The Problem of Speech in 'Being and Time'*

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Heidegger's publications following Being and Time have the mark of a steadily maturing thinker. Nevertheless, Being and Time is read today with the same interest as it was when it was first published in 1927. The reason for this is that it remains Heidegger's major work with respect to the problems raised. It sets the stage for what would occupy Heidegger in the future. The so-called 'turn' (Kehre) after Being and Time is less a shift in Heidegger's thinking than, in tune with the meaning of the term Kehre, a bend in the road without changing the direction. With Being and Time Heidegger came into his own.

During the first quarter of our century a good number of philosophers argued for the independence of philosophy from psychology. Heidegger's dissertation Die Lehre vom Urteil im Psychologismus, 1914 [The Doctrine of Judgment in Psychologism] was among these. It refuted the theory of those who, like W. Wundt in his Logic, did not distinguish between psychological and philosophical questioning. ¹ Any interpreter of Being and Time should keep in mind the anti-psychological stance which forms an essential part of Heidegger's philosophizing. The essay Heidegger wrote to become instructor at the university (Habilitationschrift) entitled Die Kategorien- und Bedeutungslehre des Duns Scotus, 1916 [The Doctrine of the Categories and Meanings in Duns Scotus] was inscribed 'Heinrich Rickert in most grateful admiration' (Heinrich Rickert in dankbarster Verehrung).² This is significant because Rickert belonged to the group of philosophers who wanted to free philosophy from psychology. He was also a noted representative of the Neokantian school and of the theory of values which Heidegger later rejected. In Being and Time Heidegger mentioned Rickert only once, criticizing his treatment of history 'as an object of a science'.³

Though his dissertation and the Duns Scotus habilitation essay are quite

* Being and Time will be quoted according to the German edition of 1953. The page numbers are identical with those in the margin of the English translation by Macquarrie and Robinson. The translations in the text are my own.
dated, especially in the questions they raise, they nevertheless give clear
indications that Heidegger like other thinkers of the time is groping his
way out of the prevailing philosophical situation. In the introduction to his
dissertation Heidegger praises Husserl’s *Logical Investigations* because ‘they
have broken the fascination with psychology and started a clarification of
logic and its tasks’. In the *Duns Scotus* essay Husserl’s phenomenology is
still more visible. In addition, topics such as meaning, speech and reality
occupy a central place. In Heidegger’s own judgment these themes
heralded things to come. In the preface to his recently published *Frühe
Schriften*, Heidegger writes that ‘hidden in the problem of categories was
the question of Being, in the form of the doctrine of meaning, the problem
of speech. The belonging together of the two questions remained still in the
dark’. In a final chapter Heidegger calls attention to the necessity to see the
problem of the categories (that is, the understanding mind) in a historic
context. We should note, however, that neither the concept of history
suggested in the *Duns Scotus* essay nor in the lecture The Concept of Time in
the Science of History (1915) allows any anticipation that would characterize
the development of the theme of history and historicity in *Being and Time*. Readers of *Being and Time* will notice its repeated references to religious
writers. One must keep in mind that Heidegger started his university
education with theology. As we shall see this fact is important in relation
to his concept of speech. After two years, however, Heidegger switched
to philosophy and combined with it the study of the natural and human
sciences. His thorough acquaintance with the latter disciplines gives
authority to his discussion of matters pertaining to them. Still other
cultural influences that preceded the publication of *Being and Time*
moulded his intellectual character. Early in his career Heidegger showed a
predilection for Hölderlin, Rilke and Trakl, poets who held his attention
throughout his life. During what he called ‘the exciting years 1910–1914’,
he studied the second edition of Nietzsche’s *Will to Power*, Hegel, and
Schelling, and in translation read Kierkegaard and Dostoevski. During the
same period Heidegger familiarized himself with the *Collected Works* of
Wilhelm Dilthey whose views on history helped Heidegger define his
own thoughts on the subject in *Being and Time*. The full significance of his
broad cultural interests comes to the fore only after *Being and Time*. Nevertheless, if one reads *Being and Time* with a sensibility for nuances one
will discover that the author’s inner preparation for the task he set himself
in this work was a result of his broad formal and privately pursued
education.

In view of the staggering number of problems raised in *Being and Time*
one can assume that the gestation period was much longer than the actual
writing, which Heidegger began in 1923 when he came to Marburg
University. It is not surprising, therefore, that *Being and Time* owed its
publication to an external motive.
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Before Being and Time appeared, Heidegger already had a devoted following among students. The reason for this is revealing also in relation to the philosophical approach Heidegger took in Being and Time. As a teacher Heidegger did not engage in theoretical observations about a philosopher but traced his thinking process step by step. Those of us who were familiar with the Neokantian school, for example, had learned to see in Kant a spokesman for transcendental logic. Heidegger, on the other hand, placed Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason in an ontological context. The basis for any interpretation of the Critique, Heidegger thought, is man’s condition as a finite being existing in a ‘world’† of objects. From man’s finiteness it follows that he has no immediate knowledge of objects, but needs the empirical intuitions of space and time to establish a relation between himself and entities. Time is for Kant the more universal intuition because all perceptions have the character of being inner temporal events of the subject and because indirectly the temporal structure also applies to what appears in perceptions. The mind’s power of imagination is, according to Heidegger, the element that unifies pure thinking and pure intuitions.1 These few sentences may show how Heidegger proceeded in order to elucidate the ontological roots of the Critique of Pure Reason. It was precisely Heidegger’s ability to lay bare the very foundations of any philosophy that impressed his students so much. It was also the reason why Being and Time, which broke new philosophical ground, was received with immense enthusiasm. It had the impact of a revolution in philosophy.

1. THE NEW BEGINNING OF BEING AND TIME: DASEIN AS BEING-IN-THE-WORLD

The philosophical innovativeness of Being and Time has several aspects. Most important for our understanding of what Heidegger achieved with his major work is the starting point. Despite the many inspirations he received from Husserl, Heidegger applied Husserl’s battle-cry ‘Back to the things themselves’ in his own way. The focus of Husserl’s philosophy is on ideal essences that are immanent in the consciousness of a transcendent subject. When in his later writings Husserl introduced the concept of a ‘life world’ the latter was still a ‘world’ reflected in consciousness. In Heidegger’s view Husserl’s phenomenology, although positing the intentional character of consciousness, did not overcome the Cartesian dualism of subject and object. In order to avoid such a dichotomy Heidegger based his investigations in Being and Time not on consciousness but on the concrete situation in which human existence — Dasein — finds itself. This shift in emphasis is in Heidegger’s own judg-

† World is put in quotation marks when it is used in the traditional sense which is different from the meaning Heidegger gives it.

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ment a major accomplishment of Being and Time. As late as 1966, on the occasion of a seminar on Heraclitus which he conducted with Eugen Fink at the University of Freiburg, he called attention to this fact. Criticizing Sartre's translation of Dasein as être-là, Heidegger made the following comment:

But with this translation everything which has been gained with Being and Time and which amounts to a new position is lost. Is man there like a chair? . . . The Da[tein] is the clearing and openness of entities that man faces. The knowledge of consciousness, representation, is something totally different. How is consciousness, knowledge as representation, related to Dasein? . . . Consciousness is only possible on the ground of Da as a mode derived from it. On the basis of this, one must understand the historic step taken in Being and Time by starting with Dasein over against consciousness.\(^{15}\)

The French translation of Dasein with être-là is equivalent to the English translation 'being-there'. Heidegger’s knowledge of English is limited. Probably for this reason he does not refer to 'Being-there' which causes the same difficulty as être-là. The Da in Dasein, then, denotes world. Therefore Heidegger’s famous formulation Dasein is equivalent to Being-in-the-world. Besides indicating an important aspect of Heidegger’s position, the meaning of the sentence is so central to the argument in Being and Time that one cannot lose sight of it without risking the danger of misinterpreting major themes in the work. Richard Schmitt in his commentary on Being and Time claims that the task undertaken by Heidegger in Sein und Zeit is to provide the outlines of such a new philosophical vocabulary; he thoroughly misunderstands Heidegger.\(^{12}\) Schmitt, who tries to make Heidegger appear like a linguistic analyst, never comes to grips with Dasein as Being-in-the-world, and consequently he misrepresents most issues he is dealing with.\(^{14}\) Heidegger has clearly stated his goal as to 'uncover the fundamental structure of Dasein: the Being-in-the-world'.\(^{15}\) In the same context Heidegger stresses the necessity to keep in mind the whole structure when treating its 'component moments'. In other words, speech, for example, must be seen in the context of Dasein as Being-in-the-world.

For the purpose of the present study, therefore, it is absolutely necessary to have the right perception of the meaning of world as Heidegger uses it. Our everyday concept of 'world' is defined by the things in the 'world'. Such thinking has a long tradition in the history of philosophy in the West. In order to distinguish his view of world from that of previous philosophers, Heidegger inserts in Being and Time a long discussion of Descartes' concept of 'world'. Descartes defines 'world' as res extensa which contains corporeal things. Thus material objects are present-at-hand and according to Heidegger's interpretation identified with 'world'.\(^{16}\) Descartes further stated that the reality of things consists in their being objects for a subject. Since Descartes was a well-known mathematician it is logical that he should consider the quantitative method best suited

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to determine the 'reality' of such entities. On the other hand, Descartes was fully aware of the difficulty involved in assuming that the human mind was capable of establishing the truth of a 'world' exterior to and independent of it. His solution was to assume a divine being who had so arranged matters that whatever is clear to the mind is true — that is, corresponds to reality. Descartes did not really solve the problem but simply shifted the whole issue to another dimension, which is still less apt to provide a 'proof'. Nor have Descartes' successors given a satisfactory account of the relation between the truth constituted by the mind and the reality of the 'world'.

It is one of the great achievements of Being and Time to have eliminated the dualism of the thinking man on the one side and the 'world' on the other. The Da in Dasein indicates the world human existence is in (or with). Dasein and world belong together. If Dasein has world and the latter is for the sake of Dasein, the obvious conclusion is that human existence and world are interrelated. It is no longer necessary to assume a leap of the mind, as it were, over to the world. World as Heidegger sees it is not the receptacle for res extensas, rather it is the condition sine qua non for things to appear to Dasein at all. World opens a certain horizon to Dasein which is responsible for the specific character of human existence. How this works is perhaps best understood when I am thinking of a phrase such as I am at peace. Peace is not outside of me but envelops me. Peace is the character of my world. Similarly, things and beings have a 'place' in human existence according to the structure of the world. To indicate the e-vent (Ereignis) whereby the world brings things into the open, Heidegger uses the term worldliness of the world.

It should be clear by now that the traditional 'world' described by the things in it has been changed to a world where things are only 'there' as far as and in the way that world lets them be. Since we are living today in a world of scientific exploration our approach to nature has the predominant mark of mathematical calculation.

Some readers may wonder why, in view of the title, Being and Time says so much about world. One must realize, however, that in Being and Time Heidegger has tried to secure a first access to Being through an analysis of the existence of that entity that has a special relation to Being — that is, man and his world. Moreover, world is the topos of Being in its temporal manifestation. (The meaning of temporality will be discussed later in the study).

2. THE EXPERIENCE OF WORLD

It is characteristic of Heidegger's concept of world that because human existence does not encounter the world from outside but is in it, Dasein
takes part in the shaping of the horizon that is circumscribed by world. Dasein's involvement in the world is primarily not theoretical but issues from an 'activity' that changes the world. The latter fact is indicated by Dasein being concerned with things and taking care of its fellow human beings.

Every person is born into a world or, in Heidegger's terminology, is thrown into a world that is not of his making. The world a human being is born into is one he shares with his generation. Since it is not simply my world, I face it in a mood of anxiety. Anxiety or dread has, as will be shown later, an important function in Dasein's Being-in-the-world. In the present context, however, it is necessary to realize that anxiety brings Dasein in close relation to world; in fact much closer than if the person felt 'at home' in it. In other words, Heidegger is suggesting that state of mind or mood (Befindlichkeit) discloses world to Dasein. Since Dasein qua Dasein is always somehow attuned to the world, Befindlichkeit is an 'existential' of Dasein and belongs to the very structure of it. Anxiety as an 'existential' of Dasein is seen in an ontological context. It should not be confused with an anxious feeling. State of mind (Befindlichkeit) in its ontological frame relates to the whole world, but feelings apply to this or that single event which we encounter in our daily lives. We may fear for instance what will happen to us during a heavy storm. It is a fleeting sensation that ceases as soon as the storm is over. We may also think of children who are afraid of unfamiliar situations. Their fear is clearly an example of the ontological mood of dread. Other psychological conditions such as insecurity about the possible structure of our lives have their ground in primary states of mind. Perhaps it would be easier for a person to cope with problems arising in the course of life if he realizes that these problems are a consequence of a fundamental aspect or an 'existentiell' of human existence.

Besides Befindlichkeit another 'existential' of Dasein is understanding. Befindlichkeit signifies an attunement toward world that is rather passive. Understanding is simultaneous with attunement and relates to the world through designs and projects which open up possibilities for the disclosure of things in the world. Heidegger has expressed the latter thought in an often quoted passage:

The pre-disclosure of that on the strength of which the release of what we encounter in the world occurs is nothing else but understanding of world toward which Dasein as an entity always comports itself.

What makes this sentence sound complicated and perhaps confusing to some is the fact that Heidegger describes a condition prevailing between Dasein and world that moves in a circle. Dasein, Heidegger maintains, is not only affected by the world, it is thrown into, but in turn affects it. Dasein and world affect each other mutually. Worded differently: Dasein
Heidegger’s Existential Analytic, 1978

has not only world, but interprets it according to its understanding. Heidegger calls this situation a hermeneutic circle. It is another key expression of Being and Time. Since the hermeneutic circle has bearing on Heidegger’s discussion of speech its implications must be fully understood.

Heidegger’s insight into the circular structure obtaining between Dasein and world owes much to the pioneering work of Wilhelm Dilthey.23 Dilthey observed that in contrast to the objective approach in the natural sciences the study of the human sciences, although based on factual evidence, introduces an element of the writer’s self-understanding. In Being and Time Heidegger devoted a lengthy section to a discussion of Dilthey’s and his friend Paul York von Wartenburg’s views on historicity.24 Nevertheless, Heidegger was not quite satisfied with Dilthey’s solution. He felt that Dilthey together with Scheler, Bergson and Husserl concentrated too much on the personality and thus never reached the dimension of Being of Dasein.25

Heidegger certainly does not want to deny that the historian must be open to the inspiration he receives from his sources. It is true, however, that the historian as a person is moulded by many time-bound influences which affect the way he looks at his documents. Since every aspect of human existence is shot through with this kind of a circle, Heidegger says rather aggressively: ‘The decisive step is not how to get out of the circle but to get into it in the right way’.26 The hermeneutic circle retained its prominence throughout Heidegger’s career although the concept was somewhat modified in his later work. During the seminar on Heraclitus he gave another strong endorsement of it.27

Keeping the meaning of world and of the hermeneutic circle in mind we are now prepared to take up the topic of speech as it is dealt with in Being and Time.

3. REDE (LOGOS) AS EXISTENTIAL

Together with Befindlichkeit and understanding Rede belongs to the primary structure of Dasein. As an existential of Dasein it is interrelated with world. When linguists or philosophers of language discuss the problem of speech they are mainly interested in structure and semantics. Others may see in language a tool for making judgments about the world or for communication among people. Heidegger’s approach is radically different in that in his view world is not an object of speech but world appears in Rede [speech]. World is not without word and word is not without world. Without world bringing things into the open, there would be nothing to speak of. The relation between world and speech may become clearer if we contrast Heidegger’s position to a widely held theory according to which
words are symbols. When Susanne Langer published *Philosophy in a New Key* she expressed the view of many philosophers in equating speech with 'the power of using symbols'.28 The new 'key' that opened the door to a new philosophical insight meant 'a symbolic transformation of experience'.29 One wonders how a concrete experience with nature, for example, could be changed into a symbol created by the mind. Symbolists like Susanne Langer not only fall back on the Cartesian dualism of 'reality' and mind but they achieve quite a miracle in that the thing present-at-hand (to use Heideggerian terminology) vanishes and is replaced by a symbol. Archibald MacLeish in *Poetry and Experience*, on the other hand, understands considerably better what happens in language. Referring to the ancient Chinese poet Lu Chi, MacLeish points out that the former considered poetry a meaning-giving saying. While the natural sciences, he further says, deal with the world and things in 'equations' and 'laws', Lu Chi's poetry shows that the poet 'captures the world whole'.30 Although the 'world' of MacLeish or the Chinese poet may not be the same as Heidegger's, they agree that world is present in words. '... Dasein that understands and interprets,' Heidegger writes, 'can disclose something like "meanings" which in turn are the basis for the possible being of word and speech.'31

Heidegger further elaborates on meanings:

It is that which defines the structure of world in which Dasein as such always is. *Dasein in its familiarity with meaning is the ontic condition for the possibility of disclosure of an entity that, having the character of Being according to circumstances [ready-at-hand], is encountered in a world and thus can reveal itself in its in-itself.*

Heidegger illustrates this thought with the example of a hammer. The hammer is not present-at-hand but ready-at-hand and as such disclosed by its belonging to a whole frame of reference (*Bewandnisganzheit*).33 The hammer stands in relation to what it is used for: to hammer a nail in a shoe, for example; the shoe which is made of leather relates to the skin of an animal, to the person who will wear it, etc. Thus we can see that with the simple word "hammer" a world of meaningful interrelations opens before us. But meanings change with a changed world and words, far from being fixed entities, have a dynamic character.34 To give an example: Modern science took from the Greek the word *proton* signifying the first item in any sequence, but applied it to a specific first, namely, the first particle of a nucleus. Words are not only given new meanings but new words enter a language with new insights. The mystics of the Middle Ages, for instance, coined many new words designed to express some aspect of their faith as far as the latter differed from the official teaching of the Church. The central focus of the religion of the mystics was to realize union with the divine spirit. It was not easy to achieve and required of them to wait patiently for God to enter the soul. They named this inner attitude *Gelas*
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\( \text{senheit, a word not previously known in the German language.} \) (Heidegger uses the word in a similar connotation when he warns us against overpowering nature through our technological know-how and calls for \textbf{Ge}

\textit{lassenheit}, towards things, that is to let things be). \( \textsuperscript{36} \)

The world-context of \textbf{Rede} is central to Heidegger’s concept of speech. \textbf{Rede} establishes a boundary of meaning for Dasein’s understanding of world. Heidegger’s lengthy discussion of the question how things (\textit{Zeug}) such as a hammer become manifest in \textbf{Rede} serves the purpose of showing how \textbf{Rede} stands in the same hermeneutic circle to world as \textit{Befindlichkeit} and understanding. Richard Schmitt in a study of ‘Heidegger’s Analysis of \textit{Tool}’ has nothing to say about the function of world in relation to tools being ready-at-hand and thus misses the most important point Heidegger makes in this connection. \( \textsuperscript{37} \) To clarify his view Heidegger distinguishes between logic and logos. While logic is an activity of the mind to make theoretical statements about things present-at-hand, ‘\textit{Logos} as \textbf{Rede} implies as much as to make manifest that about which in \textbf{Rede} is \textit{die ‘Rede’}. ‘\textit{lógoς als Rede besagt vielmehr so viel wie ὄνομα, offenbar machen das, wovon in der Rede ‘die Rede’ ist’}. \( \textsuperscript{38} \) \textbf{Die Rede} at the end of the sentence is put in quotation marks because \textbf{Rede} here refers to uttered words in contrast to \textbf{Rede} as a mode of manifesting world. In \textit{Being and Time} Heidegger further says: ‘\textbf{Rede} is the articulation of intelligibility. It therefore underlies [ary] explanation and statement’ (\textbf{Rede} \textit{ist die Artikulation der Verständlichkeit. Sie liegt daher der Auslegung und Aussage schon zugrunde}). \( \textsuperscript{39} \) Articulation in German means either to organize, structure or to speak out clearly. \( \textsuperscript{40} \)

Those who believe that Heidegger changed his concept of speech in later writings should realize that he refers on several occasions to what he had said in \textit{Being and Time}. In his study \textit{Logos} (\textit{Heraclitus, Fragment 50}) he asserts: ‘\textit{Der lógoς bringt das Erscheinende, das ins Vorliegen Hervor-Kommende, von ihm selbst her zum Scheinen, zum gelichteten Sichzeigen}’ (Logos has the effect that what appears and comes forth into its presence manifests itself by itself and shows itself as being cleared; Heidegger relates this to section 7 of \textit{Being and Time}). \( \textsuperscript{41} \)

It is perhaps necessary to say a word about \textit{lichten} and \textit{Lichtung} that we have translated with ‘to clear, clearing’. It has caused some difficulties because here as in many other instances Heidegger falls back on ancient word-meanings. In \textit{The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking} (1969) Heidegger identified light (\textit{licht}) with \textit{leicht}. \( \textsuperscript{42} \) In modern German \textit{leicht} is used in contrast to heavy, but in the ancient Alemannic dialect it had the same meaning as light or clearing. Albert Hofstadter in his ‘Introduction to \textit{Martin Heidegger, Poetry, Language, Thought}’ has this to say about \textit{Lichtung}: ‘But as the thinking matured, although the effect of clearing, opening, brightening, and lighting remained, there was added to it in light as a sense opposed to heavy, and especially in the sense of easy, effortless, nimble.’ \( \textsuperscript{43} \) But in \textit{The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking} Heidegger...
explained that "The German word "Lichtung" is according to etymology a loan-word translated from the French "clairière"... The adjective "licht" is the same word as "leicht" [not thick]. It is perhaps noteworthy that Webster exemplifies clearing as 'a tract of land cleared of wood'. To clear something means to make it light, free and open, for example, to make the woods free of trees at a place. The openness that comes to the fore is the clearing.\footnote{44}

In order to grasp fully the two aspects of Rede as showing what is manifest and uttering words, it may be helpful to remember that according to Heidegger his concept of logos was not only influenced by Greek thinkers but also by Scripture.\footnote{45} One thinks of the Gospel of St. John where it is said: 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him... The creation and Christ reveal the Word that is the light of the world and because it has become manifest it can be spoken of. Or one could quote Psalm 19: 'The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament showeth his handiwork; /Day unto day uttereth speech, /And night unto night showeth knowledge. /There is no speech nor language, /Where their voice is not heard'. The Psalmist clearly says that in the creation God's voice lives and is 'heard' and only because this is so do languages exist. Heidegger formulates the same thought in the context of Dasein's world: 'In Rede (ἀπόφασις)', he says 'as far as it is genuine [echt] what is said should originate [schöpfen, geschöpft] from what is spoken of, so that the uttered communication in its saying makes manifest and accessible to the other what is spoken of.'\footnote{46}

When Heidegger introduces the concept of worldliness of the world he explains its meaning by a discussion of tool (Zug) as was noted before.\footnote{47} This may leave the impression that Heidegger, like the later Wittgenstein, adheres to a purely pragmatic concept of world and speech.\footnote{48} Heidegger's emphasis on useful things should not blind us to the fact that there are other disclosures besides those in the context of practicality. Nature may reveal itself in light of the products man puts to use; but other than 'useful' aspects of nature's Being should not be overlooked.

We may disregard nature's mode of Being as ready-at-hand; nature may be discovered and determined by the pure present-at-hand. But in such disclosure of nature, nature remains hidden as that which 'stirs and strives', assails us and grips us as landscape. The botanist's plants are not flowers at the ridge, the source of a river fixed geographically is not 'the spring in the vale'.\footnote{49}

I may think of nature as a source of livelihood but I may also enjoy nature without having any practical interest. Some people love flowers, others woods, mountains or the sea, again others just like to be in nature. In all these cases world discloses nature as 'landscape'. Whether I concentrate on the usefulness of nature or her beauty, speech must harmonize with the
Being of nature. This is quite clear and yet not as easy to achieve as it may sound. Heidegger knows this of course. It seems to me, however, that Heidegger, in contrast to Wittgenstein, is more concerned with the origin than with the application of words. The disclosure of entities manifests itself in Rede.

Dasein exists, however, not only in a world of things but with other human beings. Dasein's Being-in-the-world-with-others reveals important aspects of speech. In this connection Heidegger differentiates between inauthentic and authentic existence and correspondingly between inauthentic and authentic speech.\(^{50}\) We will treat of the former first.

4. INAUTHENTIC SPEECH, GEREDÉ (IDLE TALK)

Dasein, being thrown into the world, shares the latter with others. It is the way we encounter world first, but it is not a world that reflects Dasein's freely chosen possibilities. It is a world of common goals and values. Heidegger calls it the world of the 'they' (Das Man is a neutral pronoun but used as a noun.) It is indifferent to individual preferences.\(^{51}\) The world of the 'they', the everyday world, has always been a subtle, and sometimes not so subtle, force suggesting, if not dictating, a code of conduct and a way of thinking. Such is the case with the mass media, for example, which exert great influence on people's judgments and tastes concerning matters of vital importance. The magic of science and technology, in addition, has created an atmosphere that threatens the very essence of human existence.

If Dasein is completely immersed in the everyday world no discourse, in the true sense of the word, is possible. The partners in such a dialogue have no genuine words at their disposal but use a language ready-at-hand. They repeat what is known by everybody and do not challenge the truth of what is said: True is what is accepted by the 'they'. Although many words may be uttered, they rather conceal than reveal what is talked about. Speech under these circumstances degenerates, according to Heidegger, into idle talk (Das Gerede). In German the prefix ge- indicates a gathering together of several items of a kind. Thus Ge-rede is a collection of many words. Idle talk does not lead to any new insights but leaves one with the feeling 'nothing has happened'. Dasein, that has the character of idle talk, Heidegger says, has severed itself from 'the primary and in its origin genuine relations of its Being to world, to being-with, even to being-in'.\(^{55}\)

A word of caution is necessary. Reading the several pages in Being and Time that are devoted to idle talk one may get the impression that Heidegger does not allow any rewarding features in regard to the 'they' and their world. To be sure fallenness and alienation from one's true self are deficient modes of existence. But the world of the 'they' has nevertheless a task to fulfill: It is a springboard for authentic existence and speech. In
the beginning of section 35 entitled *idle talk* (*Gerede*), Heidegger states: 'The expression idle talk shall here not be used in a degrading sense. Terminologically it means a positive phenomenon which constitutes the kind of understanding and explanation of everyday Dasein'.\(^58\) Far from being altogether negative, the fact of the matter is that

Dasein has always already established an explanation in terms of idle talk. First of all, in this way we are getting acquainted with much; there is much that will never go beyond such average understanding. It is impossible for Dasein to extricate itself from the everyday interpretation into which Dasein will grow in the beginning. Every true understanding, interpretation, communication, rediscovery and new owning of the world is carried out in it, from it and against it.\(^54\)

The last sentence is especially important. We can only grasp the implications of authentic speech after realizing that the character of idle talk is concealment. Dasein’s fallenness is not a failing of some kind, rather it belongs to the ontological structure of Dasein as being-in-the-world-with-others. It would however be wrong to be satisfied with inauthenticity and idle talk.

5. AUTHENTIC SPEECH: DREAD, CARE, CONSCIENCE AND DEATH

How can Dasein deliver itself from fallenness? As far as Dasein is satisfied with its everyday existence it flees from its true being. The moment of truth, however, comes when the world of the ‘they’ is called into question. It was already noted that a first acquaintance with world happens in the mode of anxiety.\(^55\) When in a state of anxiety or dread Dasein is shaken to its foundation, the everyday world loses its control over it.\(^56\) Precisely at the point when the familiar world breaks down, Dasein is thrown back on itself, on that which dread was about: its own possibility to-be-in-the-world. Dread thus rescues Dasein from the everyday world in the midst of which it existed ‘assured’ and ‘familiar’.\(^57\) Dread is a powerful impulse to change the direction of Dasein’s existence as being-thrown-into-the-world. Dasein becomes aware of the fact that it is not ‘at home’ in the world of the ‘they’. Dasein’s anxiety, Heidegger maintains, is always accompanied by a sense of guilt. Guilt does not arise because the person may have violated a code of ethics or because of social pressures, but it has its source in the call of conscience. Conscience is not a condition of the inner man that may be felt under certain factual circumstances, rather it is an ‘existential’ phenomenon and constitutes the Being of the world of Dasein.\(^58\)

In a striking analysis running through several long chapters, Heidegger shows how the call of conscience, a strong inner voice, incites Dasein to
take over its possibilities and to become authentic. The call of conscience is a silent voice which has the effect of Dasein communicating with itself. In its discrete character the call of conscience has much in common with primary Rede. No words are uttered but the world of authentic Dasein becomes manifest. Dasein that listens to its conscience or as Heidegger says that 'wants to have a conscience' shuns the idle talk of the 'they'.

The silent voice of conscience tells Dasein of its guilt in existing in the mode of everydayness. Dasein resolves to become authentic in the sense of not following the prevailing 'general conditions', but resolves to call forth a real 'situation'. The latter indicates a movement or a project that has the ontological structure of care. Taking care of its existence, Dasein does not cling to the here and now of everydayness but takes into consideration the whole of its existence: coming from nothing and going to nothing. Dasein experiences wholeness not as a fact but as a supreme possibility. Wholeness is only achieved in confronting death when Dasein has reached the point of its nothingness.

One may wonder whether such an orientation towards death does not prevent Dasein rather than motivate it to take care of its existence. According to Heidegger the very opposite is the case. 'That the will-to-have-a-conscience is determined as being towards death,' Heidegger claims, 'does not mean a flight from the world [into] seclusion rather it includes [Dasein] without illusion to resolve “to act”.' Furthermore, the awareness of one's possibilities to be is accompanied according to Heidegger by 'a ready joy'. In view of Heidegger's comments regarding his concept of Dasein as Being-towards-death it seems difficult to agree with B. E. O'Mahony's interpretation in a study of Heidegger's 'Existential Analysis of Death'. He claims that being-towards-death is among other features 'the perpetual shadow of non-being [inherent limitation] cast over man's life revealing to him the profound vacuity of every action'. For Heidegger it is a positive force and an incitement for authentic existence.

Inauthentic existence by contrast, since it lives in the present, refuses to take death as an integral part of life. Witnessing the death of another person, my feeling is that it will not happen to me. The corresponding language is 'one dies'. Referring to Tolstoy's famous story *The Death of Ivan Ilych* Heidegger points to the fact that inauthentic existence considers death 'an inconvenience if not a lack of tact'. For inauthentic existence death represents a constant threat: ignoring it seems the only means to take its sting away. Everydayness turns 'the courage to face death with anxiety,' Heidegger holds, 'into fear of an approaching event'. Authentic existence has the courage to live with the nothing inherent in Dasein. The not is twofold: It is not only the nothingness of death that brings every Dasein to its end; it is also hidden behind the possibilities Dasein chooses since with each choice made, other choices are negated.

Authentic Dasein existing in full awareness of its finitude has come into
its own. Only a Dasein that understands itself truly understands others. Existing in the world with others, Dasein relates to the other differently than to things ready-at-hand. What makes the difference is that the other person is another Dasein. Whereas Dasein is concerned with things ready-at-hand, it shows solicitude (Fürsorge) for the other. Solicitude means that one Dasein helps the other or others to achieve authentic existence. This happens when Dasein having become free for its authentic existence, encounters the other Dasein in its own possibility of being authentic. This encounter sets the stage for Dasein truly being-together-with-the-other and to engage in a genuine dialogue.

The latter is not characterized by the many words uttered, but by its silences. During a meaningful discourse silence may interrupt the flow of words time and again. This is no cause for embarrassment as it is often taken. Rather, in Heidegger’s words: ‘Who keeps silent in a dialogue [Miteinanderreden] has more genuine means “to make himself understood”, that is, to develop the understanding, than the one who is never at a loss for words.’ Dasein must be able to hear before it speaks. As in the call of conscience, in a true dialogue Dasein listens to the other’s voice. ‘Listening,’ Heidegger asserts, ‘even constitutes the primary and true openness of Dasein for its possibilities to be with others, that is, to hear the voice of the friend.’ Since authentic Dasein with others has the quality of solicitude for the authentic being of the other, to listen shows that I care about the other. Is it not true that a dialogue is most open to the other’s voice when I am conversing with a friend (a close person)?

In a true dialogue uttered words are carefully chosen. Authentic Dasein and authentic speech belong together. The way this works may be exemplified by Heidegger himself. In an interesting study of ‘Heidegger’s Conception of Speech in “Being and Time”’ Jan Aler starts with an analysis of Heidegger’s style. Aler addresses himself to Heidegger’s well-known and often criticized practice of uncovering original meanings of words or sometimes of coining new words. The result, Aler believes, is ‘a style of writing that is especially accurate, plastic, lively, emphatic and original’. Aler further notes that Heidegger’s etymology is in most cases accurate. As an example of Heidegger’s use of words Aler cites the noun ‘dis-tance’ (Ent-fernung). In this connection Aler maintains that ‘Heidegger uses it in the most literal sense conceivable — namely as “making distance disappear”’. His point is also well taken that Heidegger employs prefixes and radicals correctly, but the reader will hardly understand this without some further explanation. Heidegger’s justification for turning the meaning of distance into nearness lies in the fact that the prefix ent- had originally the meaning of either converting the sense of the noun or verb it was attached to into its opposite or indicating the beginning of a new action. Heidegger has his own reasons for going back to ancient senses of words. In the course of a long history words have become entities whose
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meanings have been fixed in dictionaries. One can hardly doubt that
originally words, sentences, in short, entire languages had a relation to a
people's world of which we are typically no longer conscious. On the
other hand, it is precisely its world-context that is the most interesting
aspect of a word. Heidegger's study of ancient languages tries to uncover
the world-context of words because he sees in the latter the 'power of
elementary words'.

6. TRUTH, HISTORICITY AND SPEECH

Heidegger's concept of truth challenges previous views of the subject. The
traditional theory locates truth about entities in the judgment. This pre-
supposes a correspondence between a statement and an object the state-
ment is about. How statements may be verified by experience and how
ideas of the mind apply to entities 'outside' it remains obscure. Why is it
that our advanced technology has given us new experiences with and new
insights into nature that we had not had before? Heidegger's answer to this
is that truths in a primary sense are related to the world of Dasein. To
understand Heidegger's position it may help to remember the her-
meneutic circle. The concept was introduced to make clear the inter-
relationship of world and Dasein. World discloses entities to Dasein which
in turn relates to them among other possibilities through the mode of
understanding. Thus primary truth, according to Heidegger, is uncon-
cealment (Unverborgenheit) of entities. Propositional truth, then, is a deriva-
tive of the existential truth as unconcealment. It may be noted in passing
that Unverborgenheit is a new word Heidegger introduced into the German
language. Verborgen means hidden but the prefix un- added to it gives the
word an opposite sense.

Ernst Tugendhat has published an important study comparing the
concept of truth in Husserl and Heidegger. At one point in his discussion
Tugendhat voices the following criticism of Heidegger's concept of truth:

... his thesis of truth as disclosure would be convincing only if one adhered to
the fact that a wrong statement is not discovering. But Heidegger says that in the
wrong statement the entity is 'in a certain way already disclosed and yet still
partly hidden'.

As a matter of fact, Heidegger does not refer to a 'wrong statement'; rather
he says:

An entity [Seiendes] is not totally hidden, rather it is discovered, although at
the same time obstructed; it shows itself — however, in the mode of apparent
resemblance [Schein]. Likewise that which was previously discovered sinks back
into obstruction and hiddenness.
THE PROBLEM OF SPEECH IN BEING AND TIME

Heidegger explicitly states that these sentences belong in an ontological context of Dasein. As Being-in-the-world Dasein always discovers entities but it cannot be certain that it is a 'true discovery'. In any event, any discovery contains both truth and untruth. Ontic statements are derivative of the ontological structure of Dasein Being-in-the-world. Is it not the case that most experiential statements embody only relative truths? Consider the progress atomic science has made compared to Newton's knowledge of nature. This is precisely what Heidegger indicates when he claims that any discovery of entities has at the same time a quality of 'apparent resemblance' (Schein).

Truth as unconcealment is not primarily theoretical knowledge of entities but a concern of Dasein with world. Only because Dasein takes care of the world are disclosures related to the natural and social world possible. Care as was noted indicates Dasein's resolve to take over its possibilities in view of its whole existence from birth to death (nothingness). Wholeness in this context does not imply in-between birth and death, a way of existence characteristic of everydayness, but awareness of what constitutes Dasein's wholeness. Only if the latter is the case does Dasein take its orientation from the future. Direction towards the future activates the past and accounts for the present. Heidegger therefore concludes that temporality is the essence of care. Temporality is an existential of Dasein defined by the three ek-stases of future, past and present. With the future the other two ek-stases are given; one cannot speak of a before and after, only of a together. In the final analysis Dasein moves along a horizon described by the scheme inherent in each of the three ek-stases of temporality. From Dasein's care-structure as temporality is derived the clock-time which regulates our daily lives through a time-sequence. When I say I can do it now, or I have done it before or I will do it, I am thinking of time at my disposal. My existence occurs in time. What happens in time has its root in the temporality of Dasein which makes 'situations' possible. Situations are 'historical epochs' through which Dasein structures its actual existence. Epochs however come about because the essence of temporality as care is historicity, that is, temporality 'temporalizes', lets possibilities appear. 'Only if in the Being of an entity,' Heidegger says, 'death, guilt, conscience, freedom and finitude dwell together equally primordially as in care, is it possible for it [Dasein] to exist in the mode of destiny that is to be in the depth of its existence historical.' Destiny (Geschick) has nothing to do with fate but derived from the verb schicken, to send; it denotes the event that originates in temporality.

The structure of Being and Time reminds me of a symphonic composition. The major subjects reappear in the various sections of the book like the basic themes of a musical piece in its different parts. In Being and Time as well as in a symphony the themes receive an ever deeper clarification by way of an ascending scale of significance until the final crescendo.
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weaves them all together. The climax of Being and Time is reached with the temporality of Dasein. It is the point of unification of the various aspects of the analysis of Dasein as being-in-the-world.

It is obvious that Rede is an important factor of Dasein's being 'historical'. Heidegger has not much to say about it in Being and Time but simply affirms: 'Die Rede is in itself temporal because all speaking about . . . of . . . and to . . . is rooted in the ek-static unity of temporality.' 80 The reason given for not elaborating further on Rede is that Heidegger felt he had to develop first the interrelation between Being, truth, and temporality. 81 One guesses that this would have been the subject of the third part of Being and Time, which however was never written.

With the temporality of Rede, its historicity is implicitly given. Being 'historical' in an ontological sense, speech manifests the changing horizon of Dasein's world. Rede is the custodian as it were of the unconcealment of world as it occurs in epochal e-vents. (Heidegger later speaks of speech as the house of Being.)

In view of the fact that Heidegger devoted many of his later studies to speech and poetry, one wonders whether there is any hint of this in Being and Time. It is well known that Heidegger was an avid reader of poetry throughout his life. Long before his major work was published, he had an intimate acquaintance with Hölderlin, his favorite poet. Although Being and Time has speech as a major theme, it contains only a short remark concerning poetry: 'The communication of the existential possibilities of attunement, that is the disclosure of existence,' Heidegger asserts, 'may become the special objective of the "poeticizing" Rede.' 82 Without reading too much into the sentence, it seems that Heidegger was alive to the very special quality of poetic Rede. About a decade after the publication of Being and Time, Heidegger gave his first lecture on Hölderlin. It became immediately clear why poetic speech was so important for Heidegger. The great poet has a unique gift to listen to what Being reveals through world. The poetic Rede, moreover, has an immediacy that is not given to the thinker. If the thinker thinks Being, the saying of the poet is the song of the holy. 83

NOTES

1. See Frühe Schriften (Early Writings), Frankfurt Am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1972, pp. 3–129.
2. Ibid., p. 132.
3. Being and Time, p. 375 Being and Time will henceforth be cited as BT,
5. Ibid., Preface, p. IX.
6. Ibid., p. 350.
8. See below, Gospel of St John, Psalm 19, p. 168.

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11. The lecture-class on Kant was later published as Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik, Bonn: Friedrich Cohen, 1929.


Doch damit ist alles, was in Sein und Zeit als neue Position gewonnen wurde, verlorengangen. Ist der Mensch so da, wie der Stuhl? ... 'Das Da ist die Lichtung und Offenheit des Seienden, die der Mensch aussteht. Das Wissen des Bewusstsein, das Vorstellen ist etwas anderes. Wie verhält sich das Bewusstsein, das Wissen als Vorstellen, zum Dasein? ... Das Bewusstsein ist nur möglich auf dem Grunde des Da als ein von ihm abgeleiteter Modus. Von hier aus muss man den geschichtlichen Schritt verstehen, der in Sein und Zeit mit dem Ansatz beim Dasein gegenüber dem Bewusstsein gemacht ist.


14. See below, 'Heidegger's Analysis of Tool'.

15. BT, p. 41: 'Unter Festhaltung des Fixierten Ansatzes der Untersuchung ist am Dasein eine Fundamentalsstruktur freizulegen: das In-der-Welt-sein.'

16. Ibid., pp. 89ff.

17. Ibid., p. 362 and passim.

18. See my sections 4 and 6.

19. BT, p. 187. See also 5. Authentic Speech.

20. See BT, p. 12 where Heidegger states the difference between 'existentiell' and 'existential'. The latter refers to the structures of existence, the former to factual existence.

21. BT, p. 143.

22. Ibid., p. 86: 'Das vorgängige Erschliessen dessen, woraufhin die Freigabe des innerweltlichen Begegnenden erfolgt, ist nichts anderes als das Vorstehen von Welt, zu der sich das Dasein als Seiendes schon immer verhält.'


24. BT, section 77.

25. Ibid., pp. 46ff.

26. Ibid., p. 153 'Das Entscheidende ist nicht, aus dem Zirkel herauszudringen. und ihm nach der rechten Weise hineinzuwachsen.'


29. Ibid., p. 93.


31. BT, p. 87.

32. Ibid. 'Sie ist das, was die Struktur der Welt, dessen, worin Dasein als solches je schon ist, ausmacht. Das Dasein ist in seiner Vertrautheit mit der Bedeutung die ontische Bedingung der Möglichkeit der Eindeutigkeit der Bewandtums (Zuhandenhheit) in einer Welt begegnen und sich so in seinem An-sich bekunden kann.

33. Ibid., p. 158.

34. Ibid., p. 161.

35. See Sigmund Feist, Die Deutsche Sprache, Munich: Max Hueber, 1933, p. 136. There are other words which were coined by the mystics; we selected gelassen, Gelassenheit because of its connection with Heidegger.

36. See the essay Gelassenheit, Pfaffing: Günther Neske, 1959.

37. 'Heidegger's Analysis of Tool'. The Monist 49 (1966), p. 36.
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38. BT, p. 32.
43. New York: Harper and Row, 1971. Introduction, p. XXII. Hofstadter comes to his conclusion combining two different statements of Heidegger. In the second passage in Vorträge und Aufsätze, p. 179, Heidegger speaks of das Gering as the round dance of the 'mirror-play of the world'. The world encompasses earth, heaven, man and gods. He further calls attention to the use of 'ring' and 'gering' in ancient German where the meaning was 'fügsam' [pliable] and 'leicht' [light, not heavy]. As far as I can see, Heidegger wants to say that the four making up the world submit to each other gently and plably in the round dance (Gering) that unites them in the e-ventful mirror-play. But this has no reference to Lichtung [clearing].
44. See note 42: 'Das deutsche Wort "Lichtung" ist sprachgeschichtlich eine Lehnbürgersetzung des französischen clairière . . . Das Adjektivum "licht" ist dasselbe Wort wie "leicht." Etwas leicht bedeutet: etwas leicht, etwas frei und offen machen, Z.B. den Wald an einer Stelle frei machen von Bäumen. Das so entscheidende Freie ist die Lichtung.' (pp. 71–72)
45. See Unterwegs zur Sprache, Pfullingen: Neske, 1969, p. 96: 'Ohne diese theologische Herkunft wäre ich nie auf den Weg des Denkens gekommen. Herkunft aber bleibt stets Zukunft' (Without the theological background I would never have come on the road of thinking. Background, however, always remains as 'future').
46. BT, p. 32.
47. See above, illustration of the hammer.
49. BT, p. 70: 'Von dem (Natur) Seinsart als zufriedener kann abgesehen, sie selbst lediglich in ihrer reinen Unbändigkeit entdeckt und bestimmt werden. Diesen Naturerdecken bleibt aber auch die Natur als das, was "lebt und strebt", uns überall, als Landschaft gefangen nimmt, verborgen. Die Pflanzen des Botanikers sind nicht Blumen am Rain, das geographisch fixierte "Entspringen" eines Flusses ist nicht die "Quelle im Grund".
50. See the discussion in BT, pp. 113–130.
51. Ibid., section 38.
52. Ibid., p. 177.
53. Ibid., p. 167: 'Der Ausdruck "Gerede" soll hier nicht in einer herabziehenden Bedeutung gebraucht werden. Er bedeutet terminologisch ein positives Phänomen, das die Seinsart des Vorhergehens und Auseinander setzen des alltäglichen Daseins konstituiert.'
54. Ibid., p. 169: 'Im Dasein hat sich je schon diese Ausgeglichenheit des Geredes festgesetzt. Viele lernen wir zunächst in dieser Weise kennen, nicht wenig kommt über ein solches durchschnittliches Verständnis nie hinaus. Dieser alltäglichen Ausgeglichenheit, in die das Dasein zunächst hineinwächst, vermag es sich nie zu entziehen. In ihr und gegen sie vollzieht sich alles echte Versuchen, Auslegen und Mitteilen.'
55. See above, 2. The Experience of World.
56. BT, p. 188.
57. Ibid., p. 189.
58. Ibid., See the discussion of conscience in section 57.
59. Ibid., p. 296.
60. Ibid.
61. Ibid., p. 306.
62. Ibid.
63. Ibid.
64. Ibid., p. 310: 'Das als Sein zum Tode bestimmte Gewissen-haben-wollen bedeutet auch keine weltflüchtige Abgeschlossenheit, sondern bringt illusionlos in die Entschlossenheit des "Handelns".'
65. Ibid.
67. BT, p. 254.
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68. Ibid.
69. Ibid., p. 163.
70. Ibid., p. 164. 'Wer im Miteneinanderreden schweigt, kann eigentlicher "zu verstehen geben", das heisst das Verständnis ausbilden, als der, dem das Wort nicht ausgeht.'
71. Ibid.: 'Das Hören konstituiert sogar die primäre und eigentliche Offenheit des Daseins für sein eigenes Seinkönnen, als Hören der Stimme des Freundes...
73. Ibid., p. 37.
74. Der Sprach-Brockhaus, op. cit., under 'ent-'.
76. BT, p. 222.
77. Ibid., p. 326.
78. Ibid., p. 328ff.
79. Ibid., p. 385: 'Nur wenn im Sein eines Seienden Tod, Schuld, Gewissen, Freiheit und Eindiekeit dergestalt gleichursprünglich zusammenwohnen wie in der Sorge, kann es im Modus des Schicksals existieren, das heisst im Grunde seiner Existenz geschichtlich sein.'
80. Ibid., p. 349: 'Die Rede ist an ihr selbst zeitlich, sofern alles Reden über ... von ... und zu ... in der ekstatischen Einheit der Zeitlichkeit gründet.'
81. Ibid.
82. Ibid., p. 162.