no anyone, no *Daesin* at all. Thus, accountable cases are “primordial” institutions. Heidegger places this structure, which he calls “in-each-case-mineness” (*Jemeinigkeit*; p. 42), among *Dasein*’s most fundamental characteristics.

There is more, however, to primordial cases of *Dasein* than conformist accountability. To see what it is, we must unpack a fourth slogan—this time, one which Heidegger himself states and emphasizes:

*The “essence” of Dasein lies in its being extant.*¹⁰

“Being extant,” of course, is one of the basic technical notions of *Being and Time*; it is not at all the same as “being real”—indeed, these are contrasted. Reality is the mode of being of the traditional *res*, the independent “thing” or substance. *Dasein*, it should be clear by now, is not a thing in any traditional sense; it is not real, but extant. By the same token, electrons and galaxies are not extant (but real). The contrast is not invidious in either direction—there genuinely *are* both extant and real beings (entities). Nor, strictly speaking, is it exhaustive: mutually defining (interdependent) paraphernalia are neither real (independent things) nor extant (*Dasein*), but “available”; and there are other modes as well.¹¹

Roughly, to be extant is to be instituted; but Heidegger doesn’t put it that way. The closest he comes to a definition is more like: something is extant if what (or “who”) it is, in each case, is its own efforts to

understand what (or who) it is (see. e.g., pp. 53, 231. and 325). Now there may be some plausibility to saying that who we are is, in part, a function of our self-understanding: I'm a pacifist or a baseball fan if I think I am. But nothing I could think would make me emperor, let alone Napoleon; and much more than my self-image seems involved in my being a philosophy teacher, an electronics hobbyist, a middle-aged man, and so on.

The problem concerns the notion of "understanding"; Heidegger says:

We sometimes use . . . the expression "understanding something" to mean "being able to manage an undertaking," "being up to it," [or] "knowing how to do something." (p. 143)

Understanding something is equated with competence or know-how. So, the person who "really understands" race cars is the one who can make them go fast, whether by fine tuning or fine driving (two ways to understand them); understanding formal mathematics amounts to mastery of the formalisms, ability to find proofs, and such like. But what, in this sense, could be meant by "*self*-understanding"? What would be the relevant "know-how"?

Well, it would be each individual's ability to be him or herself, to manage his or her own life—in other words, knowing how (in each case) to be "me". And what know-how is that? According to Heidegger, any and all know-how that I may have is *ipso facto* some portion of my knowing how to be me. If I understood race cars in the way that mechanics do, then I would know how to be a race-car mechanic—which, in part, is what I would be. Even theoretical understanding, e.g., of electrons, is a sophisticated and specialized aspect of knowing how to be a person of a certain sort: a quantum mechanic, say.

So far, however, this is only "dispersed" self-understanding, in terms of separate worldly roles; it lacks any character of understanding oneself as a complete individual—as a *self*. Imagine a chess-playing device which can come up with a strong move for any given position. but which lacks any overall sense of trying to win. The collected moves of such a device do not really add up to a complete game, but are only a series of unconnected exercises; it doesn't really play chess. Analogously, a collection of dispersed roles does not really add up to a whole person, a complete "life". What is left out is *trying* to understand oneself (as such).

Two preliminary observations are in order before proceeding. First, every normal conformist is at the same time a unit of accountability and a censorious guardian of the tradition. Each normal disposition to do *A* in circumstances *C* is, by the very nature of conformism, paired

with another disposition to censure any failures to do *A* in *C*. But these dispositions are distinct, meaning that it is possible to censure one's own failures. Thus, a conformist unit of accountability is also a potential unit of self-accountability. Second, in my pains to avoid any hidden presupposition of mentality or reason, I have spoken exclusively of dispositions, behavior, and know-how—making everything sound “mindless” and inarticulate. But of course it isn't. Among *Dasein's* many institutions are those of language and explicit consideration. These can be particularly relevant to a serious effort at self-understanding: what I say about myself, for example, and why. Moreover, they enable a case of *Dasein* to judge its own dispositions without actually acting them out. It doesn't have to wait and see what it would do in a certain situation; it can “ask itself”. And if it then disapproves, it doesn't have to spank its own bottom; it can “change its mind”.

Invariably, a case of *Dasein* plays many roles. What is proper for it on any occasion will be a function of what roles these are; some priests, for instance, aren't supposed to have love affairs, though other bachelors may. Also invariably, the demands of these roles will often conflict. What is appropriate for me, the breadwinner, may not be compatible with what is appropriate for me, the aspiring artist, not to mention me, the shop foreman, me, the political activist, and me, the would-be adventurer, dreaming of the orient. This gives self-understanding, the ability to be me, a more challenging aspect.

All these competing proprieties must somehow be juggled; and there are basically two ways to do that. One, of course, is just to “slide,” to take at each moment the path of least resistance. That means attending to whatever proprieties happen, at that moment, to be the most conspicuous or pressing, forgetting about whatever others are temporarily out of sight. This is to remain dispersed in the worldly. The opposite possibility is to confront the conflicts, and resolve them: that is, to make up one's mind.¹² Trying to understand oneself is seeking out and positively adjudicating the conflicting requirements of one's various roles, in the exercise of a higher-level disposition which we might call “self-criticism” (I think it's close to what Heidegger means by “conscience”).

A case of *Dasein* is genuinely self-critical when, in response to discovered tensions among its roles, it does something about them. Thus, I might quit the priesthood and embrace my lover, or decide to subordinate everything to my art. The important point is that I don't just let some dispositions override others (which may be weaker at the moment); rather, in the light of some, I resolutely alter or eliminate others. As a unit of self-accountability, I find and root out an inconsistency in my overall self-understanding; instead of vacillating unwittingly between one “me” and another, I become one of them (or

perhaps a third) constantly and explicitly, and thereby achieve a “truer” self-understanding.

All self-critical adjudication is among current roles. In terms of the whole, some may be rejected, others adjusted; but there is no external or higher standard against which all are judged. The only end is self-constancy—a clearer, more coherent self-understanding ability to be me. When a role survives such critical scrutiny (perhaps adjusted), Heidegger says it is “taken over as one’s own” (*zugeeignet*; M&R: appropriated). It is no longer my role just because I happen to play it, but mine because I claim it, by my own choice. Insofar as self-understanding critically takes over its roles, it is said to be *self-owned* (*eigentlich*; M&R: authentic). Inconstant (dispersed and wavering) self-understanding is, in the same terms, *disowned* (but, of course, it’s still *je meines*: in each case mine). A disowned case of *Dasein* does not lack a self or “personality,” even a subtle and distinctive one; it’s just unself-critical. “Who” it is is still determined by its self-understanding, but this understanding remains unexamined and dispersed in the world.

The opposite of dispersal, self-owned-ness, is, roughly, “getting your act together.” As the resolution of conflicts that lead to wavering inconsistency, it is also *resoluteness*. Everything that is owned, everything that is gotten together or resolved upon, is adopted in the first place from the anyone; except for small variations, there is no other source for ways of understanding oneself. To be self-owned (“authentic”) is not to rise above the anyone, not to wash away the taint of common sense and vulgar custom, but rather to embrace (some part of) what these have to offer in a particular selective way. The result is a critically realized, maximally self-constant ability to lead an individual, cohesive, limited life: *mine*! This is what’s at stake in trying to understand oneself.

It is also the rest of what is meant by saying that people are “primordial” institutions. Nobody is every wholly disowned or wholly self-owned; mostly, we’re in between. Moreover, that’s essential. The very possibility of multiple roles, and thus of community and *Dasein* in any nontrivial sense, depends on a fair measure of routine self-constancy in the member “cases”. That people try to understand themselves, and hence are always self-owned in some manner and degree, is as much a prerequisite on the possibility of *Dasein* as that they are primitive loci of accountability (*je meines*). Heeding the call to this self-critical effort (conscience), and not mere conformist accountability, is fully-human responsibility. Thus Heidegger can say that to be extant is to be that being the cases of which try to understand themselves: in being what they are, who they are is an issue to them.

Portions of these last few paragraphs may sound disconcertingly “existentialist,” as, indeed, do large tracts of *Being and Time*. But, though the comparison is not empty, it is more often misleading than

helpful. The central question is not how to be a “knight of faith” or a “superman,” let alone a “futile passion,” but rather what it is to be a person at all. I have tried to sketch an account of how our distinctively human use of tools and language, sense of custom and propriety, and capacity for self-criticism might all be grounded in our distinctive communality. According to the analysis, a person is not fundamentally a talking animal or a thinking thing, but a case of *Dasein*: a crucial sort of subpattern in an overall pattern instituted by conformism, and handed down from generation to generation. If the same account turns out also to lend an insight into the special existentialist concerns of personal integration and self-ownership . . . well then, so much the better.¹³

NOTES

¹Heidegger (1927); all page citations are to this text, unless otherwise indicated; translations are my own. For reference, the German pagination is reproduced in the margins of the Macquarrie and Robinson (1962) translation; when necessary, this translation will be cited by the initials “M&R”.

²Conformism is deeply related to the crucial notion of “falling”; compare also the discussion of “*Sorge um . . . Abstand*” (p. 126).

³*Das Man* (M&R: the “they”); see, e.g., pp. 126f, 194. and 288.

⁴*Verweisung* (M&R: reference or assignment); the sense of the German is roughly “being sent or directed, by or away from one thing, toward another,” for which English lacks a comfortable equivalent. But nuances in the original are at best a guide; *a priori*, it’s just as likely that no German word is exactly right as that no English word is. Philosophical sense is ultimately determined not by dictionaries or etymologies, but by examples and the doctrines themselves.

⁵Dewey makes a similar point: “A tool is a particular thing, but it is more than a particular thing, since it is a thing in which a connection, a sequential bond of nature is embodied. It possesses an objective relation as its own defining property. . . . its primary relationship is to other external things, as the hammer to the nail, and the plow to the soil.” (1925, p. 103)

⁶Compare *Welt*, sense 3, p. 65, and *Umwelt*, p. 66.

⁷Compare this with Dewey’s remark about “mind” (which he clearly distinguishes from personal consciousness): “. . . the whole history of science, art, and morals proves that the mind that appears *in* individuals is not as such individual mind. The former is in itself a system of belief, recognitions, and ignorances, of acceptances and rejections, of expectancies and appraisals of meanings which have been instituted under the influence of custom and tradition.” (1925, p. 180; compare p. 184)

⁸The Macquarrie and Robinson translation, however, is poor in this regard; thus, they render the opening sentence (just mentioned) as: “We are ourselves the entities to be analysed [i.e., *Dasein*].” The plural ‘entities’ would suggest a count noun, but the German is singular; such errors are common. (But on rare occasions, Heidegger himself seems to slip up; see e.g., pp. 240 and 336.)

⁹German doesn’t have a terrific term for it either; when Heidegger wants to speak of individuals, he qualifies with ‘*je*’ or ‘*jeweilig*’, meaning, roughly, “in each case,” or “in the given case.”

¹⁰p. 42 (italics and scarequotes in original); compare pp. 117, 212, 231, 318, etc.

¹¹I have been taking some liberties. ‘Being extant’ translates ‘*Existenz*’ (German lacks the cognate pair we have in English); ‘being real’ translates ‘*Vorhandensein*’ (M&R: presence-at-hand), which is not strictly correct, but pedagogically defensible in the context of *Being and Time*; ‘being available’ translates ‘*Zuhandensein*’ (M&R: readiness-to-hand). For relevant texts, see pp. 42, 69, 92, 211f, and 313f.

¹²Readers familiar with *Being and Time* will notice that “forgetting,” “remaining dispersed in the worldly,” and “resolution” (and also several other expressions in the following paragraphs) are theoretical notions, discussed at length by Heidegger.

¹³This paper would not have been possible were it not for years of close and fruitful collaboration with Bert Dreyfus. I am also grateful for comments and questions from Bob Brandom, Jerry Massey, Nick Rescher, and the audiences at Ohio State University, Yale University, and the Council for Philosophical Studies Summer Institute on Phenomenology and Existentialism, where earlier versions were read and discussed.

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